



Environmental Council of the States

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September 20, 2021

Dear ECOS Members:

Thank you for the honor of being elected to serve as President of ECOS for the 2021-2022 year. We are off to a great start (in my grumble opinion) with an outstanding team of officers, 100% membership, talented staff, and a strong new strategic plan to keep growing and succeeding in the midst of constant change.

COVID-19 continues to challenge our operations, programs and meetings, and the lives of our employees and family members in so many ways, and yet we are adapting and learning to thrive with new tools, technologies, and partnerships. I am particularly impressed by the improved communication and collaboration with our federal partners, even when we don't agree with every policy or process. Our collective voice is having a positive impact. For example, E-Enterprise for the Environment which strives to modernize the business of environmental protection and involves every EPA national program, is gaining momentum and reflecting state perspectives and priorities.

Deep engagement with EPA and other federal and tribal agencies and nongovernmental partners will be even more important over the coming months. ECOS must continue pressing for increased funding, support, and innovation of environmental, health, and infrastructure programs and leaning forward for durable, bipartisan solutions on urgent state and national priorities such as climate change; diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice; and emerging contaminants of concern.

Thank you again for all the work you and your staff do to support ECOS and our nation's environmental health. Don't hesitate to reach out to me, Myra, Chuck, Pat, or Don if you have any suggestions, questions, or concerns. And one last thought: Make this the year you commit to engage more of your state staff in ECOS projects, committees, discussions, and webinars. What better opportunity exists for future leaders to learn from diverse, accomplished, experts in other state, federal, and tribal agencies and cross train in areas outside of your staff's own comfort zones?

Best to you all,

Ben

Ben Grumbles
Maryland Department of
the Environment
ECOS President

Myra Reece
South Carolina Department of
Health and Environmental Control
ECOS Vice President

Chuck Carr Brown
Louisiana Department of
Environmental Quality
ECOS Secretary-Treasurer

Patrick McDonnell
Pennsylvania Department of
Environmental Protection
ECOS Past President

Donald Welsh
ECOS Executive Director