



Environmental Council of the States

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May 3, 2025

The Honorable Lee Zeldin
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave NW, WJC Building North/South Room: 1448K
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Administrator Zeldin,

Yesterday, the Office of Management of Budget (OMB) sent the White House recommendations for discretionary funding to the United States Senate for fiscal year (FY) 2026. In response, the Environmental Council of the States (ECOS) Officers urgently request an in-person meeting with you to discuss the fiscal implications of the FY2026 recommendations for states.

As we understand the recommendation, the White House recommended elimination or cuts to categorical grant programs that will devastate economic development, critical infrastructure, and environmental protections across the nation.

States carry out more than 90% of the nation's federal environmental programs in communities around the United States, and states, state legislatures, and the business community depend on Congress to fund our efforts through grants and partnerships with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Such dramatic budget cuts to states will incapacitate state environmental programs while creating significant uncertainty for state legislatures and businesses across the United States. Further, the proposal to dramatically shrink the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds will also hurt the heretofore unified effort to address the nation's water infrastructure needs, which is necessary not only to protect human health and the environment, but also to grow the economy.

If Congress were to adopt the White House recommendation for discretionary spending, states may be required to terminate primacy, delegation, or authorization agreements and return full program implementation to EPA. This would overwhelm EPA and have detrimental impacts to economic development. In addition, state primacy, delegation, or authorizations were approved by EPA and published in the Federal Register following public notice and comment. Such primacy, delegation, or authorization agreements are predicated on commitments that include a federal and state cost share. A reduction or elimination of the federal cost share will create implementation issues resulting in legal liabilities that may contribute to a state's decision to return a program to EPA for implementation within a state.

Pursuant to principles of cooperative federalism, EPA and states working in partnership through regular discussions would greatly benefit our organizations and we stand ready to have such discussions.

Thank you.

James Kenney

Chris Wells

Leah Feldon

Myra Reece

Cc:

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