

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Ranking Member Frank Pallone, Jr.

Hearing on “Fiscal Year 2025 Environmental Protection Agency Budget Request”

May 15, 2024

I would like to welcome Administrator Regan back to the Committee. Thank you for being here today to discuss President Biden’s Fiscal Year 2025 budget request for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Since our last budget hearing, EPA has been hard at work protecting public health and the environment. The agency has been implementing the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act that were delivered last Congress by President Biden and Congressional Democrats. I look forward to hearing about the Agency’s progress. These laws are directing investments into communities across the nation, modernizing our aging infrastructure and helping us lead the world in the transition to a clean energy economy.

Last month, the Administration announced \$20 billion in grant awards as part of the Inflation Reduction Act’s Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund to deploy clean energy projects in communities nationwide. In February, the EPA announced the final \$1 billion allotment of funding – for a total of \$3.5 billion – from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to clean up contaminated Superfund sites. And then, earlier this month, the EPA announced \$3 billion in funding to replace up to 1.7 million toxic lead service lines nationwide.

These investments are already making a difference. More than 271,000 clean energy jobs have already been created, with millions of good-paying American jobs expected over the next decade. The investments from these two laws will grow our economy and cut costs for American families.

The President’s fiscal year 2025 request builds on the success of our historic climate laws by investing in the health, safety, and prosperity of all American families and moving the country forward.

To combat the climate crisis, I am pleased that the budget invests nearly \$3 billion for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and helping communities build resilience to the impacts of a changing climate. EPA will continue to drive down potent super pollutants with key climate programs to cut methane and curb the production and use of hydrofluorocarbons. And the budget includes funding to implement achievable carbon pollution standards for fossil fuel power plants and vehicles — as directed by Congress.

I also commend the Administration for devoting \$170 million to combat PFAS pollution and increase funding to effectively implement the Toxic Substances Control Act. This funding will allow the agency to evaluate and manage risks from toxic chemicals to protect workers and

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families. This investment builds on EPA's recent drinking water standards and hazardous substance designations for specific PFAS chemicals, which will protect Americans from these forever chemicals.

The budget request supplements the revenue collected from the reinstatement of the Superfund tax to fund more cleanup activities. I fought for decades to reinstate this tax, and thanks to these new laws it is once again a reality.

I am also pleased to see the budget bolster EPA's work to advance environmental justice through the President's Justice40 initiative.

Overall, I believe this budget request appropriately prioritizes the protection of human health and the environment. It demonstrates the value the Biden EPA places on ensuring access to clean air and water, meeting our shared climate goals, driving innovation in homegrown clean energy, creating good paying middle class jobs, and protecting American consumers by holding polluters accountable.

This budget stands in stark contrast to the Republicans' polluters over people agenda. It's bad enough that not one Republican on this Committee supported either the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law or the Inflation Reduction Act, but they have spent the last year trying to undermine these investments at every turn.

Republicans are also working behind closed doors with the Trump campaign to develop a radical policy road map that would repeal the Inflation Reduction Act, slash the EPA, and dismantle bedrock environmental protections. And according to recent reports, Trump is selling off his policy priorities to the highest bidder – to the tune of demanding \$1 billion in campaign contributions from big oil and gas corporations, in exchange for executing their pro-polluter agenda.

The priorities of Democrats and the Biden Administration could not be more different, and the President's fiscal year 2025 request reflects that. I appreciate Administrator Regan's leadership and am committed to working together to secure a more sustainable future for all Americans.

And with that I yield back the balance of my time.