



**Testimony of Nancy Vehr
President
Association of Air Pollution Control Agencies
U.S. House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Regarding Fiscal Year 2020 Appropriations for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
State and Local Air Quality Management Grants**

March 15, 2019

The Association of Air Pollution Control Agencies (AAPCA)¹ appreciates the opportunity to provide written testimony on the budget for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as your Subcommittee initiates the appropriations process for fiscal year (FY) 2020. AAPCA's state and local members are directly responsible for implementing air quality regulations designed to protect public health, and are reliant on stable, adequate resources to fulfill obligations under the federal Clean Air Act. Specifically, AAPCA members ask that state and local air quality management grants under the State and Tribal Assistance Grant (STAG) program be funded at a level at least equal to FY 2019.

The *Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2019* (H.J.Res.31), signed into law on February 15, 2019, funded the STAG program at just over \$3.605 billion. Under the STAG program, \$1.077 billion was directed to categorical grants, including \$228.219 million for State and Local Air Quality Management Grants and \$87 million for the Diesel Emission Reductions Grant program, an increase of \$12 million from FY 2018 enacted levels.² Investments in these programs, which can make up an average of 27 percent of state environmental agency budgets,³ provide critical assistance to agencies that are responsible for protecting air quality.

By amplifying these federal grant resources – especially under Sections 103 and 105 of the Clean Air Act – through strict budgeting, creative programming, and best practices, state and local air agencies have been able to accomplish significant success in air quality.⁴ Activities that are funded include a broad range of responsibilities essential to fulfilling Clean Air Act mandates, include planning, training, developing emissions inventories and rules, modeling, monitoring, permitting, inspections, and enforcing key elements of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), air toxics, and regional haze programs.

¹ AAPCA is a national, non-profit, consensus-driven organization focused on assisting state and local air quality agencies and personnel with implementation and technical issues associated with the federal Clean Air Act. AAPCA represents more than 45 state and local air agencies, and senior officials from 22 state environmental agencies sit on the AAPCA Board of Directors. AAPCA is housed in Lexington, Kentucky as an affiliate of The Council of State Governments. More information regarding AAPCA can be found at: www.cleanairact.org.

² H.J.Res.31 – *Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2019* ([Public Law 116-6](#)). Funding levels prior to rescissions.

³ <https://www.ecos.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/FY18-EPA-Budget-Letter.pdf>.

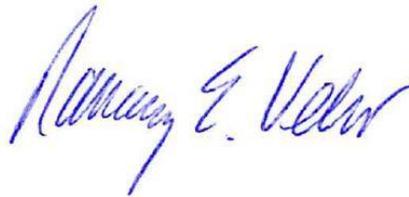
⁴ See the [2017](#) and [2018](#) editions of AAPCA's report, *The Greatest Story Seldom Told: Profiles and Success Stories in Air Pollution Control*.

While each state or local agency may be affected differently, instability in grant funding can have consequential impacts on environmental work. Importantly, since FY 2008 appropriations for state and local air quality management grants have averaged nearly \$230 million, with an average year-to-year change of less than three percent.⁵ AAPCA members appreciate the longterm recognition of Congressional budgets of the need for stable and adequate funding that has resulted in cleaner air.

As the Subcommittee evaluates the President's budget proposal for FY 2020 and begins the appropriations process, AAPCA members ask for continued stability and support of the programs that fund core Clean Air Act work. Appropriately funded state and local air quality management grants underscore foundational components of cooperative federalism, allowing air agencies to continue the important and essential work that has driven success in air quality and provide stability for entities that rely on their expertise.

Thank you for your attention to this testimony. AAPCA and its members look forward to working with your Subcommittee as Congress develops its priorities for FY 2020 appropriations. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Jason Sloan, Executive Director, at jsloan@csg.org or (859) 244-8043.

Sincerely,



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⁵ Figures assume dollars not adjusted for inflation.