

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

May 17, 2019

On behalf of the Association of Air Pollution Control Agencies (AAPCA),¹ thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony regarding the fiscal year (FY) 2020 budget for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). AAPCA's state and local members are directly responsible for planning and implementing air quality regulations designed to protect public health, and believe that stable and adequate resources are core to fulfilling Clean Air Act obligations. As your Subcommittee begins the FY 2020 appropriations process, AAPCA members specifically request 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 of this year, provided approximately \$3.605 billion in funding for the STAG program. Of this funding, \$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

The investment in these programs, which can make up to an average of 27 percent of environmental agency budgets,³ provide critical assistance to state and local air agencies, which maximize these funds through strict budgeting, creative programming, and best practices. 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. By amplifying federal grant resources, especially under Section 103 and 105 of the Clean Air Act, agencies have achieved significant success in air quality.⁴

The President's budget proposal for FY 2020 was released by the White House on March 11, 2019, and requests \$6.068 billion for U.S. EPA, or \$2.76 billion (31 percent) less than appropriated by Congress in FY 2019.⁵ U.S. EPA's *FY 2020 Justification of Appropriation Estimates for the Committee on Appropriations* details a proposed 35 percent reduction in funding for the STAG program, including a nearly 45 percent reduction in categorical grants.⁶ The budget request for U.S. EPA also seeks a 30

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](http://www.gpo.gov/legis/laws/publaw/116-6)). Funding levels prior to rescissions.

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

⁴ AAPCA, *State Air Trends & Successes: The StATS Report*, April 22, 2019

⁵ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/budget-fy2020.pdf>.

⁶ <https://www.epa.gov/planandbudget/cj>.

percent decrease in funds for state and local air quality management grants, along with the proposed elimination of several air quality programs.

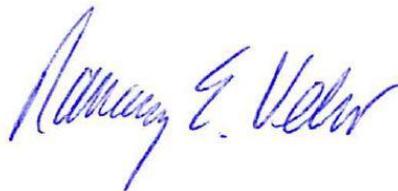
AAPCA recognizes that your Subcommittee is in the early stages of the FY 2020 appropriations process and appreciates that Congress did not adopt figures similar to those proposed by the Administration for the past two fiscal years. In fact, since FY 2009 the annual change in funding for state and local air quality management grants has been less than three percent, with an average of \$230 million provided each of those years.⁷ AAPCA members believe that these long-term, stable resources have had consequential impacts on air pollution control efforts that have been able to accommodate substantial national economic and population growth.⁸

In addition to funding state and local air quality management grants at a level at least equal to FY 2019, AAPCA members would also like to highlight the importance of retaining funding for fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) monitoring under Section 103 of the Clean Air Act, rather than through Section 105. Section 103 does not require state and local agencies to match funds, as is stipulated in Section 105. Should this funding authority be transitioned as proposed,⁹ agency budgets could be adversely impacted.

As your Subcommittee develops the budget for U.S. EPA through the appropriations process, AAPCA members ask for continued stability and support of funding to carry out core Clean Air Act activities. 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's state and local 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,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nancy E. Vehr". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nancy Vehr
Administrator, Air Quality Division,
Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality
President, AAPCA

⁷ Figures assume dollars not adjusted for inflation.

⁸ U.S. EPA, [Our Nation's Air: Status and Trends Through 2017](#), July 31, 2018. Section: Air Quality Improves as America Grows.

⁹ U.S. EPA, ["FY2020 National Program Manager Guidance Monitoring Appendix,"](#) March 2019. DRAFT.