

**American Rivers * Audubon * Center for Biological Diversity * Clean Water Action
Earthjustice * Environment America * Environmental Defense Fund
Friends of the Earth * Greenpeace * League of Conservation Voters
Natural Resources Defense Council * Sierra Club * The Wilderness Society**

July 8, 2014

Dear Representative:

On behalf of our millions of members and supporters, we write to express our opposition to the FY2015 Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations bill (H.R. 4923). Instead of providing funding to maintain America's leadership in clean energy, this year's bill once again cuts renewable energy funding, while increasing spending for the mature, polluting fossil and nuclear energy sectors. Furthermore, this bill continues House Leadership's pattern of inserting harmful policy riders into spending bills in an attempt to circumvent regular legislative order. Adding unrelated, controversial, and often radical policy reversals onto these bills hijacks the process and undermines the already challenging budget process.

H.R. 4923 provides a window into the bill sponsors' misguided vision for America, a future that devalues research, ignores the science of climate change, leaves our drinking water vulnerable to pollution and rejects the clean energy technologies of today and tomorrow in favor of yesterday's dirty fossil fuels.

We urge you to reverse the clean energy funding cuts and remove all policy riders, or to vote against this bill. We also urge you to oppose any and all amendments that would harm our health and our environment, such as those to prevent implementation of energy efficiency standards, block EPA's Clean Power Plan, or prevent research on climate change.

Every year, fossil fuel pollution causes billions of dollars in health costs from cancer, heart attacks, and asthma and the increasing amount of carbon pollution has led to extreme weather events costing billions more to both the government and citizens. One of the most prudent ways to address these costs and improve the health and environment of our citizens is to research, develop and deploy clean energy solutions.

Clean energy is creating thousands of jobs in states around the nation, while helping to clean up our air and water. A potent combination of government policies, private sector investment and American ingenuity and hard work is building a vibrant solar energy sector in North Carolina, a strong wind energy industry in Kansas, and advanced electric vehicles out of California. Meanwhile, energy efficiency is improving economic productivity, cutting utility bills and reducing health and environmental costs across the country.

Rather than continuing to invest in these successful clean energy technologies, this bill instead embraces the pollute and pay approach of the past by further subsidizing the mature fossil fuels and nuclear energy sectors and cutting funds for the clean, renewable and energy efficient technologies that fuel our future. Specifically, the bill cuts \$112.7 million, from the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency office while increasing funding for energy derived from fossil fuels by \$30 million and nuclear energy by \$9.8 million.

The bill also includes very damaging policy riders. Sec. 105 and Sec. 106 undermine the Clean Water Act by freezing in place outdated definitions of fill material and preventing the finalization of a public rulemaking to restore Clean Water Act protections to the drinking water of 117 million Americans.

Removing the flexibility to update these definitions will have real impacts on streams and wetlands that supply drinking water and prevent flooding. The bill also contains a rider (Sec. 315) to prevent the Department of Energy from moving ahead with energy saving standards for ceiling fans – standards that ultimately will save consumers money and reduce pollution. These riders, and any others that will be offered, undercut the public process for determining how to implement the laws that Congress has passed. They are bad policies that will put Americans health and safety at risk and have no place on a funding bill.

This bill has the opportunity to build a path toward cleaner and healthier energy and water use policies for all Americans, but as currently written it puts America's public health, environment, and energy future at risk. We strongly oppose the bill as drafted and once again urge the House to instead pass a bill that invests in clean energy, decreases our dependence on fossil fuels and safeguards America's waters and climate. We also urge opposition to any amendment that would harm health and the environment.

Sincerely,

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