

**American Rivers \* Audubon \* Clean Water Action \* Defenders of Wildlife \* Earthjustice  
Environment America \* Friends of the Earth \* Greenpeace \* League of Conservation Voters  
Natural Resources Defense Council \* Oceana \* Ocean Conservancy  
Physicians for Social Responsibility \* Sierra Club**

April 21, 2015

Dear Representative:

On behalf of a diverse community of environmental, conservation, recreation and historic preservation organizations, we urge you to oppose the FY2016 Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations bill because it fails to restore funding for clean energy innovation and does not responsibly promote proper use of our water resources. 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 harmful unrelated, controversial, and often radical policy reversals onto these bills hijacks the process and undermines the already challenging budget process.

We are deeply concerned that the 302(b) allocations for the Energy and Water bill fail to properly keep pace with needs. Years of funding cuts, further exacerbated by sequestration, have left agencies struggling just to keep up with inflation and fixed costs and has caused significant damage to programs that the public strongly supports. These programs are critical to public lands, wildlife, public health, historic preservation and clean energy.

This bill follows a misguided vision for America, a future that devalues research, leaves our drinking water vulnerable to pollution, limits our ability to efficiently tackle pressing ocean challenges like sea level rise, and rejects the clean energy technologies of today and tomorrow in favor of yesterday's dirty fossil fuels.

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 vibrant solar, wind and advanced vehicle industries across the country. 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 \$279 million from the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency office while increasing funding for fossil energy research by \$34 million and nuclear energy by \$23 million.

The bill also includes very damaging policy riders. First, Sec. 105 undermines the Clean Water Act by preventing the finalization of a lengthy and public rulemaking to restore Clean Water Act protections to

streams, wetlands, and other important waters. Without the administration's Clean Water Rule, the streams that help supply public drinking water systems serving one in three Americans will remain at risk. Second, Sec. 104 would freeze in place rules that encourage mountain top removal coal mining by allowing companies to bury streams under mining waste. Removing the flexibility to update current requirements will have real impacts on streams and wetlands that supply drinking water and prevent flooding. Third, Sec. 505 blocks the Army Corps of Engineers and the Department of Energy from utilizing tools such as ocean planning and ecosystem-based management under the National Ocean Policy. The National Ocean Policy fosters efficient government and improves coordination among the federal and state entities that govern our oceans, coasts and Great Lakes. Prohibiting the Army Corps and the DOE from participating would limit our ability to efficiently tackle pressing ocean challenges like sea level rise and offshore wind development and hinder inclusive state, federal and local planning work to improve the health and sustainable use of oceans.

These riders, and any damaging policy provisions 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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