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# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6175

RICHARD M. RUSSELL, MAJORITY STAFF DIRECTOR  
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February 6, 2018

The Honorable Scott Pruitt  
Administrator  
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Administrator Pruitt:

I write today to follow up on my August 24, 2017 letter<sup>1</sup> regarding your decision to assign a political appointee in EPA's Office of Public Affairs to sign off on the agency's issuance of grant solicitation decisions. That decision became even more troubling in light of reports that EPA cut or delayed several grants – many of which were related to climate change,<sup>2</sup> and that the political appointee removed all references to climate change in some of EPA's grant announcements.<sup>3</sup>

A recent analysis of EPA's publicly available grants data undertaken by my staff (attached) demonstrates that at least 49 out of 50 states saw declines in reported EPA funding in 2017 as compared to a similar period in 2016.<sup>4</sup> The State of Delaware, for example, saw a 71 percent reduction in grant funding last year compared to the year before, dropping from roughly 56 grants worth \$26.2 million in 2016 to 39 grants worth \$7.5 million in 2017. Nine states (RI, NY, WY, NJ, AL, IA, AZ, HI, and ME) saw more than a 90 percent decline in reported funding, and 38 states saw their reported funding slashed by more than half. Every state analyzed saw double-digit percent declines. This analysis makes your earlier determination to insert a political appointee into the process even more concerning, and additionally raises questions about agency reporting and adherence to the law.

Each year, EPA awards more than \$4 billion in funding to non-profit organizations and state and local governments to help these entities achieve their goals for protecting human health and the environment. Grant money accounts for about half of the agency's roughly \$8 billion budget, and Congress appropriates that money to EPA for the specific purpose of awarding it. Under the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, EPA is also required to disclose all award data to a publicly searchable database<sup>5</sup> within 30 days of making an award.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.carper.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=99884797-7E86-4954-BCE6-958D35992317>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/epa-now-requires-political-aides-sign-off-for-agency-awards-grant-applications/2017/09/04/2fd707a0-88fd-11e7-a94f-3139abce39f5\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.ea6ba55ffd04](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/epa-now-requires-political-aides-sign-off-for-agency-awards-grant-applications/2017/09/04/2fd707a0-88fd-11e7-a94f-3139abce39f5_story.html?utm_term=.ea6ba55ffd04)

<sup>3</sup> <http://apps.washingtonpost.com/g/documents/politics/epas-new-procedures-for-drafting-competitive-grant-solicitations/2537/>

<sup>4</sup> As of February 6, 2018, data for grants awarded to Illinois during the relevant period in 2016 was unavailable.

<sup>5</sup> [www.usaspending.gov](http://www.usaspending.gov)

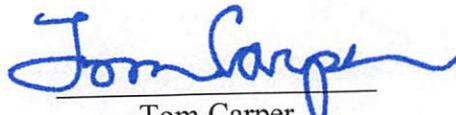
It appears from the analysis conducted by my staff that EPA is either not awarding the money Congress appropriated, or it is not reporting this data to the publicly searchable database as required by law, or both. So that I may better understand the reason for why there is an apparent decline in EPA grant awards, and in addition to the responses to my questions and requests for information in my August 24, 2017 letter, please provide responses to the following:

1. For the period January 20, 2017 thru September 30, 2017, please explain whether EPA chose not to spend the grant money allotted to it by Congress, or not to report that data completely as mandated by Congress, or some combination of both?
2. For each grant that was awarded in 2016, but applied for and not awarded in 2017, please indicate the subject matter and applicant for the grant, the reason why the grant was denied in 2017, and whether that decision was made by EPA's career staff or by an EPA political appointee.
3. To date, EPA has not publicly posted grant awards information past September 30, 2017. As mentioned above, the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act requires EPA to report awards data within 30 days of making an award. Accordingly, please post data covering the period October 2017 thru December 2017 by February 21, 2018.

Please provide responses to these questions by February 21, 2018. If you or members of your staff have further questions, please feel free to ask them to contact Michal Freedhoff at the Committee on Environment and Public Works at (202) 224-8832.

With best personal regards, I am,

Sincerely yours,



Tom Carper  
Ranking Member

## Year-by-Year Comparison: EPA Grants

State	Jan. 20, 2016 - Sept. 30, 2016		Jan. 20, 2017 - Sept. 30, 2017		YOY % Change in Funding
	Federal Funding	Total Grants	Federal Funding	Total Grants	
Alabama	\$51,213,004	55	\$3,996,266	22	-92.20%
Alaska	\$77,715,041	327	\$14,132,548	40	-81.81%
Arizona	\$61,021,066.00	135	\$4,892,440.00	39	-91.98%
Arkansas	\$35,597,004	41	\$28,182,888	20	-20.83%
California	\$303,437,680	402	\$49,106,718	177	-83.82%
Colorado	\$52,307,837.00	102	\$20,424,935.00	33	-60.95%
Connecticut	\$53,027,212.00	82	\$6,730,635.00	19	-87.31%
Delaware	\$26,260,282	56	\$7,584,309	39	-71.12%
Florida	\$114,797,236	99	\$16,571,830	44	-85.56%
Georgia	\$67,612,182	64	\$9,069,210	27	-86.59%
Hawaii	\$34,759,865	46	\$2,013,665	20	-94.21%
Idaho	\$30,805,774	63	\$13,779,376	24	-55.27%
Illinois	*	*	\$36,380,356	48	N/A
Indiana	\$71,195,829	63	\$7,543,708.00	29	-89.40%
Iowa	\$48,647,235	53	\$4,398,526	9	-90.96%
Kansas	\$39,580,767	72	\$10,181,120	26	-74.28%
Kentucky	\$46,490,462	42	\$4,836,542	27	-89.60%
Louisiana	\$54,017,086.00	93	\$23,283,175	29	-56.90%
Maine	\$41,114,820.00	84	\$3,972,959	31	-90.34%
Maryland	\$93,201,656	126	\$19,254,653	62	-79.34%
Massachusetts	\$109,647,660	133	\$66,045,335	54	-39.77%
Michigan	\$167,156,344.00	222	\$132,024,914.00	106	-21.02%
Minnesota	\$71,996,325.00	135	\$57,004,475.00	64	-20.82%
Mississippi	\$38,729,474	47	\$10,352,703	32	-73.27%
Missouri	\$77,919,518.00	72	\$9,083,319	28	-88.34%
Montana	\$34,293,994.00	93	\$26,960,672	51	-21.38%
Nebraska	\$29,044,909	59	\$5,579,544	27	-80.79%
Nevada	\$34,521,855.00	100	\$4,452,782	34	-87.10%
New Hampshire	\$36,502,226.00	54	\$7,860,797	37	-78.46%
New Jersey	\$102,905,116	82	\$5,872,515	16	-94.29%
New Mexico	\$34,067,780.00	127	\$3,534,690	32	-89.62%
New York	\$250,039,836	173	\$21,566,819	54	-91.37%
North Carolina	\$77,934,229.00	111	\$67,601,566	69	-13.26%
North Dakota	\$27,607,061.00	45	\$8,125,062	14	-70.57%
Ohio	\$147,444,308.00	131	\$104,851,034	71	-28.89%
Oklahoma	\$67,680,366	160	\$30,660,177	60	-54.70%
Oregon	\$51,832,104	99	\$28,283,110	37	-45.43%
Pennsylvania	\$132,346,127	108	\$67,449,486	49	-49.04%
Rhode Island	\$31,205,560	49	\$2,881,056	12	-90.77%
South Carolina	\$39,190,866.00	48	\$7,043,757	26	-82.03%
South Dakota	\$27,065,158	49	\$7,118,362	13	-73.70%
Tennessee	\$35,689,900	55	\$8,008,920	43	-77.56%
Texas	\$186,018,433	100	\$21,585,208	48	-88.40%
Utah	\$34,285,886	53	\$14,918,231	32	-56.49%
Vermont	29,207,273.00	47	16,366,333.00	19	-43.96%
Virginia	80,111,843.00	114	10,974,464.00	78	-86.30%
Washington	115,050,052.00	209	30,677,206.00	94	-73.34%
West Virginia	\$45,198,499	57	\$27,260,714	33	-36.39%
Wisconsin	\$95,382,807	158	\$19,706,441	79	-79.34%
Wyoming	\$22,305,731	26	\$1,664,269	8	-92.54%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,535,183,278</b>	<b>4,921</b>	<b>\$1,111,849,820</b>	<b>2,085</b>	<b>-68.55%</b>

\* 2016 grant data for Illinois was unavailable on public database.