

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 21, 2025

The Honorable Lee Zeldin
Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Zeldin:

We write today to request that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) cease, once and for all, its baseless efforts to undermine the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF). For months, the Trump Administration waged an unprecedented and defamatory assault on this program, unlawfully weaponizing the federal government in an inexplicable effort to deprive hardworking Americans of low-cost financing that will help them lower their energy bills, make their communities more resilient, and generate good local jobs. During this time, we and other Congressional leaders demanded that EPA provide justification for its actions.¹ EPA failed to answer those questions or provide any other evidence to support its accusations. In court, your own lawyers confirmed the lack of evidence to support your accusations of waste, fraud, and abuse.² Your silence in response to our inquiries is striking.

On April 15, 2025, Judge Tanya Chutkan ruled against EPA in the agency's ongoing dispute with nonprofit recipients selected under the GGRF's National Clean Investment Fund (NCIF), directing Citibank to restore grantees' access to their legally obligated funds.³ As outlined in the opinion, "[w]hen agencies fail to operate within the bounds of the law—whether through breaching agreements, arbitrary decision-making, or ignoring regulations—they erode public trust, materially affect the rights and interests of individuals and organizations, and undermine confidence in the very institutions meant to serve the people."⁴ The ruling came after EPA repeatedly failed to follow proper rules and procedures in its attempts to freeze funds and terminate contracts under the NCIF and its sister program, the Clean Communities Investment

¹ Letter from Rep. Frank Pallone, Jr., Ranking Member, House Committee on Energy and Commerce, Rep. Paul D. Tonko, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Environment, House Committee on Energy and Commerce, and Rep. Yvette D. Clarke, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, House Committee on Energy and Commerce, to Lee Zeldin, Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency (Mar. 11, 2025); Letter from Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse et al., Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, to Lee Zeldin, Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency (Mar. 13, 2025).

² *Judge Grills Trump Admin Lawyer on Canceled Climate Grants*, Politico (Apr. 3, 2025); *Trump's EPA Wages War over \$20B in 'Gold Bars'*, Politico (Apr. 15, 2025).

³ Order (Apr. 15, 2025), *Climate United Fund v. Citibank, N.A.*, et al., (No. 1:25-cv-00698-TSC).

⁴ Memorandum Opinion (Apr. 16, 2025), *Climate United Fund v. Citibank, N.A.*, et al., (No. 1:25-cv-00698-TSC).

The Honorable Lee Zeldin

April 21, 2025

Page 2

Accelerator (CCIA). With no evidence to offer, EPA’s actions amount to “thinly veiled attempts to dismantle the entirety of a congressionally created program.”⁵

The NCIF and CCIA were created to expand economic opportunity across the country, leveraging public and private capital to drive investment that will help everyday Americans lower their energy bills and access new, good-paying jobs – two goals the Trump Administration allegedly shares. The eight nonprofit coalitions selected under the NCIF and CCIA were chosen because they are experts in their fields, with deep expertise in providing low-cost, high-impact capital to communities typically overlooked by traditional financial markets, and the experience and proven track records needed to improve people’s lives by making energy and housing more affordable. That is precisely why EPA selected them after a rigorous, highly transparent multi-year review process.

You accepted the responsibility as Administrator to answer the oversight inquiries of Congress. You failed to respond to our questions, and you failed to provide credible evidence in court supporting your defamatory claims against GGRF and its awardees. Now, the courts have spoken, and the American people can see EPA’s attack on the NCIF and CCIA for what it is: a sham. We call on you to immediately end the sham, answer our questions, and work *with*, rather than *against*, the NCIF and CCIA grantees as they seek to deploy low-cost capital to families and small businesses across the country.

If, as you’ve stated, you are truly committed to addressing Americans’ “serious concerns about upward economic mobility and their struggle to make ends meet”—and if, as you testified before Congress, you “believe in the rule of law” and remain committed to upholding your “obligations under the law”—you will end your fruitless attack on the GGRF and work with us to ensure this program delivers on its potential.⁶

Sincerely,



Frank Pallone, Jr.
Ranking Member
House Committee on Energy and Commerce



Sheldon Whitehouse
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Environment
and Public Works

⁵ *Id.*, Memorandum Opinion (Mar. 18, 2025) *Climate United Fund v. Citibank, N.A.*, et al., *Coalition for Green Capital v. Citibank, N.A.*, et al., *Power Forward Communities, Inc. v. Citibank, N.A.*, et al. (No 1:25-cv-00698-TSC).

⁶ Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, *Hearing on the Nomination of The Honorable Lee M. Zeldin to be Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency*, 119th Cong. (Jan. 16, 2025).

The Honorable Lee Zeldin

April 21, 2025

Page 3

cc: The Honorable Brett Guthrie
Chairman
House Committee on Energy and Commerce

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Chairman
Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works