

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 22, 2010

The Honorable James Moran  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and  
Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Michael K. Simpson  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and  
Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Moran and Ranking Member Simpson:

We write to respectfully urge you to provide robust funding for the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) program and for state and local air pollution control agencies in the pending fiscal year 2011 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies appropriations bill. Strong support for these vital air quality initiatives will help achieve our oft-stated goals of economic recovery and environmental protection.

As you are aware, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provided \$300 million for DERA. By supporting DERA at this level, Congress recognized the tremendous value of the program in saving jobs, promoting health and improving the environment. While the Environmental Protection Agency has done a commendable job implementing the DERA program as required under the Recovery Act, the agency has also been overwhelmed with applications far outstripping allocated amount. Specifically, EPA has already received over 650 applications for the federal portion of DERA, totaling over \$2 billion in requested funding that would generate another two billion local matching dollars.

In light of this clear and apparent demand for further diesel retrofit funding, we urge you to provide \$100 million for DERA in the fiscal year 2011 appropriations bill under your subcommittee's jurisdiction. This level of funding would help to alleviate the significant unmet demand for diesel retrofit funding, and would also do much to restore the economic health of communities nationwide that are dependent on the automobile industry. The DERA program has also always been – and continues to be – a sound federal investment. It leverages two state and local dollars for every federal dollar invested in the program, and it provides \$13 of economic benefit for every dollar spent on DERA activities.

Air quality grants to state and local entities have demonstrated similar effectiveness in the past. To that end, we urge your subcommittee to accede to the President's Budget request of \$309.1 million, an increase of \$82.5 million above fiscal 2010 appropriated levels, for these grants under Sections 103 and 105 of the Clean Air Act. This level of funding would assist state and local air pollution agencies install pollution control technologies; assess the effects of air pollution on

local communities; prepare state implementation plans; and monitor carbon monoxide, lead, sulfur dioxide, and other toxic contaminants.

State and local governments hold primary responsibility for preventing and controlling air pollution, and they rely on these grants to carry out their core obligations under the Clean Air Act. While the states' responsibilities to protect clean air are expanding, federal support for these programs has deteriorated by about 33 percent in purchasing power terms over the last 15 years. Acceding to the President's request for this important program will do much to ensure that state and local jurisdictions meet their Clean Air Act mandates, and will aid our ongoing efforts to reduce air pollution and protect our constituents' health.

Thank you for your past support of these vital air quality programs, and for considering our requests to provide sufficient funding for them again in fiscal year 2011. We look forward to working with you in the future to support these and similar programs that invest in our economy, protect the quality of our air, and preserve our environment for future generations.

Sincerely,

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