

Proposed NACAA Recommendations for FY 2020 Appropriations
July 23, 2018

Background

During the NACAA Board of Directors' Meeting in Milwaukee, WI (July 28-30, 2018) the members will consider board approval for the association's message to Congress related to FY 2020 appropriations. As in the past, the NACAA board will decide on an overall message and then NACAA will develop testimony, a model letter for the members and other communications that contain that information. Typically, this discussion has taken place at the winter board meeting for the appropriations cycle that follows in the spring. However, this year the board will consider this issue at the summer meeting so that NACAA will be ready to move ahead with its messaging as soon as necessary, without having to wait for the board to act in January 2019.

During the last few years, the Administration has recommended significant cuts to state and local air quality grants. For example, Section 103/105 grants were recommended to be cut from \$228 million to \$152 million (33 percent) for FY 2019. It is very possible steep cuts will be proposed for FY 2020 as well. State and local air agencies have been operating with insufficient funds for many years. Additionally, the Administration is advocating increased responsibilities for state and local agencies as part of its "Cooperative Federalism." These circumstances call for an increase in grants.

Proposed Recommendations

The proposed NACAA recommendation for FY 2020 includes three parts (please note that these are nearly identical to the NACAA recommendations for FY 2019):

- An increase of \$82 million above the likely FY 2019 amount (\$228 million), for a total of \$310 million. In FY 2004, state and local air grants were \$228.5 million, which is approximately the same amount they have been for several years and are likely to be again for FY 2019. If adjusted for inflation, level funding from FY 2004 is approximately \$310 million in today's dollars, which is about \$82 million more than current amounts. Our messaging would emphasize the fact that the NACAA recommendation represents level funding from 15 years ago, adjusted for inflation, and that additional grants are essential to address increased responsibility under Cooperative Federalism and the long-standing shortfall we have faced. [For FY 2019, NACAA recommended an increase of \$75 million (from \$228 million to \$303 million). The increased amount for FY 2020 merely reflects additional changes to the Consumer Price Index.]
- State and local air agencies should have flexibility to target the grants for the highest priority activities in their areas.
- Funding for PM_{2.5} monitors should continue to remain under Section 103 authority, so that matching funds are not required, rather than shifting it to Section 105.