February 28, 2022

TO: NACAA Air Directors

Congress will soon begin considering FY 2023 appropriations, including federal grants to state and local air agencies. We need your help in making a strong case to Congress about the need for increases in your federal grants. It is especially important that agencies with Representatives or Senators on the House and Senate Appropriations Committees or the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Subcommittees contact their Members of Congress (or staffs) and urge the adoption of legislation that increases federal grants. We are providing you with information to help you with this.

If your Congressional delegation does not include members of the committees or subcommittees, it is still helpful to contact them to ask that they convey immediately to the subcommittees the need for increased funding for Section 103/105 grants. Even if you are unable to send a letter, it would be very useful to send an informal email or call their offices. Additionally, please consider articulating the need for additional funding to decisionmakers within your own agency/jurisdiction who may be able to contact Congressional leaders.

The following is some information that would be helpful for those communications:

1. A [model letter](https://www.4cleanair.org/wp-content/uploads/NACAA-Model-Letter-to-Congress.pdf) to help prepare your own correspondence to Congress. We urge you to tailor it to use your own words and highlight your local details. If your letter is not sent to a member of the committee or subcommittee, please also send a copy to the committee and subcommittee chairs.
* A [list of the members of the Senate and House Appropriations Committees and Subcommittees on Interior, Environment, and Independent Agencies](https://www.4cleanair.org/wp-content/uploads/Appropriations-members-FY23-cycle.pdf). The addresses of the subcommittee and committee chairs are included. Email addresses for only the subcommittees are publicly available. If you have contacts within the individual offices, you may wish to email your correspondence.
* A [NACAA one-pager](https://www.4cleanair.org/wp-content/uploads/NACAA-FY-2023-Funding-One-Pager-February-2022-1.pdf) containing funding recommendations that you may wish to share with interested parties and decisionmakers

Your input matters. Please contact your representatives and/or ask your local board members or agency heads to contact your Congressional delegation. When you send a letter to a Member of Congress on this issue, please provide Mary Sullivan Douglas of NACAA with a copy as well. If you have any questions, please contact Mary at (571) 970-6678 or mdouglas@4cleanair.org.

February 28, 2022

**Model Letter to Members of Congress from Individual State and Local Agencies**

[Brackets and underlining indicate spaces for agency- or area-specific information.]

Dear [Senator or Representative]:

 Our country’s programs to reduce air pollution have been a tremendous success but, despite nationwide progress, air pollution still causes tens of thousands of early deaths in America and poses a serious public health problem resulting in adverse health impacts to millions every year. In fact, 30 percent of Americans—about 97 million people—still live in areas with unhealthy levels of ozone or particle pollution, and millions are exposed to dangerous levels of other hazardous air pollutants. We are requesting your support to address this significant problem.

[Name of agency] and other state and local clean air agencies across the country are charged with running the essential air quality programs that protect public health. Unfortunately, these programs have been underfunded for many years and need significant increases in resources. Federal grant funding under Sections 103 and 105 of the Clean Air Act, which support state and local clean air and climate agencies, has been essentially flatlined for nearly 20 years, despite many new regulations and requirements. These grants have not even kept pace with inflation, while our programs have become more costly and complex. Continued shortfalls in federal funding will leave communities at risk and will result in cuts to existing programs, just as climate change and air pollution are exacerbated. For example, here in [name of state or area], [provide specific, concrete examples of how a lack of Section 105 grants has hurt your program. If possible, provide concrete evidence of how this has affected air quality or public health.]

To meet current and expected obligations, the federal government should provide $500 million in Section 103 and 105 federal grants to state and local air agencies in FY 2023 to carry out current programs and new challenges and allow flexibility for state and local air agencies to use federal grants for their highest-priority needs. As much as possible, these grant increases should not require matching funds (including keeping funding for fine particulate matter monitoring under Section 103 authority, which does not call for a state or local match).

These additional funds will be used nationally for important efforts, such as advancing new programs and expanding existing clean air efforts that protect vulnerable communities; supporting pollution detection and visualization through air monitors and sensors; supporting small business programs; and addressing climate change with activities that include planning, monitoring, permitting, enforcement, adaptation and resilience. Here in [name of agency], we would [identify high-priority tasks/concerns additional funding would address].

We work hard to improve air quality, but sufficient federal funding is critical. Please ensure that federal grants to state and local air quality agencies under Sections 103 and 105 are increased to $500 million in FY 2023. I would be glad to answer any questions you have or provide more information. Thank you for any assistance you can offer.

Sincerely,

cc: Chairs of Appropriations Committees

 Chairs of Interior, Environment, and Independent Agencies Subcommittees