



CREATING GOOD JOBS, A CLEAN ENVIRONMENT, AND A FAIR AND THRIVING ECONOMY

## **The BlueGreen Alliance Urges Funding of Key Programs for Workers and the Environment in FY19 Energy & Water Appropriations Bill**

May 15, 2018

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
H-305, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
2365 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Frelinghuysen and Ranking Member Lowey:

As a coalition of the nation's largest labor unions and environmental groups, collectively representing millions of members and supporters, we write to encourage members of the House Appropriations Committee to fully fund key agencies and programs that protect workers and the environment in its fiscal year 2019 (FY19) Energy and Water appropriations bill.

The fiscal year 2018 (FY18) omnibus was a clear rejection of the cuts proposed in President Trump's FY18 budget to key agencies and programs on which Americans rely. We thank members of the House and Senate for sending a clear message to the president by rejecting these harmful cuts. The FY19 Energy and Water bill recently passed through the subcommittee maintains a commitment to these overall funding levels, but we remain concerned about several proposed cuts to key offices and programs that drive energy innovation and investment. We are also troubled by the inclusion of harmful policy language that would undermine the bedrock Clean Water Act.

As the full committee moves forward its FY19 Energy and Water bill, we hope members will robustly fund key programs and agencies that:

### **Spur Innovation and Economic Growth**

We urge committee members to fully fund programs that maintain the nation's global competitiveness and innovation edge when it comes to energy and transportation. In particular, we hope the committee will ensure robust funding for critical offices and programs at the Department of Energy (DOE) that promote innovative technology research and development and ensure that we not only invent the next generation of technology in America, but that we build it here too. Policies and programs that invest in low-carbon energy and energy-efficient technologies help spur innovation, investment, and manufacturing while ensuring that the U.S. does not fall behind in the development and commercialization of the technologies that are driving an increasing share of economic growth around the world.

These offices and programs include:

### ***DOE Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE)***

DOE's EERE ensures America remains a leader in clean energy production as the world moves from traditional energy to cleaner and more efficient forms. While the FY19 funding bill increases DOE's overall budget, it reduces this office's budget by \$243 million. These cuts would undermine EERE's ability to carry out numerous critical efforts, including its work through the:

- ***Advanced Manufacturing Office (AMO)***: Continued research and development is critical to the future of manufacturing in the United States. AMO works with other agencies and programs across the government to help ensure America leads not just in inventing new technology, but in developing the cutting edge technologies and processes to manufacture it, and to spur energy and manufacturing efficiency and competitiveness.
- ***Building Technologies Program (BTP)***: Commercial and residential buildings account for around 40 percent of the nation's energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. The BTP has provided invaluable research, development, demonstration, and technical assistance for the building efficiency industry and related suppliers and manufacturers. With a continued dedication, these industries will hopefully continue to grow exponentially, leading to greater job creation and reduced energy use.
- ***Vehicles Technology Office (VTO)***: The VTO is at the forefront of developing and commercializing key advanced clean vehicle and fuel technologies that are saving Americans money at the pump, deeply cutting pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, and aiding job growth in the domestic auto industry. These programs have helped spur domestic advances in critical electric vehicle battery, electronics, and fuels technologies.
- ***Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)***: Low-income families are particularly vulnerable to volatile energy bills. Weatherization reduces energy bills by over \$270 per year per family. It creates much-needed jobs in a stagnant construction industry. The WAP has consistently delivered on its objectives, weatherizing more and more homes each year. We must keep our focus on lowering energy bills and creating jobs in the budding energy efficiency industry.
- ***State Energy Program (SEP)***: In a time of significant energy transition, states are bombarded with critical decisions that impact their consumers, businesses, and economy. Since 2013, the SEP has provided states and territories with more than \$300 million in financial assistance. Benefits to states include assistance in energy cost and waste, expansion of energy resources in the state, and promotion of economic growth with improved environmental quality.

### ***Loan Programs Office***

By issuing loans and guarantees for innovative energy and vehicle technologies—through the Advanced Technology Vehicles Manufacturing Loan Program (ATVM) and the Title XVII Innovative Technology Loan Guarantee Program—the Loan Programs Office helps bring advanced technologies to market and keep America at the forefront of these advancements. We are concerned about the bill's proposed \$1 million cut to the office.

### ***Advanced Research Projects Agency - Energy (ARPA-E)***

ARPA-E provides crucial funding for new technologies in the energy space for innovators whose ideas may be too advanced or untested for private market investment. These innovators are producing cutting-edge technologies for storing, generating, and utilizing energy. We are concerned that the bill reduces funding by over \$28 million, which will hinder this unique type of investment.

### **Invest in Hard-Hit Communities**

We also urge committee members to fully fund programs that would reinvest in communities across the nation that have been negatively impacted by America's evolving energy mix, including the Appalachian Regional Commission. This commission has a unique ability to partner with coal-impacted communities and increase their ability to compete for new jobs and outside investment.

These offices and programs include:

***Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) – POWER (Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization) Initiative***

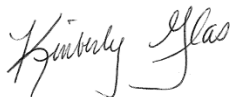
The Appalachian Regional Commission has invested \$94 million to date in impacted communities, money which is slated to create or retain nearly 9,000 jobs and leverage an additional \$210 million in community investment. The projects supported by these programs are focused on growth industry sectors, including sustainable agriculture, information technology, advanced manufacturing, healthcare, and tourism and recreation. They fund much needed infrastructure development, economic development planning, business incubation and industry cluster strategies, job and entrepreneurship training, and other vital services critical to the revitalization and diversification of local and regional economies. We appreciate the committee's recognition of the importance of the ARC and urge appropriators to ensure robust funding for its POWER Initiative.

We are also concerned about the inclusion of damaging anti-environmental policy riders that run counter to the goal of environmental protection and do not belong in a spending bill. Section 108, a rider that serves to undermine the Clean Water Rule, threatens the health of our nation's waters, and therefore all Americans who rely on clean water for drinking, navigation, recreation, and livelihoods. Additionally, this backdoor method of repealing a crucial safeguard is cause for alarm, not least because it outright ignores the 1.5 million public comments submitted in support of the rule. This harmful language must be removed.

Ultimately, Americans want to lead the world in the kind of innovation that will create quality jobs in the United States while ensuring we provide communities most in need with tools and resources to reinvigorate their economies and build a bright economic future. They want the government to work for them and they count on hard-working government employees carrying out essential tasks in many communities.

We urge the committee to move forward with a plan that moves us forward on the path towards protecting working families and the environment while driving innovation and quality job creation.

Sincerely,



Kim Glas  
Executive Director  
BlueGreen Alliance