



## Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development

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July 10, 2020

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
304 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Vice Chairman  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
437 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

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

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Appropriations  
1026 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Shelby, Vice Chairman Leahy, Chairwoman Lowey, and Ranking Member Granger:

Care for the common good is closely related to care for our common home, the earth. The allocation of federal funding reflects the moral and social dimensions of environmental stewardship, as Pope Francis reminded us in *Laudato Si'*, his 2015 encyclical on ecology. As the U.S. Senate considers the fiscal year 2021 appropriations for the federal agencies with purview over our nation's natural resources, we are reminded that the government has an "inalienable responsibility to preserve its country's environment" (*Laudato Si'*, no. 38) and urge you to uphold this principle.

Responsible care for our nation's natural resources depends upon programs of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI). FY 2020 appropriations awarded \$9.1 billion for the EPA and \$13.86 billion for the DOI. Responsible stewardship requires that in FY 2021, those appropriations levels should be maintained or, if possible, increased.

A healthy human and social environment is inseparable from a healthy, natural environment. "Whether believers or not, we are agreed today that the earth is essentially a shared inheritance, whose fruits are meant to benefit everyone" (*Laudato Si'*, no. 93). During this critical time in our country, key EPA and DOI programs that safeguard public health and further ecological protection must be supported and enforced. Robust funding for the cleanup of Superfund sites, EPA's geographic programs, and the ability of the National Park Service to respond to environmental emergencies, restore damaged landscapes, and provide opportunities for recreation, are such examples. Programs that enforce standards established by key regulations including the National Environmental Policy Act, the Clean Air Act, and the Clean Water Act, should also be supported.

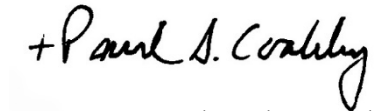
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The EPA and DOI rely on adequate funding to manage important programs that care for our nation's environment. Thank you for your leadership in protecting and preserving our common home for the good of all people.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul S. Coakley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

Most Reverend Paul S. Coakley

Archbishop of Oklahoma City

Chair, Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development