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**BEFORE THE
U.S. HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES**

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Thank you, Chairman Simpson, Ranking Member Pingree, and members of the Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the bold vision laid out in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Budget request. Before turning to FY 2024, I also want to express my appreciation for the targeted increases included in the FY 2023 enacted appropriation and all of the work that went into accomplishing this year's budget. Building off that foundation, in our FY 2024 Budget request, we lay out an ambitious plan for EPA that provides the resources needed to advance a cleaner, healthier, and more equitable Nation where all people have equal access to safe and clean water, air, and communities.

The FY 2024 President's Budget Request

The President's FY 2024 Budget for EPA provides \$12.1 billion to advance the key priorities outlined in the *FY 2022-FY 2026 EPA Strategic Plan*, including tackling the climate crisis, delivering environmental justice, protecting air quality, upgrading the Nation's aging water infrastructure, and rebuilding core functions at EPA. EPA is committed to providing robust support to our tribal, state, and local partners through grants that directly reach these communities. Nearly half of our Budget, over \$5.8 billion, is to support state, tribal and local partners to advance the critical mission we can only accomplish by working together. The Budget requests approximately \$1.2 billion to support implementation of grant programs authorized in the Drinking Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Act (DWWIA). The Budget also includes more than 1,900 additional Full Time Equivalents (FTE) across program and regional offices, bringing EPA back to 17,000 FTE, to ensure EPA has the capacity to protect human health and the environment across the Nation.

Tackling the Climate Crisis

In FY 2024 EPA will continue to prioritize climate mitigation and adaptation, which are both essential components of the strategy to reduce the impacts of climate change. EPA's budget will support federal partners, tribal governments, states, territories, local governments, environmental justice organizations, community groups, and businesses to address climate change. EPA will provide an additional \$45 million and 26 FTE for climate adaptation efforts to strengthen the adaptive capacity of tribes, states, territories, local governments, communities, and businesses. In

addition, EPA also will provide \$400 million in grants, an increase of \$151 million, to help expand the efforts of state and local air pollution control agencies to implement the Clean Air Act. We will leverage an additional \$65 million to implement the American Innovation in Manufacturing Act to continue phasing out hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs). EPA will direct an additional \$37 million to improve knowledge of the impacts of climate change on human health and the environment through our research programs.

Enforcing Environmental Laws

Enforcing and ensuring compliance of our Nation's environmental laws is central to achieving EPA's mission. EPA holds, and will continue to hold, bad actors accountable for their violations, with a particular focus on communities with multiple pollution sources. This Budget invests \$246 million for civil enforcement efforts, such as increasing enforcement efforts in communities with high pollution exposure and preventing the illegal importation and use of hydrofluorocarbons in the United States. The request also includes \$165 million for compliance monitoring and additional resources to implement a coal combustion residuals compliance program. The Budget also directs \$75 million for criminal enforcement efforts to pursue investigations of the most egregious environmental cases and to support a specialized Criminal Enforcement Initiative focused on addressing environmental justice issues in partnership with the Department of Justice (DOJ).

Ensuring Clean and Healthy Air for All Communities

Poor air quality still affects millions of people across the country, perpetuating harmful short- and long-term health and quality of life impacts. In FY 2024, EPA will improve air quality for communities by reducing emissions of ozone-forming pollutants, particulate matter, and air toxics. The President's Budget includes \$1.4 billion to improve air quality and reducing localized pollution, reducing exposure to radiation, and improving indoor air for communities across the country. The Budget dedicates \$180 million to the development and implementation of national emission standards to reduce air pollution from vehicles, engines, and fuels. EPA's work to set these standards provides certainty to industry, builds on advances in technology, and reinforces market movement towards a cleaner energy system that provides reliable and affordable energy. The Budget provides \$150 million, a \$50 million increase above the 2023 level, to expand the availability of Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) grants and rebates.

The Budget includes \$367 million to assist tribal, state, and local air pollution control agencies in the development, implementation, and evaluation of programs for the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and to establish standards for reducing air toxics. EPA will continue to build on its historic progress in protecting human health and the environment from the harmful effects of air pollution and work to assure clean air for all Americans, with a particular focus on those in underserved and overburdened communities.

Achieving Clean and Safe Water for All Communities

Clean and safe water is a foundation for healthy communities and a thriving economy, and EPA is committed to ensuring clean and safe water for all. Although immense progress has been made across our Nation, many still lack access to safe and clean water and suffer the effects of aging infrastructure and legacy lead pipes. America's water systems also are facing new challenges, including cybersecurity threats, climate change, and emerging contaminants of concern, such as PFAS.

In FY 2024, EPA will continue our work with federal, tribal, state, and nongovernmental partners to advance water quality science, provide clean and safe water for all communities, and protect our Nation's waterbodies from degradation. The Budget provides more than \$4 billion for water infrastructure, an increase of \$1 billion over the 2023 enacted level. The Budget funds all of the authorizations in the original Drinking Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Act of 2021 and maintains funding for EPA's State Revolving Funds (SRF) at the total 2023 enacted level, which complements funds provided for water infrastructure programs in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. To further the President's goal of replacing all lead pipes within the next decade, the Budget proposes \$219 million for two grants dedicated to remediating lead contamination in water—Reducing Lead in Drinking Water and Lead Testing in Schools.

Also included is \$80 million to support the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) loan program. As of February 2023, EPA has issued 100 WIFIA loans to communities across the country totaling over \$17 billion in credit assistance to help finance more than \$36 billion for water infrastructure projects. WIFIA loans for these projects have saved communities nearly \$5 billion, which can be used for additional infrastructure investment and to keep rates affordable for water system users. These WIFIA-financed projects have created over 123,000 jobs and benefited more than 50 million people, demonstrating that WIFIA credit assistance is an effective tool to help address a variety of water infrastructure needs to support communities nationwide.

In FY 2024, EPA will continue to work across environmental programs to advance agency efforts to tackle Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) pollution. As part of the President's commitment to tackling PFAS pollution and EPA's PFAS Strategic Roadmap, the FY 2024 Budget provides EPA with the resources to increase its understanding of PFAS and their human health and ecological effects; restrict PFAS use to prevent new PFAS pollution from entering the air, land, water; and remediate PFAS that have been released into the environment. The FY 2024 Budget provides \$279 million for the Section 106 Grants Program, which funds state, interstate, and tribal water pollution control programs, and is a critical funding source to establish, expand, and implement water quality programs to protect and restore water resources. More than \$60 million in additional funding is provided across the budget to accelerate progress on EPA's PFAS Strategic Roadmap, and enable EPA to move more quickly on policy, regulatory, and enforcement actions across multiple statutory authorities. EPA will continue its efforts in FY 2024 to develop analytical methods, drinking water health advisories, toxicity values, effluent limitation guidelines, as well as risk communication and other tools to support states, tribes, and localities in managing PFAS risks in their communities.

From the Great Lakes to the Chesapeake Bay, from Lake Pontchartrain to the Puget Sound, the United States is home to water bodies of ecological, cultural, and economic significance. The Budget invests \$682 million to continue strong support for EPA's Geographic Water Programs to protect and restore these water bodies of special ecological and economic importance to the Nation. EPA's Geographic Programs deliver technical and financial assistance to solve problems and support healthy resilient ecosystems and to maintain, restore, and improve water quality, which yields environmental, economic, and recreational benefits to their communities.

Safeguarding and Revitalizing Communities

Preventing and cleaning up environmental pollution that harms communities and poses a risk to public health and safety continue to be a top priority for the Administration. The FY 2024 Budget enables EPA to collaborate with Tribal, state, and local partners to improve the livelihood of all residents of the United States by addressing contaminated sites, including Superfund, brownfields, leaking underground storage tanks, and other waste sites and restoring them to productive use.

An estimated \$2.5 billion in Superfund tax receipts that will be available to EPA in FY 2024, combined with IJA funding and appropriated resources, will enable the Superfund program to continue with a renewed urgency cleaning up some of the Nation's most contaminated land and respond to environmental emergencies and natural disasters. This historic level of funding will allow EPA to advance critical Superfund pre-construction work such as site characterization, construction design, and community outreach/engagement. Additionally, this funding will allow the Superfund Emergency Response and Removal Program to effectively and efficiently address situations that require emergency response and removal actions such as chemical releases, fires or explosions, natural disasters, and other threats to people from exposure to hazardous substances, including from abandoned and uncontrolled hazardous waste sites. The Budget also includes \$217 million for EPA's Brownfields programs to provide grants and technical assistance to communities so they can safely clean up and reuse contaminated properties, as well as \$20 million for the new Alaska Contaminated Lands program. Taken together, these investments will ensure EPA is cleaning up sites and fully engaging the communities we serve in the process.

Ensuring the Safety of Chemicals for People and the Environment

Chemicals and toxic substances are ubiquitous in our everyday lives and are often released into the environment from their manufacture, processing use, or disposal. EPA has significant responsibilities under amendments to the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) to ensure the safety of chemicals in or entering commerce and addressing unreasonable risks to human health or the environment. The FY 2024 Budget includes \$131 million and 534 FTE to support the TSCA Program, an increase of \$48 million and 174 FTE over the 2023 level. EPA will continue to emphasize quality of work, adherence to statutory intent and timelines applicable to pre-market review of new chemicals, chemical risk evaluation and management, data development and information collection, and review of Confidential Business Information (CBI) claims. These resources will support EPA-initiated chemical risk evaluations, issue protective regulations in accordance with statutory timelines, and establish a pipeline of priority chemicals for risk evaluation.

The agency also has significant responsibility under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) to screen new pesticides before they reach the market and ensure pesticides already in commerce are safe. In addition, EPA is responsible for complying with the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and ensuring that federally endangered and threatened species are not harmed when the agency registers pesticides. To continue making progress toward meeting ESA mandates in FY 2024, the Budget includes an additional \$27 million in our environmental pesticides program, including an additional \$10 million to support Endangered Species Act Pesticides Review to improve EPA compliance in pesticide regulatory activities and develop improved methodologies for ESA review.

Elevating Environmental Justice

The development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies has not always ensured the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income. To help address these inequities, EPA created a new national program in September, the Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights, to lead our efforts in this area and embed environmental justice practices into EPA programs.

In FY 2024, EPA requests more than \$375 million and 265 FTE for the Environmental Justice Program to expand support for community-based organizations, indigenous organizations, tribes, states, local governments, and territorial governments to identify and develop solutions to environmental justice issues through multi-partner collaborations. This includes \$130 million in four environmental justice grant programs and \$91 million and 50 FTE to build out community-centered technical assistance hubs. The Budget provides a total of \$31 million, an \$18 million increase, to build civil rights capacity across EPA and to reduce the backlog of civil rights cases. In the long term, the vigorous enforcement of civil rights laws will address historical and systemic barriers that contribute to the environmental injustice affecting vulnerable communities. The Budget proposes additional funds and FTE to increase protection of fenceline communities with disproportionately high pollution exposure through improving inspections, compliance assistance, and monitoring capacity in those communities.

Continuing to Restore EPA's Core Capacity and Following the Science

The Budget adds more than 1,960 FTE relative to the 2023 enacted level, for a total of more than 17,000 FTE, to help rebuild EPA's capacity. The Budget also will dedicate resources to continue strengthening the agency's ability to recruit, hire, develop, promote, and retain top talent and remove barriers to equal opportunity at management and staff levels to strengthen and advance diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

Ensuring EPA has the work force it needs to carry out its mission to protect clean air and water, tackle the climate crisis, and promote environmental justice is essential. A commitment to follow the science underpins EPA's work, and this budget includes \$968 million for the Science and Technology account, an increase of more than \$165 million above current levels that will ensure programs have the best available data to inform decisions.

Conclusion

All people in this country deserve clean air, clean water, and safe land on which to live. This is the core of EPA's mission and is a worthy investment of federal resources. The FY 2024 President's Budget positions the EPA to advance our vital mission of protecting human health and the environment, championing environmental justice, and tackling the climate crisis. With these investments we lay the groundwork to ensure the benefits of a cleaner environment for future generations.

Thank you for the opportunity to be here today. I look forward to our continued partnership to achieve our goals and welcome any questions you may have.