

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 18, 2008

The Honorable Norm Dicks
Chairman
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
Room B-308 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Todd Tiahrt
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Dicks and Ranking Member Tiahrt:

As you begin work on the Fiscal Year 2009 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, we respectfully request that \$3.9 million be included for the Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Air Status and Trends Network program (CASTNET) and that \$800,000 is included for the Temporarily Integrated Monitoring of Ecosystems (TIME) and Long-Term Management (LTM) program. We greatly appreciate the Committee's efforts in securing \$3.9 million for CASTNET and \$800,000 for TIME/LTM in Fiscal Year 2008.

As you know, CASTNET is the nation's primary source for atmospheric data on dry acidic deposition, rural ground-level ozone and other forms of atmospheric pollution that enter the environment as particles and gases, such as mercury. Established in 1987 with 86 sites currently in over 40 states, CASTNET operates in conjunction with other national monitoring networks to provide information on the effectiveness of national emission control strategies. According to the EPA, CASTNET is critical to maintaining accountability of the Acid Rain Program, the Clean Air Interstate Rule (CAIR), and other programs for controlling transported air pollutants.

The Administration's proposed 2009 budget would cut CASTNET funding by \$1 million from its historical and Fiscal Year 2008 level of \$3.9 million to \$2.9 million in Fiscal Year 2009. This program is listed within the Clean Air Allowance Trading Programs and the Administration's Justification states, in part, that "A deduction in funding to the CASTNET will begin a phase down from 'upgrade' of the network systems to operations and maintenance...In addition, this change reduces a congressionally directed increase in the FY 2008 Omnibus" (p. 45). It must be noted, however, that such a decrease would severely weaken the CASTNET program while its funding level has remained the same for over a decade and thus, in real dollar terms, has already seen a decrease of \$1.2 million due to inflation.

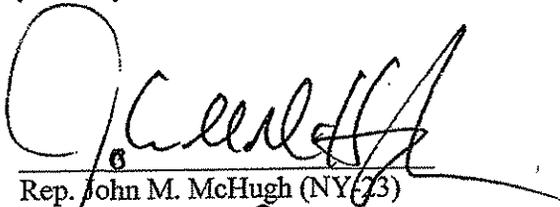
Additionally, the Administration's proposed 2009 budget would drastically cut the Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Program (EMAP). This program, found within the Research: Human Health and Ecosystems subcategory, consists of several smaller programs including TIME and LTM. Together, the TIME and LTM surface watering monitor programs cover much of the research on acidified waters. The proposed budget would completely eliminate the \$800,000 for these programs, which are essential sources of data for measuring the response of sensitive ecosystems to key components of the Clean Air Act throughout the eastern United States. Additionally, in the absence of statutory guidance, we believe that it would be most efficient if these programs are funded through the

Clean Air Allowance Trading Programs, which are administered by the Office of Air and Reduction. As you are aware, other deposition programs are monitored through this office.

Acid rain, principally caused by nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and sulfur dioxide (SO₂), destroys our forests, kills our fish, and poisons our water. Many scientific studies have identified a relationship between elevated levels of the fine particles that cause acid rain and increased illness and premature death from heart and lung disorders, such as asthma and bronchitis. The CAIR calls for significant reductions in nitrogen oxides and sulfur dioxide emissions beginning in 2009 through 2015. With these critical new regulations pending, it is imperative that the programs principally charged with monitoring this progress are not effectively or otherwise eliminated.

Accordingly, we respectfully request that you fund the Clean Air Status and Trends Network (CASTNET) program at \$3.9 million and the Temporarily Integrated Monitoring of Ecosystems (TIME) and Long-Term Monitoring (LTM) surface water monitoring programs at \$800,000. Thank you for your kind consideration of our request.

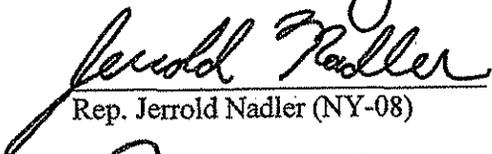
Sincerely,



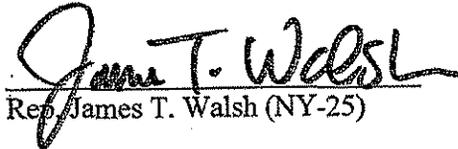
Rep. John M. McHugh (NY-23)



Rep. Charles P. Kangas (NY-15)



Rep. Jerrold Nadler (NY-08)



Rep. James T. Walsh (NY-25)



Rep. Kirsten E. Gillibrand (NY-20)



Rep. Carolyn B. Maloney (NY-14)



Rep. Carol Shea-Porter (NH-01)



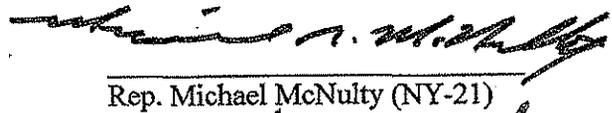
Rep. Louise M. Slaughter (NY-28)



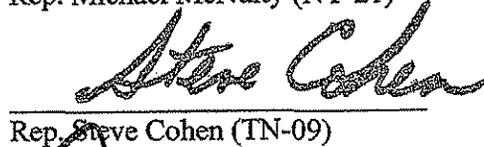
Rep. Michael A. Arcuri (NY-24)



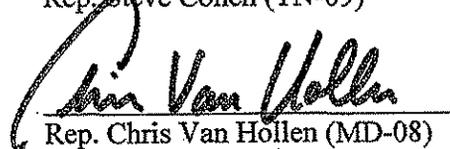
Rep. Russ Carnahan (MO-03)



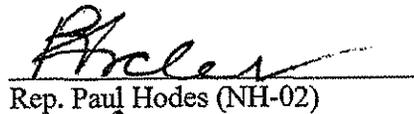
Rep. Michael McNulty (NY-21)



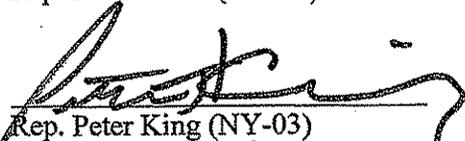
Rep. Steve Cohen (TN-09)



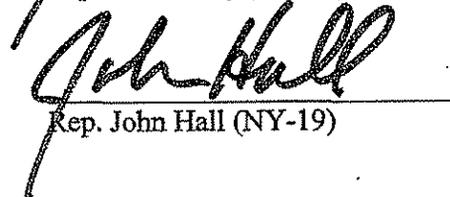
Rep. Chris Van Hollen (MD-08)



Rep. Paul Hodes (NH-02)



Rep. Peter King (NY-03)



Rep. John Hall (NY-19)

Letter signers:

1. John M. McHugh (NY-23)
2. Michael A. Arcuri (NY-24)
3. Charles B. Rangel (NY-15)
4. Russ Carnahan (MO-03)
5. Jerrold Nadler (NY-08)
6. Michael McNulty (NY-21)
7. James T. Walsh (NY-25)
8. Steve Cohen (TN-09)
9. Kirsten E. Gillibrand (NY-20)
10. Chris Van Hollen (MD-08)
11. Carolyn B. Maloney (NY-14)
12. Paul Hodes (NH-02)
13. Carol Shea-Porter (NH-01)
14. Peter King (NY-03)
15. Louise M. Slaughter (NY-28)
16. John Hall (NY-19)