November 7, 2017

Scott Pruitt, Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Pruitt,

We are writing to express our concerns about the recent announcement that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has issued a directive preventing scientists with EPA grants from serving on the agency’s scientific advisory boards. We are alarmed at the signal this sends about the EPA’s willingness to seek out objective, independent scientific expertise in fulfilling its mandate to protect the environment.

As the advising bodies tasked with evaluating the scientific and technical aspects of EPA rulemaking and research programs, the Science Advisory Board (SAB) and Board of Scientific Counselors (BOSC) should be comprised of independent, highly qualified experts on the scientific research.

It would be an arbitrary and unnecessary limitation to disqualify preeminent experts from serving on these advisory boards because they have received EPA grants to conduct the research which has made them experts. Receiving an EPA grant, which is given with no expectation of particular results, does not constitute a conflict of interest — and no such limitation has been proposed on advisory board members who receive industry funding for their work. The SAB has been well-respected because of its historical inclusion of independent, objective scientists from both academic and industry backgrounds.

We urge you to maintain the rigorous standards and technical expertise of the science advisory boards at the EPA. It is in our country’s best interest to ensure that EPA regulations have a sound scientific basis, and to ensure this we must have objective, independent, highly-qualified scientific advisors.

Sincerely,

Bill Foster
Member of Congress
Anna G. Eshoo  
Member of Congress

Elizabeth H. Esty  
Member of Congress

Dwight Evans  
Member of Congress

Brian Fitzpatrick  
Member of Congress

John Garamendi  
Member of Congress

Raúl M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress

Colleen Hanabusa  
Member of Congress

Sheila Jackson Lee  
Member of Congress

Pramila Jayapal  
Member of Congress

Marcy Kaptur  
Member of Congress

Joseph P. Kennedy, II  
Member of Congress

Ann McLane Kuster  
Member of Congress

Jim Langevin  
Member of Congress

Daniel W. Lipinski  
Member of Congress
David Price  
Member of Congress

Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress

Lucille Roybal-Allard  
Member of Congress

Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress

Albio Sires  
Member of Congress

Jackie Speier  
Member of Congress

Norma J. Torres  
Member of Congress

Mike Quigley  
Member of Congress

Jacky Rosen  
Member of Congress

Bobby L. Rush  
Member of Congress

Kyrsten Sinema  
Member of Congress

Louise M. Slaughter  
Member of Congress

Paul Tonko  
Member of Congress

Niki Tsongas  
Member of Congress
Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress

Peter Welch
Member of Congress

John Yarmuth
Member of Congress

Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress

Carol Shea-Porter
Member of Congress