

# The Trump Administration's Cancellation of Funding for Environmental Protections Endangers Americans' Health While Draining Their Wallets

By Cathleen Kelly and Jasia Smith April 2, 2025

All people—regardless of income, ZIP code, or race—have a fundamental right to breathe clean air, drink safe water, and live in healthy and safe communities. To further this goal, Congress funded environmental and public health protections through the [Inflation Reduction Act](#) (IRA) and [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act](#) (IIJA). These protections [include](#) funds to help states and cities monitor, reduce, and clean up dangerous pollution; increase access to clean and affordable energy; and upgrade home energy efficiency to save families money on their electricity bills. IRA and IIJA funds also help state and local governments expand access to clean and safe water and prepare for increasingly common extreme weather events caused by climate change.

Since taking office, the Trump administration has [canceled funding](#) for many of these [programs](#)—[despite multiple court orders](#) to reinstate them. In March, the administration [announced](#) that it had canceled [400 grants totaling \\$1.7 billion](#) aimed to improve air and water quality and prepare communities for more extreme weather events, along with [\\$20 billion in grants](#) to reduce climate and local air pollution and support affordable clean energy. [Denying](#) states, cities, and communities across the country funds to implement [projects](#) that reduce pollution and energy costs and protect them from more extreme weather puts Americans' [health](#) and [jobs](#) at risk while driving up household energy bills.

Despite the IRA's [cost-saving](#), [job creation](#), and [public health benefits](#), Republicans in Congress [voted 54 times](#) to repeal the IRA, while Project 2025 [called for](#) key aspects of this landmark clean energy and climate bill to be canceled. Repealing IRA incentives would [increase](#) household electricity costs by more than \$110 in 2026, threaten more than \$500 billion in planned economic investment, and cost roughly [790,000 jobs](#) in 2030 and more than 700,000 jobs in 2035, compared with a “business as usual” scenario with the incentives left in place.

#### See also:

[“How the Trump Administration's Agenda To Eliminate Environmental Protections and Promote the Fossil Fuel Industry Harms Public Health”](#)

President Donald Trump and his administration also plan to [slash](#) the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) budget by 65 percent, which would [make it impossible](#) for the agency to fulfill its mission of protecting public health and ensuring that Americans can breathe clean air and drink safe water. In addition, the administration announced plans to [abandon environmental protections](#) at the expense of [public health and safety](#), as [planned in Project 2025](#) and [promised by President Trump](#) to oil executives in exchange for campaign contributions. These protections include air quality standards for smog, soot, and air toxics as well as emission requirements for power plants, vehicles, coal waste, and oil refineries.

This fact sheet contains more information on how the Trump administration's cancellation of funding for IRA and IIJA environmental protections threatens public health and drives up household costs for families.

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## **Weakening air pollution monitoring would worsen air quality and the health of Americans while driving up health care costs in communities across the country**

- The IRA provided roughly [\\$230 million](#) for grants to states, local governments, Tribes, and nonprofit organizations to support air monitoring—including [\\$170.5 million](#) for air quality sensors and multipollutant [monitoring](#), and [\\$37.5 million](#) for monitoring air quality at [schools](#).
- Studies consistently show that [soot and ozone pollution](#) from power plants, cars, and trucks that burn fossil fuels and other sources threatens public health, causing lung and heart disease, asthma and asthma attacks, lung cancer, heart attacks and strokes, and other life-threatening conditions.
- [Air quality monitoring ensures](#) that communities have essential information on air quality and the health dangers they face from air pollution. Air monitoring helps [set](#) and [support compliance](#) with pollution limits, avoiding up to [370,000 premature deaths](#) annually.
- Air monitors [provide real-time data](#) on [air quality](#), which allows communities to take action when air quality becomes dangerous for people, including children. Poor air quality is estimated to be responsible for more than [100,000 premature deaths](#) in the United States each year.
- Air pollution from burning fossil fuels costs each American an average of [\\$2,500 per year](#) in health care expenses, totaling [\\$820 billion per year](#) nationwide.

- By canceling funds for air pollution monitors, the Trump administration would [make it easier](#) for polluters to dump deadly amounts of pollution in communities without getting caught, all at the expense of the American people's health. Withholding these funds also makes it harder for communities to hold polluters accountable for illegal and unsafe amounts of pollution.

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## **Canceling Environmental and Climate Justice grants would rob communities of resources they are counting on to reduce pollution, prepare for more extreme weather, and save money on electricity bills**

- Congress appropriated [\\$3 billion](#) through the IRA for Environmental and Climate Justice Program [grants](#) to help working-class communities on the front lines of dangerous pollution and climate change improve air quality and prepare for more dangerous heat, flooding, and other extreme weather risks. This program supports [Community Change Grants](#) to reduce pollution and protect communities from more extreme weather, the [Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Grantmaking Program](#) to help communities [navigate the federal grants application process](#) to access needed funds, and [other programs](#).
- These funds [support efforts](#) to remove lead—a [neurotoxin](#) considered unsafe at any level—from drinking water in homes and schools, increase tree canopy in cities to cool neighborhoods, develop solar-powered microgrids to improve energy reliability, and improve monitoring of local water and air quality.
- These funds also support projects that help families upgrade their home energy efficiency to save money on their energy bills, among other projects that improve lives and livelihoods in low-income and working-class communities
- On March 10, the administration [announced](#) that it had canceled [400 grants totaling \\$1.7 billion](#) designed to reduce air and water pollution and protect communities from more extreme weather events. On March 25, Senate Democrats [sent a letter](#) to EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin demanding that he reverse these cancellations. The letter stated: “These terminations—which violate a number of court orders—escalate your attempts to impound Congressionally-appropriated, legally-obligated funds protecting clean air and clean water and powering domestic investment in low-cost clean energy.”
- Canceling Environmental and Climate Justice grants for cities and local groups [threatens public health and safety](#) by denying families the opportunity to reduce exposure to lead and other dangerous pollutants that contaminate drinking water and make air unhealthy to breathe. Cutting off these funds would also halt efforts to prepare for more intense and dangerous extreme weather, all while denying families support to make cost-saving home energy efficiency improvements.

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## Eliminating the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund would deprive working-class and low-income households of affordable, pollution-free energy

- Through the Inflation Reduction Act, Congress directed the EPA to create the [Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund](#), investing \$27 billion in clean renewable energy and climate resilience projects that reduce planet-warming pollution, improve local air quality, and lower energy costs for families.
- The fund [mobilizes private capital](#) to support thousands of clean energy projects and energy efficiency upgrades, [create jobs](#), and [deliver affordable energy](#) to communities in every corner of the country. These investments also reduce pollution and improve public health and economic opportunities in working-class communities on the front lines of dangerous pollution and climate change threats.
- A U.S. federal judge has [temporarily blocked](#) the administration's effort to cancel Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund grants, [noting](#) that the EPA failed to offer a "legal justification" for ending them. In addition, four states—Minnesota, California, Illinois, and Maine—are [suing the administration](#) "for illegally blocking congressionally approved funds from flowing to state projects to reduce greenhouse gases." The states' lawsuit also sues Citibank, which is holding \$20 billion of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund's resources on behalf of the federal government "to ensure funds are released as required by law."
- Canceling these funds would deny more than [900,000 working-class and low-income households](#) access to affordable solar energy, which can help families save money on their electricity bills and keep their power on during dangerous heat waves.
- Eliminating these funds would also prevent low-income rural communities, such as those supported by [Green Bank for Appalachia](#), from improving access to clean energy, lowering energy costs, and reducing climate and local pollution.

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## Blocking funding for the Clean Ports Program would prevent U.S. trade hubs from reducing dangerous pollution, cancer risk, and early deaths

- The IRA included [\\$3 billion](#) to fund projects that reduce dangerous air pollution at ports to protect public health in nearby communities.

- Diesel engines that operate at ports [emit](#) particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>), commonly known as soot; nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>); ozone; and air toxics, which can create significant health problems—including premature deaths, increased cancer risk and hospital admissions for heart and lung disease, and more frequent respiratory problems. Ports also create climate pollution, which contributes to climate change and higher public health and safety risks from [more frequent and intense](#) extreme weather.
- For example, the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach—the largest and [busiest port complex](#) in the country—together control [40 percent](#) of all containers that come into the United States, producing [100 tons of smog each day](#). Roughly [3,700 premature deaths per year](#) in California are attributable to ports and goods movement operations across the state, with roughly 120 deaths per year tied to particulate matter pollution from the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach.
- By blocking funding for the Clean Ports Program, the Trump administration would stall or halt efforts by port authorities to cut air pollution from diesel-powered engines, denying nearby communities the chance to reduce premature deaths, cancer risks, and other health conditions related to diesel pollution.

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## **Canceling grants for clean heavy-duty vehicles would allow harmful pollution to accumulate in communities near transportation corridors**

- Through the IRA, Congress directed the EPA to provide [\\$1 billion](#) in grants to states, cities, Tribes, and schools to [replace](#) dirty heavy-duty vehicles with zero-emissions vehicles and infrastructure to reduce harmful pollution and protect public health.
- In the United States, diesel-burning heavy-duty vehicles account for [20 percent of NO<sub>x</sub> and 25 percent of PM<sub>2.5</sub>](#) from vehicles, significantly contributing to asthma and heart attacks while containing more than [40 known cancer causing substances](#).
- Withholding funds for the Clean Heavy-Duty Vehicles Program would prevent the replacement of dirty diesel-burning vehicles and cancel opportunities to improve air quality and public health in communities located near highways, truck hubs, and other goods movement facilities or where air quality [does not meet national standards](#).

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## Undoing programs and protections for clean and safe water could expose hundreds of millions of Americans to dangerous chemicals and toxic pollution

- To make long-overdue progress on reducing water pollution and ensuring safe and clean drinking water and water resources for all Americans, the IIJA invested [\\$55 billion](#) in upgrading the nation's water infrastructure. This included \$23.4 billion to modernize community water infrastructure through the [Clean Water State Revolving Fund](#) (CWSRF), \$15 billion to [replace lead service lines](#), and \$10 billion to [treat water polluted by dangerous forever chemicals](#) and other contaminants disproportionately found in communities of color.
- The IIJA also invested [\\$3.5 billion](#) in critical water infrastructure in Tribal communities and additional funds to upgrade [water infrastructure](#) in rural areas. These investments have improved public health, created [good-paying union jobs](#), and protected the right of all people to drink safe water and have access to clean water resources.
- Lead in drinking water can cause [long-term harm](#) to Americans' brains and nervous systems, slow growth and development among children, and behavioral problems.
- Every single U.S. state has at least [2,800 active lead lines](#) that deliver water to a total of [22 million people](#)—disproportionately people of color and low-income Americans.
- PFAS, or “forever chemicals,” are [harmful substances](#) that can also be found in drinking water or in soil, food and food packaging, and household products, among other sources. More than [200 million Americans](#) could have PFAS in their drinking water, and certain levels of exposure can cause [reproductive effects](#), developmental delays, increased risk of certain cancers, and reduced immunity response.
- On January 21, 2025, the White House Office of Management and Budget [issued a memo](#) calling on agencies to freeze IIJA and IRA funding, [including funds](#) for drinking water and clean water state revolving loan funds. Although this memo was [rescinded](#) on January 29, funds for many programs funded by the IRA and IIJA [remain frozen](#). While the freeze on most water funding for states has been lifted, these programs would likely be affected by President Trump's plan to cut EPA funding by [65 percent](#). Canceling these funds would [threaten public health](#) and deny Americans their fundamental freedom to drink safe water and access clean water resources.
- The Trump administration also [reversed](#) the new federal standard for PFAS, which could lead to an estimated [9,600 preventable deaths](#) and nearly [30,000 avoidable illnesses](#), totaling nearly [\\$1.5 billion in additional health costs](#) per year.

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## Canceling funds for clean school buses would expose American children to emissions that damage their health

- Through the IIJA, Congress directed the EPA to provide \$5 billion in grants and rebates to replace diesel school buses with electric and [clean school buses](#) to cut pollution, create healthy schools, improve public health, and create [good-paying jobs](#).
- Blocking these funds would deny communities and schools the resources they are counting on to reduce harmful pollution from buses, protect kids' health, and improve air quality.
- Preventing students from using cleaner school buses [increases their vulnerability](#) to pollutants from diesel exhaust as well as their risk for [cancer](#), asthma, and heart disease.
- Gutting funds for electric school buses increases greenhouse gas emissions and harmful tailpipe [pollution](#) such as particulate matter, or soot, which can cause [heart and respiratory illnesses](#).

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## Blocking funding for home energy rebates would increase energy costs for low-income households and threaten Americans' safety during extreme heat

- The Inflation Reduction Act invested nearly [\\$9 billion](#) in home energy rebates for consumers to upgrade to electric home appliances and make other home energy efficiency improvements. These grants to states help working-class and low-income households save money on electricity bills. The U.S. Department of Energy [estimates](#) that they save households up to \$1 billion annually.
- Extreme heat causes [more death and injury](#) in the United States than any other weather event, costing [\\$1 billion](#) in health care costs every summer. [Nearly two-thirds](#) of the U.S. population live in counties vulnerable to health threats from unexpectedly high summer temperatures. Slashing funding for energy efficiency increases these dangers and costs.
- The rebate program can help reduce heavy energy burdens for American households, [33 million](#) of which experience energy insecurity—meaning they struggle to pay their energy bills to meet their basic needs. Meanwhile, an additional [4.9 million](#) households lack heating, and [6.3 million](#) lack air conditioning.

- Freezing these funds would [deny](#) families needed support to cut their energy costs and improve the energy efficiency, indoor air quality, and health and safety of their homes, including during dangerous heat waves and cold snaps.
- Cutting energy rebate funding would reinforce inequities in extreme heat exposure and energy security, as working-class and low-income communities have less access to air conditioning and environmental amenities. Historically redlined neighborhoods can be as much as [12 degrees Fahrenheit hotter](#) during a heatwave than nearby wealthier neighborhoods.

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## Conclusion

By [canceling funding](#) that states, cities, and communities across the country are counting on to [implement projects](#) that reduce pollution and energy costs and that protect families from more extreme weather, the Trump administration is [putting Americans' health at risk](#) while driving up household health care and electricity bills. The administration must allow this critical funding to reach communities—as Congress directed the federal government to do through the IRA and IIJA—to help protect the fundamental freedom of all Americans to breathe clean air, drink clean water, and live in healthy and safe communities.

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*If reading this fact sheet in print, you can find source links in the online version at <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/the-trump-administrations-cancellation-of-funding-for-environmental-protections-endangers-americans-health-while-draining-their-wallets/>.*