

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3903

March 25, 2015

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
S-128, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee
S-146A, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment and
Related Agencies
SD-131
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tom Udall
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment and
Related Agencies
SH-125
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Cochran, Ranking Member Mikulski, Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Udall:

We write today concerning the pending appropriation in fiscal year 2016 for the Environmental Protection Agency's Diesel Emissions Reduction Act Program ("DERA"). We believe that DERA provides us with a win-win in environmental and economic benefits and hope that you will fund the program at \$40 million. This represents a \$10 million increase comparable to last fiscal year, but is well below the program's authorization levels.

As you know, our nation relies heavily on diesel power to transport commuters, harvest our crops, and build our infrastructure. Compared with traditional gasoline engines, diesel engines usually are more fuel efficient and have a longer life span, but without the available technology, older diesel engines also produce more air emissions. New and retrofitted diesel engines are much cleaner than older, non-retrofitted diesel engines – over 90% cleaner. Unfortunately, there remain millions of older diesel engines that lack the latest pollution control technology and will remain in use for decades to come. Retrofitting older diesel engines with American-made technology can dramatically reduce diesel emissions, protecting our health and creating jobs here at home.

Enacted through the Energy Policy Act of 2005, DERA uses federal funding to leverage state and other non-federal funding sources to finance the voluntary installation of retrofits on existing heavy-duty diesel vehicles and engines, dramatically reducing harmful emissions. DERA has enjoyed overwhelming bi-partisan support since its enactment almost nine years ago. In 2005, DERA passed the Senate by a vote of 92 to 1. In 2010, the DERA reauthorization bill, which passed unanimously in the Senate and by voice vote in the House, authorized \$100 million each year through 2016. Since implementation, DERA has become one of the most cost-effective

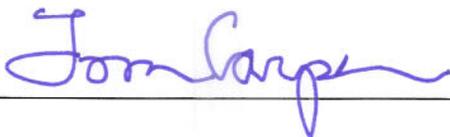
clean air federal programs. DERA effectively cleans our air, protects human health, and creates jobs using American technology. It is a true win-win-win.

The EPA continues to be overwhelmed with DERA applications with significant matching contributions to help leverage additional diesel retrofits. Despite all the success, the funding for DERA has dwindled over the past five years. Funding levels have gotten so low, some states are reconsidering participating in the program. The President's budget for fiscal year 2016 goes in the wrong direction – reducing DERA funding levels further from fiscal year 2014 levels of \$30 million to \$10million.

Although we appreciate dedication to reducing the federal deficit, we do not believe it makes sense to eliminate successful, bipartisan programs, like DERA that help drive our economy and protect our environment. We are also fearful that current funding levels are too low – possibly preventing many states from taking advantage of the program. This is why we are asking you to provide \$40 million in funding for DERA in fiscal year 2016. This level of funding would still not meet the great need, but would provide a modicum of funding for the remaining work that needs to be done. At a time when our country continue to look for ways to create good manufacturing jobs and clean the environment, DERA stands out as a prime example of a program that works on many levels.

Thank you very much for considering our request. If you have any questions, we would invite your staff to contact Laura Haynes in Senator Carper's office, laura_haynes@carper.senate.gov, 224-3168, or Luke Holland in Senator Inhofe's office: luke_holland@inchofe.senate.gov, 202-224-1036.

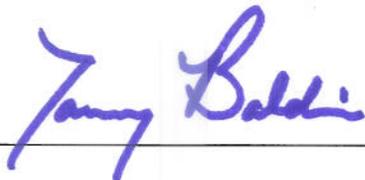
Sincerely,













Jeanne Shaker

C. M. King

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~~Jeffrey A. M. King~~

J. A. B.

Bob Sanders

Chris Coons

Ben Cardin