

April 20, 2023

The Honorable Patty Murray, Chair
Senate Committee on Appropriations
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins, Vice-Chair
Senate Committee on Appropriations
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeff Merkley, Chair
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and
Related Agencies
531 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and
Related Agencies
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairs Murray and Merkley, Vice-Chair Collins and Ranking Member Murkowski:

On behalf of the Business Council for Sustainable Energy (BCSE), I am writing to request robust funding in the Fiscal Year 2024 Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill for offices and programs impacting clean energy at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Interior (DOI).

Environmental Protection Agency Clean Energy Programs

As a business group working to advance clean energy policies, BCSE has seen firsthand the importance of the federal role EPA fills in sharing information about new technologies and practices which help speed the adoption of clean energy and allow consumers to make more informed decisions about energy usage. EPA initiatives help businesses manage environmental issues, foster transparency and best practices in emissions and water management, and develop leadership in environmental stewardship and sustainability. EPA also provides transparent, standardized, and independent data and expertise that cannot be replicated with the same credibility by private sector or non-governmental organizations.

BCSE requests funding for Environmental Agency programs including the **CHP Partnership, Green Power Partnership, ENERGY STAR, Natural Gas Star, AgStar, Methane Challenge, Center for Corporate Climate Leadership, SmartWay Transport Partnership**, and others, which embody longstanding public-private endeavors that benefit American businesses and help them continue to compete on a global scale. These EPA initiatives provide market transparency, encourage voluntary action, and identify companies that are leaders in businesses and in environmental protection. Additionally, EPA's laboratories lead the world in capabilities that make the United States preeminent in research and analysis, supporting private sector capabilities to enhance economic growth and emissions reductions simultaneously.

The ENERGY STAR program serves many market sectors and is the foundation for energy efficiency programs across the country, from tax incentives and utility incentive programs to local building performance standards. While it is best known for the blue label on consumer products, the ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager program is also critical for tracking and improving the energy



performance of our nation's building stock, which accounts for at least one-third of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions. ENERGY STAR programs for new homes and manufacturing facilities are also growing in popularity and delivering increased impact. BCSE requests an increase in funding for ENERGY STAR in FY 2024 to reverse a trend of declining resources that threatens to erode the enormous impact that the program has had since it was launched three decades ago.

The Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS), which is implemented by the **Office of Transportation and Air Quality**, has enabled the biomass and biogas industry to help meet lower carbon energy needs. EPA has finally proposed the framework to enable electricity from biogas to qualify for renewable identification number (RIN) generation when biogas electricity is used to power electric vehicles. This is a great first step, but the program must be expanded to allow all RFS-qualifying feedstocks to participate in the electricity program. BCSE encourages funding for EPA for the processing of pathways and applications to enable biomass and waste-to-energy projects to participate in the program at the earliest possible opportunity. Electricity derived from renewable biomass and solid forms of biomass is currently being used as a transportation fuel and should be credited accordingly under the RFS program. Congress should appropriate \$1 million in funding for EPA to take final action within 90 days on any registration application or pathway petition to participate in the Renewable Fuels Pathway II Rule.

EPA's **State and Local Climate and Energy Program** offers expertise about energy efficiency, renewable energy, and climate change policies and programs to interested state, local, and tribal governments. By providing these resources, EPA removes barriers that would otherwise prohibit action at the local level due to resource constraints or lack of information on best practices. Through its programs on renewable energy, renewable natural gas (RNG), natural gas, combined heat and power, and energy efficiency, EPA encourages the use of clean, efficient, and market-ready technologies that can lower costs and improve resilience in addition to lowering emissions.

EPA is also engaged in a variety of international activities to advance climate change science, monitor our environment, and promote activities that reduce greenhouse gas emissions. EPA establishes partnerships, provides leadership, and shares technical expertise to support these activities.

Department of Interior Clean Energy Programs

The Department of Interior has a critical role in renewable energy production on public lands and waters. BCSE requests funding to facilitate this transition to clean energy.

The **Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's (BOEM) Office of Renewable Energy Programs (OREP) and Environmental Studies Program (ESP)** play crucial roles in the development of offshore wind energy. Providing additional resources to these offices will help the processing of permits for an unprecedented number of offshore wind projects while allowing the Department to conduct additional lease sales and identify new lease areas on the Outer Continental Shelf. A doubling of funding is needed for the **Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE)** to ensure safety while deploying offshore wind projects. BCSE also supports funding for the **Bureau of Land Management** renewable energy program and for an increase in funding for planning and



consultation services and staff at the **Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)** needed for Endangered Species Act evaluations.

BCSE welcomes the opportunity to share information from the 2023 edition of the [Sustainable Energy in America Factbook¹](#) which shows that the clean energy transition is now hard-wired into our economy. We encourage you to build upon this momentum and success with sustained support for clean energy programs in FY2024.

BCSE looks forward to working with you throughout the FY2024 budget cycle. Please feel free to reach out to Ruth McCormick at rmccormick@bcse.org with any questions or to arrange a time to meet.

Sincerely,

Lisa Jacobson
President
Business Council for Sustainable Energy

About the BCSE

BCSE is a coalition of companies and trade associations from the energy efficiency, energy storage, natural gas, renewable energy, sustainable transportation, and emerging decarbonization technology sectors. It includes independent electric power producers, investor-owned utilities, public utilities, equipment manufacturers, commercial end users, and service providers in energy and environmental markets. Founded in 1992, the coalition's diverse business membership is united around the revitalization of the U.S. economy and the creation of a clean, secure and reliable energy future in America.

BCSE is pleased to have an independent small- and medium-size businesses initiative under its banner: the Clean Energy Business Network (CEBN). Together, BCSE and CEBN represent a broad range of the clean energy economy, from Fortune 100 companies to small businesses working in all 50 states and over 350 Congressional districts. On a national basis, these industries support over 3 million U.S. jobs.

¹¹ [Sustainable Energy in America 2023 Factbook](#), Business Council for Sustainable Energy and BloombergNEF, March 2023.