

April 18, 2024

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

The Honorable Susan Collins, Ranking Member
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 and Ranking Members Collins and Murkowski:

On behalf of the Business Council for Sustainable Energy (BCSE), I am writing to request funding in FY2025 for offices and programs impacting clean energy at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Interior (DOI) in the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill. As a diverse coalition, not all BCSE members endorse or take a position on the set of recommended requests.

BCSE welcomes the opportunity to share information from the 2024 edition of the [Sustainable Energy in America Factbook¹](#), published by BCSE and BloombergNEF, which shows the growth of renewable energy and natural gas in electricity generation, along with a decline in U.S. energy consumption due to energy efficiency investments. A document with top facts from the 2024 edition of the *Sustainable Energy in America Factbook* can be found [here](#). We encourage you to build upon this momentum and success with sustained support for clean energy programs at the U.S. Department of Interior and the Environmental Protection Agency in FY2025.

U.S. 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 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) fills in sharing information about new technologies and practices that 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. The EPA 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 EPA programs including the **CHP Partnership, Green Power Partnership, ENERGY STAR, Natural Gas Star, AgStar, Methane Challenge, Center for Corporate Climate**

¹ <https://bcse.org/market-trends/>



Leadership, SmartWay Transport Partnership, and more, 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, the 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 and our members support funding for the ENERGY STAR program that maintains a fuel neutral approach to energy efficiency. The EPA's recent proposal to eliminate certain natural gas products from the ENERGY STAR program is worrisome. This goes against the fundamental principles of the program and threatens the effectiveness of the fuel neutral energy efficiency home rebate program (HOMES rebates). The EPA should reiterate the importance of efficient natural gas products in the ENERGY STAR program and enable it to function as it was intended, in a fuel neutral manner.

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. The 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 the 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 the EPA to take final action within 90 days on any registration application or pathway petition to participate in the Renewable Fuels Pathway II Rule.

The 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, the EPA encourages the use of clean, efficient, and market-ready technologies that can lower costs and improve resilience in addition to lowering emissions.

The 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. The EPA



establishes partnerships, provides leadership, and shares technical expertise to support these activities.

U.S. Department of Interior Clean Energy Programs

The U.S. 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 Program (OREP)** plays a crucial role in the development of offshore wind energy. Providing additional resources will help the processing of permits for offshore wind projects while allowing the Department to conduct additional lease sales and identify new lease areas on the Outer Continental Shelf. 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 management program, funding for planning and consultation services and staff at the **Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)**, funding for the **National Park Service** Historic Preservation Fund, and funding for the **U.S. Geological Survey** program to support supply chain research for emerging technologies.

Conclusion

BCSE looks forward to working with you throughout the FY2025 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.

The Clean Energy Business Network (CEBN), comprising independent small and medium-sized businesses, is an independent affiliate of BCSE. Together, BCSE and CEBN encompass a broad range of the clean energy economy, from Fortune 100 companies to small businesses working in all 50 states and more than 400 Congressional districts. On a national basis, these industries support more than 3 million U.S. jobs.

CC: Members of Senate Appropriations Committee