



NEWS RELEASE

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Indiana at Risk: New Environmental Defense Fund Report “*State of Risk*” Reveals Adverse Impact on Indiana Communities and Public Health from Threatened EPA Cuts

Congress to Decide Fate of Critical Environmental Operations in Next 30 Days

(August 31, 2017) [State of Risk: Indiana](#), a new report from the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), catalogues far-reaching and grave threats to air, water and land and to the people and economy of Indiana if President Trump’s proposed 30 percent cut to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) budget is enacted this fall. Such cuts would move the agency funding radically backward to its lowest level since the mid-1970s.

The report provides an extensive overview of the EPA’s footprint in Indiana and examines how the proposed cutback plans threaten public health as well as commerce and tourism in the Hoosier State. States and local communities would face a terrible choice: stick taxpayers with the bill, drop other projects or watch their communities slide backward and become more polluted and less healthy.

The EPA has provided more than \$380 million in grants alone to Indiana over five years, notes the report.

“President Trump’s plan endangers public health efforts to make the air and water clean and to clean up tracts of land in Indiana that are polluted and undevelopable,” said Elgie Holstein, EDF’s Senior Director of Strategic Planning.

“The president seeks to roll back common-sense environmental safeguards that have protected the health and well-being of Indiana for decades,” Holstein added, “This is not just an assault on an agency. It is an assault on public health and safety.”

Documenting specific local and statewide consequences of the proposed EPA cuts, the report finds that hollowing out the EPA would be disastrous for Indiana. The Trump Administration and some in Congress are working to push the cuts through in the next 30 days, before the federal fiscal year ends.

“Washington is so broken right now that the Trump road map could be enacted in a blink of an eye in a backroom deal when Congress returns in September,” said Holstein.

The report provides a snapshot of the environmental needs and programs which a fully funded EPA can continue to remedy and support:

- **Drinking water is at risk in Indiana.** About two-thirds of Indiana’s population depends on groundwater for drinking and household uses. But proposed Trump Administration budgets cuts

would decimate funding for programs that protect rivers, lakes, streams and groundwater across the state.

- **Lake Michigan is at risk.** The state's shoreline supports a shipping industry that contributes \$14 billion annually in economic activity and more than 100,000 jobs and a recreational boating industry that contributes more than \$2 billion annually to Indiana's economy. Yet the Trump Administration's proposed budget would eliminate funding to support the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, which prevents and cleans up pollution in Lake Michigan.
- **Land is at risk in Indiana.** Indiana has 39 sites on EPA's Superfund list of the most toxic sites in the nation, as well as 220 brownfield sites with potential to be restored into viable job-building commercial land. The Trump budget would cut brownfield and Superfund funding by 30 percent. Indiana also has a backlog of more than 1,500 underground storage tanks at risk of leaking harmful chemicals into both soil and water; the administration plan eliminates one of two EPA programs to prevent and detect leaks and clean ground and groundwater – and cuts in half the second program.

A U.S. House of Representatives committee's alternate budget would, if passed, partly restore some EPA programs but still leave many major programs unfunded, provide for significant staff cuts and leave other parts of the president's plan to demolish EPA unchanged.

Holstein, who formerly oversaw environment and science budgets for the U.S. Office of Management and Budget, said Indiana's Congressional delegation will find in the new report hundreds of ways in which EPA has been helping the state manage risk.

"Congress can and must stop the madness of these proposed cuts," Holstein said. "Anything less than full EPA funding for 2018 would hobble the environmental protections on which Hoosiers and others across the United States rely as the foundation for building a better life."

"As the *State of Risk* report outlines, EPA grants and EPA experts have helped create a healthier environment in Indiana for decades, under Republican and Democratic administrations alike," said Mary Gade, who was appointed EPA Region 5 administrator by President George W. Bush. "Slashing EPA funding is wrong and dangerous. Indianans deserve better than an Administration and Congress telling them 'it's all your problem now.'"

State of Risk: Indiana is one in a series of Environmental Defense Fund reports cataloguing the impact of president Trump's proposed cuts to EPA funding. The reports are available at www.EDF.org/EPAcuts.

Indiana and EDF experts are available to provide further context and comment about the EPA budget; please contact Keith Gaby, kgaby@edf.org (202) 572-3336

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