



House Passes Massive Cuts In EPA Budget In Response To Senate Holding The Line

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Over [strong opposition and a veto threat](#) from the White House, on Nov. 3 the U.S. House of Representatives approved a 2024 appropriations package for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that would reduce 2023 funding by nearly 40 percent, from just over \$10 billion to \$6.17 billion. This package would return EPA funding to levels last seen in 1991. Republican amendments that would have reduced the appropriation even further (another 16 percent) and cut agency officials' salaries drastically (in some cases to \$1) were fended off.

The [House measure](#) also includes rescission of more than \$9.4 billion of the funding provided by the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), including \$7.8 billion in funding for the [Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund](#). According to the White House's statement, this "would eliminate funds designed to mobilize private capital into pollution-reducing clean energy technology projects, especially in low-income and disadvantaged communities, that would strengthen local economies, create good-paying jobs, reduce harmful pollution, and protect people's health while tackling the climate crisis."

The bill would also rescind \$1.4 billion from the IRA's [Environmental and Climate Justice Program](#) that provides funding for financial and technical assistance to reduce pollution and carry out environmental and climate justice activities in low-income, underserved, overburdened and disadvantaged communities.

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In addition, the legislation would repeal the administration's waters of the United States (WOTUS) regulation, and the administration's Phase 1 and 2 rules for the National Environmental Policy Act. It rescinds or prohibits funding for a number of EPA rules on greenhouse gas emissions from power plants and light, medium, and heavy-duty vehicles. It also prohibits agencies from using the social cost of carbon in cost-benefit analyses.

This House bill is the polar opposite of the Senate's EPA funding proposal for 2024. In July 2023, the Senate Appropriations Committee unanimously [approved a bill](#) that provides nearly \$10 billion for the EPA, consistent with 2023 funding. The Senate bill maintains all of the EPA's core funding and increases funding for clean air and climate programs, both of which were cut substantially in the House bill.

The Senate bill also maintains EPA administrative and technical support for IRA programs the House bill defunds, including programs to reduce pollution, mitigate climate change, facilitate energy efficiency, and to transition to net-zero and advance environmental justice.

The gloves are off. This sharp partisan divide on spending by the EPA, and on just that one agency's policies and priorities, does not bode well for the prospect of agreement on an overall budget or even a continuing resolution by the looming Nov. 17 deadline to avoid a government shutdown.