

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 14, 2017

The Honorable Scott Pruitt
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Pruitt:

We are writing in response to an extremely troubling report in late October about the suppression of climate science and information on the Environmental Protection Agency website.

As reported by the Environmental Data and Governance Initiative, as part of this website overhaul, the EPA's "Climate and Energy Resources for State, Local and Tribal Governments" website [archived link] was removed and replaced with a website entitled "Energy Resources for State, Local, and Tribal Governments" in late July 2017.¹ With this update, the EPA eliminated over 200 web pages, scrubbed references to climate change, and eliminated critical resources for state, local, and tribal governments, including information about risks posed by climate change and examples of state plans to adapt to changing weather conditions.

These latest website alterations are part of a sequence of disturbing EPA actions that appear designed to censor dialogue about climate change in the United States. On the heels of this damaging website update came the news that the EPA had canceled engagements for three agency scientists slated to speak about climate change at a Rhode Island conference in October. Then came your decision to make wholesale changes to the EPA's key advisory group, removing academic scientists and replacing them with industry insiders who have minimized the risk of greenhouse gases and climate change.

These EPA actions will directly threaten American lives and property. The information contained on the original Climate and Energy Resources website was provided to help state, local, and tribal governments protect communities from extreme weather events and sea level rise driven by climate change. The decision to eliminate these federal resources puts lives at risk and will translate into increased future costs for the states, municipalities, and tribes that rely on these resources to respond to changing environmental conditions.

In particular, the Americans who will be most impacted by this climate censorship are those already experiencing the greatest burden of climate change: communities of color, indigenous


¹ *Environmental Data and Governance Initiative*. "EPA's Website Overhaul Continues: Climate Resources Left Out of the Update to the 'Climate and Energy Resources for State, Local, and Tribal Governments' Website." October 20, 2017. <https://envirodatagov.org/epas-website-overhaul-continues/>.

communities and low-income communities who lack the resources and the access to decision-makers to protect themselves from climate impacts.

We ask that you immediately reinstate the Climate and Energy Resources website as it existed prior to the EPA's 2017 revisions. We also ask that, no later than December 15, 2017, you provide us with a detailed written description of the modifications made to this website, along with an explanation of why each revision was made.

Thank you for your attention to this extremely critical issue, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Tom Carper
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Brian Schatz
United States Senator