

# EPA Alumni Association

## *We're Not Done Yet!*



May 19, 2025

### **An Open Letter to EPA Administrator Zeldin and Members of Congress**

Last month, Administrator Lee Zeldin of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released a list of 100 accomplishments achieved during the first 100 days of the new Administration. The implication of this announcement was that EPA both could and would continue to fully carry out its mission of protecting human health and the environment under Mr. Zeldin's leadership. But the problem with this pronouncement is that the 100 accomplishments were achieved by an EPA operating with full funding, full staffing, and a full complement of regulations over the past several years. What really happened is that the efforts of Administrator Zeldin's predecessors happened to bear fruit during this 100-day period. They were important results, but they could not have happened without all the work that came before.

Administrator Zeldin has already caused or will soon cause the loss of thousands of EPA staff. He also intends to reduce EPA's budget by over 50%. These reductions would put EPA back to its resources in 1980, before the implementation of critical new or expanded programs such as Superfund, key controls on hazardous waste, and important programs under the Clean Air Act and the Toxic Substances Control Act. In addition to all of this, he intends to revoke many of EPA's regulations. The notion that EPA can continue to adequately protect human health and the environment under such conditions is, frankly, not believable.

EPA must understand the impacts of thousands of chemicals on human health and the environment, and this takes years of effort. It also takes a high level of training and expertise, and the use of expensive equipment, to detect these chemicals in the environment and to predict their likely migration. Chemicals often act differently from each other and act differently depending upon whether they are found in the air, water, or soil. Pollution is frequently found underground or diffused in the air and is thus not easily characterized. Understanding how various industries reduce pollution, and how to assure the continued efficacy of these reductions are all resource intensive endeavors.

Doing EPA's mission "on the cheap" means, in practical terms, more pollution and thus more harm. You get what you pay for. Cutting corners can also make existing problems worse. The 100 days announcement made by Administrator Zeldin actually proves the reverse of what he claims. To keep these accomplishments coming, EPA must be made whole in staffing, funding, and regulations.

*The Board of Directors of the EPA Alumni Association*