



June 16, 2017

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Frelinghuysen and Ranking Member Lowey:

As the House Appropriations Committee process moves forward, the undersigned organizations strongly oppose the President's FY 2018 budget request of \$47 million for the Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) Trust Fund program because the funding amount is inadequate. On behalf of our members and hundreds of thousands of employees across the country, we urge you to reject this funding approach and continue to adequately fund the LUST program at previous fiscal year levels of approximately \$92 million.

The Federal Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) program was established in 1986 to prevent, detect, and clean up releases from federally-regulated underground storage tanks (USTs). The LUST Trust Fund is financed by a 1/10th cent-per-gallon fee which collects approximately \$200 million each year. Our organizations' member companies have supported the LUST Fund and have paid over \$3 billion in LUST fees since its inception. EPA provides almost 90 percent of its LUST money directly to states, territories, and tribes to implement UST cleanup and prevention programs.

Unfortunately, the President's proposed FY 2018 budget calls for cutting the Leaking Underground Storage Tank Trust Fund Program in half and returning the responsibility for LUST prevention programs back to state and local governments.

For state UST program authorities, this would mean:

- **States would not receive leaking UST prevention funding** - No funding to offer technical assistance to tank owners, or to do compliance checks and inspections.
- **Significant reduction in cleanup funding** - Significant reduction of funds for leaking UST sites to states. Elimination of EPA staff who oversee cleanup projects. Elimination of oversight and audits of state tank funds.
- **Elimination of Technical Support for States** – Elimination of EPA research projects including accelerated diesel fuel corrosion studies. Elimination of training for state program inspectors, compliance officers and technical and engineering support for state program authorities. Elimination of national conferences for state programs.

In previous years, Congress has sufficiently appropriated between \$90 - \$100 million each year to the LUST program. Our organizations are concerned that if funding is cut in half, states will likely be forced to increase UST fees on petroleum marketers to make up the difference. Furthermore, by eliminating

resources generated by the UST fee, Congress threatens to weaken the very program designed to prevent future contamination.

Again, we urge you to reject any efforts to significantly reduce the LUST Fund Program and continue to fund the program at previous fiscal year levels.

Sincerely,

National Association of Convenience Stores
NATSO, Representing America's Truckstops and Travel Plazas
Petroleum Marketers Association of America
Society of Independent Gasoline Marketers of America

CC: The Honorable Greg Walden, Chairman, House E&C Committee
The Honorable Frank Pallone, Ranking Member, House E&C Committee