Dear Administrator Pruitt;

On March 16\textsuperscript{th}, 2017, the White House’s proposed budget cuts for EPA were released. President Trump stated that his proposed budget would put “America first”. That is NOT the case, unless the proposed budget is designed for middle class and above white Americans. The proposed EPA budget cuts simply translate to fewer protections for people of color, those with low socioeconomic status, vulnerable populations – those AMERICANS most susceptible to hazardous exposures and most at risk for ongoing and worsening health conditions – such as asthma and other respiratory diseases, cancers, lead poisoning, to name a few.

The proposed budget cuts to EPA have environmental justice communities enraged – and rightly so. According to the Washington Post, EPA’s proposed budget details will include the elimination of its Office of Environmental Justice, an office most environmental justice communities are quite familiar with. Another program in the crosshairs deals with brownfields. Brownfields are properties that may have hazardous substances, pollutants or contaminants present. Currently, EPA has a Brownfields Program which provides grants and technical assistance to communities, states, tribes and others to address (safely clean up and reuse) those properties. In 2005, there were more than 450,000 brownfield sites across the United States. That number has most likely doubled in the 10+ years since that report. The majority of those brownfields are located in environmental justice communities.

Proposed cuts to Superfund, environmental education, climate change initiatives and needed funding for communities – particularly Alaskan native villages will detrimentally affect millions of Americans. Impacts to children are of particular concern, as globally, 1 in 4 deaths occur in children 1 to 5 years old as a result of air pollution and other preventable environmental factors. Lead contamination, poor indoor and outdoor air quality, water contamination are all issues inherent to environmental justice communities.

EJ 2020 and other programs designed to address the disproportionate impacts from environmental contamination on environmental justice communities are necessary and should not be sacrificed to increase the military’s $600 billion budget.

Instead of adding money to a budget to fight war on foreign soil, additional funding is needed to fight a war here in the United States that environmental justice communities fight every day - the war against environmental racism, air and water pollution, soil contamination, unsafe drinking water, environmental degradation, and most important, increased adverse health effects and premature death. The war is here…at home.
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<td>Sarah James</td>
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<td>Nelson Carrasquillo</td>
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<td>Brent Newell, Esq.</td>
<td>Hilton Kelley</td>
<td>CIDA, Inc.*</td>
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<td>William Copeland</td>
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<td>Dr. Rose Brewer</td>
<td>Michele Roberts</td>
<td>Helen Kang</td>
<td>Environmental Law and Justice Clinic, Golden Gate University School of Law*</td>
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Dr. Charlotte L. Keys
Jesus People Against Pollution*

Burt Lauderdale
Kentuckians for the Commonwealth*

Leo Woodberry
Kingdom Living Temple*

Savi Horne
Land Loss Prevention Center*

Kimberly Wasserman
Little Village Environmental Justice Organization*

Richard Moore
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(The Gardens Institute) *

Terry McGuire
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VA Interfaith Power & Light

Joe Szakos
Virginia Organizing

Peggy Shepard
WE ACT for Environmental Justice*

John Heil
Mary Ihsaan

David Underhill*

*Denotes an Environmental Justice Organization/Advocate