

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3302

August 4, 2025

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

Dear Administrator Zeldin:

We write to strongly urge you to reverse your decision to eliminate the Office of Research and Development (ORD) within the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This decision will have both immediate and long-term detrimental effects on the federal government's ability to safeguard human health and ecosystems from environmental pollutants and is an abandonment of your mission to the American people.

On Friday, July 18th, 2025, EPA issued a press release announcing a reduction in force targeting ORD—a blatant continuation of this Administration's work to roll back years of progress on human health and environmental protection, prevent the EPA from fulfilling its mission, and punish the hundreds of dedicated public servants in the Research Triangle Park in North Carolina.

The Office of Research and Development, as listed on your agency's website, "conducts the research for EPA that provides the foundation for credible decision-making to safeguard human health and ecosystems from environmental pollutants." For over 50 years, ORD has conducted critical research that saves lives in North Carolina and across the country—including studying the health impacts of wildfire smoke inhalation, development of detection methods and toxicity assessments for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), improvement of water treatment technologies to ensure our communities have access to water free of lead contamination, and so much more.

Americans across the political spectrum care about clean air, clean water, and the health of their children and loved ones. Americans care about their environment, whether it's their back yard or their favorite national park. ORD's work is not partisan. On July 24th, in a 26-2 bipartisan vote, the Senate Appropriations Committee approved a Fiscal Year 2026 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies appropriations bill that would require EPA to maintain ORD.

Again, we strongly urge you to reverse your decision to eliminate ORD. This disastrous decision is unwanted and unwarranted, and its consequences would be dire for our constituents and for communities across the country.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Valerie P. Foushee
Member of Congress



Deborah K. Ross
Member of Congress