Status of State Environmental Agency Budgets/Fiscal Years 2020-2023: Environmental Council of the States Report



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The Environmental Council of the States ("ECOS") issued an August 28 report titled:

GREEN REPORT – STATUS OF STATE ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCY BUDGETS – Fiscal Years 2020 to 2023 ("Report").

The Report is authored by Connor MacCartney and Julia Henderson.

ECOS describes itself as the:

…national non-profit, nonpartisan association of state and territorial environmental agency leaders.

The Report notes that state environmental agencies (as opposed to the United States Environmental Protection Agency ["EPA"]) operate themselves more than 90% of the federal environmental programs. The states do this through delegation, primacy, or authorization.

Funding comes from state-based and federal funds.

Information included in the Report addresses environmental agency funding in Fiscal Years 2020-2023 from the following four sources:

- Federal funding.
- State general funds.
- State permit fees.
- Other sources.

In 2024, ECOS states that it sought state environmental agency budget data from the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the territories. The objective was to obtain what it describes as a:

…snapshot nationally and state-by-state on EAB funding.

Conclusions in the Report include that overall, from FY 2020 to FY 2023, state environmental agency budgets rose to an average of FY2023 of $486.7M and a median of $179.2M. This is stated to represent a 63.3% or $188.7M rise over four years.

As to federal funding, the Report notes in part:

…while states saw an increase in federal funding over the four-year period, the increase of 159.3% paled in comparison to EPA's budget increase from $10B to $100B – with both states and EPA receiving significant time-limited funding for infrastructure and special project investments.

Further, it states that as to the ability of the states to operate delegated programs, that:

…federal investments in core program implementation activities by states have declined or remained stagnant…

As a result, concern is expressed that states may risk losing their primacy, delegation, or authorization agreements and be subject to increasing risks from third-party claims and petitions.

A copy of the Report can be downloaded here.