



Environmental
Quality

ROY COOPER
Governor

MICHAEL S. REGAN
Secretary

June 23, 2017

Kristi Jones
Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor
1 East Edenton Street
Raleigh, NC 27601

Re: Appropriations Bill Damages a Healthy Environment, Secure Energy Future and Growing Economy

Ms. Jones:

The department has been the target of unrelenting budget cuts for nearly a decade. The final budget bill makes cuts to the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality that will damage our state by putting our citizens' health at risk, cutting research for 21st century energy, and impeding economic growth. The department received an approximate \$3 million reduction during a time when the state needs additional resources to protect our drinking water and air quality, and process permits to keep pace with the growing economy.

North Carolina must have an environment that protects the health of its people. The budget bill removes more than \$1.3 million in appropriated support for programs critical to health and safety including water quality, coastal resources, and solid and hazardous waste management. These cuts remove staff and resources necessary to protect against the harm caused by coal ash spills, toxins spreading into our groundwater from waste sites, and impacts our ability to address emerging contaminants in our drinking water. A cut in resources for our regulatory programs creates greater risk of unsafe exposure to North Carolinians.

North Carolina leads the nation in solar energy and is developing a diverse portfolio of renewable energy resources. Our state also continues to review energy projects such as the Atlantic Coast Pipeline and offshore oil and gas. Cuts of almost \$1 million to the state's university energy centers and the department's Energy Office remove significant resources necessary to analyze the impacts of changes occurring in the energy sector and diminish our ability to lead and secure our energy future.

Finally, cuts such as the \$500,000 in appropriated support for positions in regional offices statewide jeopardize direct technical assistance to citizens and businesses that pave the way for economic prosperity. The department needs to prepare for and support economic growth, and these cuts leave the department in a state of recession.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Michael S. Regan'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Michael S. Regan
Secretary, NCDEQ