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## Padilla, Schiff Join Colleagues in Demanding EPA Reverse Unlawful Termination of Grants for Clean Air and Water

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** — Today, U.S. Senators Alex Padilla and Adam Schiff (both D-Calif.) **JOINED** ([HTTPS://WWW.SCHIFF.SENATE.GOV/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2025/03/LETTER-RE-EJ-GRANT-TERMINATIONS-AND-OEJ-ECR-CLOSURE.PDF](https://www.schiff.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/letter-re-ej-grant-terminations-and-oej-ecr-closure.pdf)) Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.), Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works (EPW), Senator Lisa Blunt Rochester (D-Del.), and all Democratic Committee members in demanding Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Lee Zeldin reverse his illegal termination of congressionally authorized grants aimed at eliminating childhood lead poisoning, reducing toxic air pollution, and mitigating health risks from heat and wildfires, among other essential purposes.

Along with the letter, the Committee released never-before-seen, internal EPA documents that list **400 GRANTS** ([HTTPS://WWW.EPW.SENATE.GOV/PUBLIC/INDEX.CFM?A=FILES.SERVE&FILE\\_ID=2FBA3E39-8F8F-4535-AC6B-EF1620896335](https://www.epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?A=FILES.SERVE&FILE_ID=2FBA3E39-8F8F-4535-AC6B-EF1620896335)), including a total of 63 California grants, targeted for termination and expose that the agency knowingly and **WILLFULLY VIOLATED** ([HTTPS://WWW.EPW.SENATE.GOV/PUBLIC/INDEX.CFM?A=FILES.SERVE&FILE\\_ID=D0DFDCBC-4C73-4AC6-BA9B-E2326AF3E8C9](https://www.epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?A=FILES.SERVE&FILE_ID=D0DFDCBC-4C73-4AC6-BA9B-E2326AF3E8C9)) contractual obligations and court orders.

“According to documents obtained exclusively by Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works Democratic Staff, including a list produced by your office of roughly **400 GRANTS** ([HTTPS://WWW.EPW.SENATE.GOV/PUBLIC/INDEX.CFM?A=FILES.SERVE&FILE\\_ID=2FBA3E39-8F8F-4535-AC6B-EF1620896335](https://www.epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?A=FILES.SERVE&FILE_ID=2FBA3E39-8F8F-4535-AC6B-EF1620896335)) targeted for termination, you pursued these terminations in **KNOWING VIOLATION** ([HTTPS://WWW.EPW.SENATE.GOV/PUBLIC/INDEX.CFM?A=FILES.SERVE&FILE\\_ID=D0DFDCBC-4C73-4AC6-BA9B-E2326AF3E8C9](https://www.epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?A=FILES.SERVE&FILE_ID=D0DFDCBC-4C73-4AC6-BA9B-E2326AF3E8C9)) of the Terms and Conditions clauses of EPA’s contracts, which stipulate conditions under which a grant can be terminated. We call on you to follow the law, cease and desist implementation of EO 14151, rescind the grant terminations, and provide information on EPA’s decision-making process concerning the grant terminations and wider closure of the Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights,” **wrote the Senators.**

Administrator Zeldin **ANNOUNCED** ([HTTPS://WWW.EPA.GOV/NEWSRELEASES/EPA-ADMINISTRATOR-LEE-ZELDIN-CANCELS-400-GRANTS-4TH-ROUND-CUTS-DOGE-SAVING-AMERICANS](https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-administrator-lee-zeldin-cancels-400-grants-4th-round-cuts-doge-saving-americans)) on March 10, 2025, that in a joint effort with the so-called “Department of Government Efficiency,” EPA had terminated more than 400 grants that would have invested \$1.7 billion to improve air and water quality and enhance resilience to extreme weather in communities across the United States. The vast majority of the grants were made using Congressionally appropriated funds under a statutory mandate. Any attempt to withhold the funds violates the Impoundment Control Act and Congress’s constitutional Article I spending authority, which Administrator Zeldin explicitly promised

not to do at his confirmation **HEARING**

**([HTTPS://WWW.EPW.SENATE.GOV/PUBLIC/INDEX.CFM/2025/1/HEARING-ON-THE-NOMINATION-OF-THE-HONORABLE-LEE-M-ZELDIN-TO-BE-ADMINISTRATOR-OF-THE-ENVIRONMENTAL-PROTECTION-AGENCY](https://www.epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2025/1/hearing-on-the-nomination-of-the-honorable-lee-m-zeldin-to-be-administrator-of-the-environmental-protection-agency)).**

Furthermore, "EPA's grant terminations were made knowing that they violate EPA's own contracts. According to information obtained exclusively by EPW Democratic Staff, termination notices sent by EPA to grantees knowingly and deceptively cited contract language that was not actually in many of the contracts in an effort to shift the burden to grantees to challenge your illegal terminations in the courts," **continued the Senators.**

EPW Democrats are **DEMANDING** ([HTTPS://WWW.SCHIFF.SENATE.GOV/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2025/03/LETTER-RE-EJ-GRANT-TERMINATIONS-AND-OEJ-ECR-CLOSURE.PDF](https://www.schiff.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/letter-re-ej-grant-terminations-and-oej-ecr-closure.pdf)) that EPA immediately reverse any terminations already made and cease and desist making further unlawful terminations. EPW Democrats are also requesting that EPA, in accordance with commitments the EPA Administrator made during his confirmation hearing, produce documents and information related to the illegal claw backs by March 31, 2025.

Full text of the letter is available **HERE** ([HTTPS://WWW.SCHIFF.SENATE.GOV/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2025/03/LETTER-RE-EJ-GRANT-TERMINATIONS-AND-OEJ-ECR-CLOSURE.PDF](https://www.schiff.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/letter-re-ej-grant-terminations-and-oej-ecr-closure.pdf)).

The full list of 400 EPA grants targeted for termination is available **HERE** ([HTTPS://WWW.EPW.SENATE.GOV/PUBLIC/INDEX.CFM?A=FILES.SERVE&FILE\\_ID=2FBA3E39-8F8F-4535-AC6B-EF1620896335](https://www.epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=files.serve&file_id=2fba3e39-8f8f-4535-ac6b-ef1620896335)).

Internal emails that expose how EPA knowingly and willfully violated its own contracts and court orders are available **HERE** ([HTTPS://WWW.EPW.SENATE.GOV/PUBLIC/INDEX.CFM?A=FILES.SERVE&FILE\\_ID=D0DFDCBC-4C73-4AC6-BA9B-E2326AF3E8C9](https://www.epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=files.serve&file_id=d0dfdcbc-4c73-4ac6-ba9b-e2326af3e8c9)).

Sample termination letters, which cite contract language that did not appear in the respective grant contracts, are available **HERE** ([HTTPS://WWW.EPW.SENATE.GOV/PUBLIC/\\_CACHE/FILES/F/7/F75368AC-6605-4244-8663-E8C45AF9722B/E8C036A066710A2051CF027770BE1B235F3FCABB21D16C4F69FFA05E58AA58.2.21.25-TCTAC-TERMINATION-NOTICE.PDF](https://www.epw.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/f/7/f75368ac-6605-4244-8663-e8c45af9722b/e8c036a066710a2051cf027770be1b235f3fcabb21d16c4f69ffa05e58aa58.2.21.25-tctac-termination-notice.pdf)) and **HERE** ([HTTPS://WWW.EPW.SENATE.GOV/PUBLIC/\\_CACHE/FILES/A/2/A2B87662-9FE9-4602-B5BF-AC4F3F23692A/E8C036A066710A2051CF027770BE1B235F3FCABB21D16C4F69FFA05E58AA58.2.21.25-TCTAC-TERMINATION-NOTICE-2.PDF](https://www.epw.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/a/2/a2b87662-9fe9-4602-b5bf-ac4f3f23692a/e8c036a066710a2051cf027770be1b235f3fcabb21d16c4f69ffa05e58aa58.2.21.25-tctac-termination-notice-2.pdf)).

### **Whistleblower Tipline**

If you were affected by these grant terminations or would like to contact the Ranking Member to make a protected disclosure of information, please email **[DEM\\_WHISTLEBLOWERS@EPW.SENATE.GOV](mailto:DEM_WHISTLEBLOWERS@EPW.SENATE.GOV)** (**[MAILTO:DEM\\_WHISTLEBLOWERS@EPW.SENATE.GOV](mailto:DEM_WHISTLEBLOWERS@EPW.SENATE.GOV)**). The right to share information is protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution and applicable laws.

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