



March 14, 2017

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
 Chairman  
 Senate Committee on Appropriations  
 Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
 Ranking Member  
 Senate Committee on Appropriations  
 Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen  
 Chairman  
 House Committee on Appropriations  
 Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
 Ranking Member  
 House Committee on Appropriations  
 Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cochran, Ranking Member Leahy, Chairman Frelinghuysen, and Ranking Member Lowey:

Our organizations write to thank you for continued funding for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)'s efforts to fight the second leading cause of lung cancer: radon. The \$7.978 million appropriated in FY 2016, and continued into FY 2017, to fund State Indoor Radon Grants and the \$2.9 million to fund the EPA radon program have helped to educate and protect the public with crucial information for families, schools, home builders and the medical community. We ask for your support for funding EPA's State Indoor Radon Grants at \$8 million and the EPA radon program at \$3 million for FY 2018.

Congress retained funding for the State Indoor Radon Grants (SIRG) despite requests from the previous Administration to eliminate that funding. You recognized, as do we, that radon remains a serious and underappreciated risk to health. This radioactive gas forms the top risk for lung cancer in people who do not smoke, and significantly increases the risk for those who do. Yet because radon occurs naturally and is invisible, too many people remain unaware of the need to test and reduce the risk in their homes. The SIRG program and the EPA radon program have helped to forge a cooperative approach among the federal government, states, tribes, non-profits, public health groups, and business and professional groups to inform people and work to save lives for decades.

The SIRG program funds work to reduce the risk from radon in states and tribes, both of which must match these grants with their own funds totaling at least 40 percent of the project cost.

Thanks to their work, the public has much more information about the dangers of this widespread carcinogen in their home county and the availability of easy tests to determine their exposure. They can also find out that fixing their home to remove the radon costs about the same as buying a new television.

The EPA radon programs provide potentially life-saving information to the public about the underappreciated dangers about this radioactive carcinogen. EPA develops educational material for homeowners, home-buyers, builders and contractors about the risks and about testing and repairing homes, schools and other buildings. Their work is not regulatory, but provides science-based advice and recommendations for testing and repair as well as radon resistant new construction techniques. They do not do these repairs, but inform homeowners and builders where to find expert assistance in reducing radon.

Radon is a radioactive carcinogen that causes 21,000 people to die from lung cancer each year. Please do not weaken the commitment to telling people about this risk and helping them to save their lives.

Our organizations urge you to support funding for EPA's State Indoor Radon Grants at \$8 million and the EPA radon program at \$3 million for FY 2018.

Sincerely,

American Association of Radon Scientists and Technologists  
AARST Foundation  
American Lung Association  
American Public Health Association  
American Society of Home Inspectors  
American Thoracic Society  
Cancer Survivors Against Radon  
Citizens for Radioactive Radon Reduction  
Conference of Radon Control Program Directors  
Health Care Without Harm  
Lung Cancer Alliance  
National Association of County & City Health Officials  
National Center for Healthy Housing  
National Environmental Health Association

CC: Members, House and Senate Appropriations Committees