



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

AUG 26 2011

THE ADMINISTRATOR

Deborah L. Swackhamer, Ph.D.
Chairwoman
Science Advisory Board
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Dr. Swackhamer:

I offer my sincerest appreciation to you and the members of the Science Advisory Board for your review of the President Barack Obama's fiscal year 2012 budget request for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Research and Development and National Center for Environmental Economics.

As you are aware, the President's budget request recommends a decrease in the EPA's budget, reflecting the need to streamline and find efficiencies in the agency's operations while continuing to support its mission to protect human health and the environment. The board's expertise helps to ensure that the EPA's research programs continue to provide the scientific foundation necessary for meeting today's and tomorrow's environmental challenges.

The Office of Research and Development's research realignment, combining 13 project areas into six overarching national programs, is a major effort to integrate our transdisciplinary research while maximizing efficiency. I appreciate the board's strong support of this realignment and recognize your role in providing systems-based recommendations for process improvement. These recommendations have proven invaluable during the development and implementation of our new organizational structure, and we look forward to further insights from the Science Advisory Board as we continue to implement our new research structure.

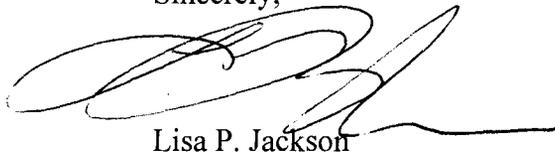
As you noted, the restructured research programs are both new and ambitious. Therefore, the FY 2012 budget did not contain the usual amount of detail on which you could comment. More detail was subsequently provided at the June 2011 joint public advisory meeting of the Science Advisory Board and the Office of Research and Development's Board of Scientific Counselors. I applaud the collaborative efforts of these expert panels and look forward to their complete review and report on future budget and program planning. By all accounts, the joint meeting was an overwhelming success, and the EPA looks forward to continued opportunities for synergy between these two advisory panels.

It is gratifying to see the board's strong support for EPA's Science to Achieve Results grants and fellowships. The increased investment in the STAR program is a testament to its versatility in both supporting the research needs of multiple national-program and regional offices and in enabling the leaders to address tomorrow's environmental challenges.

I appreciate the board's concern regarding several areas of reduced investments in the FY 2012 budget. Human health, climate change and ecosystem services as well as social, behavioral and decision sciences were highlighted by the Science Advisory Board as areas requiring increased future investment. Based on these comments, the Office of Research and Development is currently investigating new and innovative ways to effectively leverage its available resources to meet the research needs of these environmental priorities.

As Administrator, I value your comments and recommendations on the allocation of resources for scientific research. While I recognize your assessment that the FY 2012 proposed reductions will "limit the research needed to support EPA's efforts to protect human health and the environment," I and Office of Research and Development Assistant Administrator Paul Anastas remain firmly committed to maximizing the impact of our research program. I welcome further discussion with the board about ways to innovatively address the environmental challenges facing our nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa P. Jackson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lisa P. Jackson