

January 13, 2017

Senator Bernie Sanders
U.S. Senate
332 Dirksen Building
Washington, D.C., 20510

Dear Senator Sanders:

As organizations representing nearly 100,000 members and supporters in Vermont, we write to express our strong opposition to the appointment of Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt for Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). We urge you to vote against this nomination and to make your position known soon when it can influence the important debate about this nominee. Vermont needs an EPA Administrator who will work to protect the clean air and clean water that are so vital to our economy, health, and quality of life.

Mr. Pruitt has a clear record of fighting to block the EPA from enacting vital safeguards for the nation's clean air and clean water. He has sued the EPA to block protections for public health, including standards for reducing soot and smog pollution that crosses interstate lines and protections against emissions of mercury, arsenic, and other toxic pollutants from power plants.

Vermont policymakers have long recognized that clean air and clean water are not only critical aspects of public health and the environment, but also integral components of Vermont's economy. That's why Vermont's elected officials, including you, have shown important, consistent, and deeply appreciated leadership in defending EPA's authority to reduce air and water pollution. As Oklahoma's Attorney General, Mr. Pruitt has pursued the opposite agenda. For example, while Vermont plans to get 90 percent of its energy from renewable sources by 2050, Mr. Pruitt has sued EPA to block implementation of the Clean Power Plan. Similarly, while Vermont created mandatory pollution targets to clean up Lake Champlain, Mr. Pruitt sued EPA to halt the Waters of the United States (WOTUS) regulations, rules to help EPA achieve our national goal of fishable and swimmable waters.

Mr. Pruitt's denial of the science of climate change is deeply troubling, and should be disqualifying for the position of EPA Administrator. Mr. Pruitt falsely claims that the climate debate "is far from settled" and that "scientists continue to disagree about the degree and extent of global warming and its connections to the actions of mankind." But you know as well as any that climate change is happening now, humans are responsible, and Vermont is at risk. The most recent decade was Vermont's hottest on record, shifting water cycles and posing threats to agriculture, forests, infrastructure, tourism, health, and homes. And heavy rainfall events have and will continue to dramatically increase, exacerbating stormwater runoff and water quality problems, especially in the Lake Champlain Basin. Scientists are as close to being unanimous about these facts as can be expected on any issue. Further denial is simply a cover for inaction.

If confirmed, Mr. Pruitt seems intent on undermining EPA's authorities, cutting federal funds available to invest in desperately-needed clean water infrastructure at the state level, and disrupting our national response to climate change. Such actions would increase pollution risks

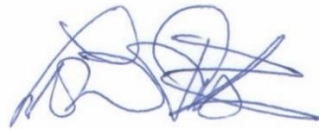
to Vermonters and our economy, and represent a significant set-back to global efforts to reduce climate changing pollution.

Mr. Pruitt could put at risk much of the environmental progress that has been achieved through bipartisan efforts over the past several decades. Vermont's air and water quality have improved significantly thanks to EPA's implementation of environmental laws. We appreciate the role you have played in working to protect Vermont's environment and working to address the threat of climate change. That is why we urge you to oppose the nomination of Scott Pruitt for EPA Administrator.

Respectfully signed,



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