

**United States Senate**  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 13, 2023

**VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION**

Kristi Trail  
Executive Director  
Pontchartrain Conservancy (Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation)

Dear Ms. Trail:

The American Rescue Plan gave the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) “\$50 million in EJ [Environmental Justice] funding” for a variety of projects that “identify and address disproportionate environmental or public health harms and risks in underserved communities due to COVID-19 and other pollution.”<sup>1</sup>

According to the EPA, over \$16.6 million of this money has been allocated to fund activities authorized by the Clean Air Act and Safe Drinking Water Act.<sup>2</sup> One of these activities was the 2021 Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving (EJCPS) Cooperative Agreement Program, which received \$4.3 million.<sup>3</sup>

In 2021, the EPA selected 34 organizations to each receive up to \$200,000 via grants through the EJCPS Cooperative Agreement Program.<sup>4</sup> The purpose of the grants was to, in part, “support community-based organizations in their efforts to collaborate and partner with local stakeholder groups ... as they develop and implement solutions that address environmental and/or public health issues for underserved communities.”<sup>5</sup>

Congress has an obligation to ensure that the taxpayer money it appropriates is used for its intended purpose and is not subject to waste, fraud, or abuse. Please provide answers to the following questions by April 27, 2023:

1. Did your organization provide to the EPA: (a) measurements of performance to show achievement of program goals and objectives; (b) lessons learned; (c) ways to improve program outcomes; and (4) plans to adopt promising practices. If so, please provide all records. If not, why not?

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<sup>1</sup> United States Environmental Protection Agency, *Environmental Justice Funding under the ARP*, <https://www.epa.gov/arp/environmental-justice-funding-under-arp> (last visited March 16, 2023).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *2021 American Rescue Plan & EJ Collaborative Problem-Solving Award Project Summaries*, <https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2021-12/2021-selected-ejcps-project-descriptions.pdf> at 7 (last visited March 16, 2023).

<sup>4</sup> *Id.* at 1.

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

2. Was your organization required to provide to the EPA financial and related data under 2 C.F.R. § 200.329(b)?<sup>6</sup> If so, please provide those records. If not, why not?
3. Please describe and provide all records relating to what your organization's goals were and how those goals were accomplished. If the stated goals were not accomplished, please explain why not.
4. How did your organization determine that it accomplished its stated goals? What metrics were used? Please explain and provide all records.
5. Provide all records showing how the taxpayer money your organization received was spent. In your production, please provide a financial summary showing what the taxpayer money was spent on.

Thank you for your cooperation on this important matter. If you have any questions, please contact Jace Pimentel at (202) 224-0642.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Grassley  
Ranking Member  
Committee on the Budget

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<sup>6</sup> "As appropriate and in accordance with above mentioned information collections, the Federal awarding agency must require the recipient to relate financial data and accomplishments to performance goals and objectives of the Federal award." 2 C.F.R. § 200.329(b).