

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 11, 2025

The Honorable Lee Zeldin
Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Administrator Zeldin,

As members of the Illinois delegation, we write to express our profound concern about the potential immediate termination of over 1,100 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) employees, many based in Illinois, as well as the impact this could have on public health and our environment.

Reports indicate that EPA staff members have received emails informing them of possible immediate dismissal due to their probationary status. We are deeply concerned about the negative impacts such terminations—done across the board without consideration for positional need or programmatic impact—would have on the agency’s ability to protect public health and the environment in the state of Illinois and across the nation.¹

Though they are probationary, many of these employees are long-standing federal workers and subject matter experts with experience vital to running the EPA effectively and efficiently. They perform critical functions protecting Americans from dangers related to pesticides, waste management, chemical control, and ground and drinking water. They are essential to the EPA’s mission and to the well-being of our constituents.

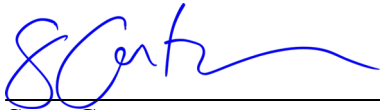
Illinois is home to industrial sites, precious natural resources, and unique environmental challenges that require diligent oversight, remediation, and ongoing enforcement. As just one example, the Chicago area has more lead pipes than any other American city, requiring EPA water technical assistance to help communities identify lead service lines, develop replacement plans, and apply for funding for lead pipe removal.

The potential dismissal of employees based out of the EPA Region V Office in Chicago threatens the health and safety of communities the state, as well as the rest of the states in Region V, and will undermine ongoing efforts to monitor and improve air and water quality, manage hazardous waste, and restore the ecosystem of the largest freshwater system in the world.

In light of these concerns, we request that you reconsider any plans to terminate probationary EPA employees. We urge you to consider the critical importance of these workers to the EPA’s mission and the potential adverse effects these terminations would have on the public health and environment of the American people.

Sincerely,

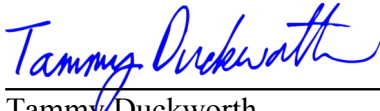
¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/02/03/climate/trump-epa-workers-zeldin.html?smid=nytcore-ios-share&referringSource=articleShare>



Sean Casten
Member of Congress



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Delia C. Ramirez
Member of Congress



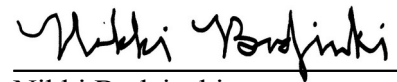
Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress



Bill Foster
Member of Congress



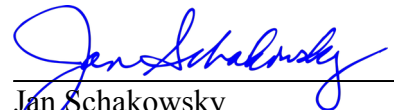
Mike Quigley
Member of Congress



Nikki Budzinski
Member of Congress



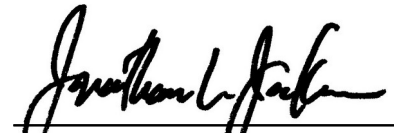
Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
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Jonathan L. Jackson
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Lauren Underwood
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Danny K. Davis
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