



For Immediate Release
March 25, 2008

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CARDIN, CLINTON, SCHUMER URGE SUPPORT FOR EFFORTS TO COMBAT ACID RAIN

Funding For Monitoring Programs Is Critical For Ongoing Assessment of Progress in Fighting Hazardous Effects of Acid Rain

Washington, DC – Senators Benjamin L. Cardin (D-MD), Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY), and Charles Schumer (D-NY) today called on the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies to continue their support for three programs that play a critical role in monitoring the progress of our nation’s fight against the effects of acid rain. In a letter to the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Subcommittee, the lawmakers stressed the need to provide funding for the Clean Air Status and Trends Network (CASTNET), the Temporary Integrated Monitoring of Ecosystems (TIME), and Long-Term Monitoring (LTM) Surface Water Monitoring programs at the FY 2008 level. The Administration’s proposed 2009 budget would cut CASTNET funding by \$1 million from its FY 08 level of \$3.9 million to \$2.9 million in Fiscal Year 2009, and completely eliminates the \$800,000 for the TIME and LTM programs.

“Acid rain and global warming are complex issues but continued federal investment in the monitoring and protection of clean water has proven critical to the health of our communities,” said **Senator Cardin, a member of the Environment and Public Works Committee**. “On behalf of all Marylanders who could be affected, from the Chesapeake Bay to the Alleghany Mountains and the Eastern Shore, I urge my Senate colleagues to salvage these critical programs.”

“Despite the progress we have made, acid rain is still a major threat to health of the Adirondacks and many other places in New York and across the country,” said **Senator Clinton**. “We need to do more, and it’s outrageous that the Bush Administration has again proposed cuts in funding for acid rain programs. I urge my colleagues to reject these cuts so we can continue to make progress in reducing the harmful effects of acid rain.”

“For some reason this Administration seems insistent on cutting funding for an absolutely essential environmental cause,” said **Schumer**. “We fought tooth-and-nail to save these programs last year, and are committed to continuing the fight until the Administration wakes up and realizes the serious threat acid rain poses. With the livelihood of the Catskills and Adirondacks increasingly jeopardized by this pervasive problem, now is not the time to shortchange such critical programs.”

Previously funded at a level of approximately \$3.9 million per year, CASTNET is the nation’s chief source for atmospheric data on dry acidic deposition, rural ground-level ozone and other forms of atmospheric pollution that enter the environment as particles and gases, such as mercury. CASTNET is presently at 86 sites in over 40 states, including Maryland. The EPA has deemed CASTNET critical to maintaining accountability of the Acid Rain Program, the Clean Air Interstate Rule, and other programs for controlling transported air pollutants. The Administration’s proposed budget would slash the funding for this critical program by \$1 million for FY09.

TIME and LTM initiatives have been funded at a combined level of \$800,000 through the Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Program (EMAP) account. They are the only extensive

networks in the Eastern United States that evaluate the status and potential recovery of sensitive ecosystems, which are particularly vulnerable to further damage from acid rain.

The letter to Senators Feinstein and Allard is attached -

March 25, 2008

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Chairman
Subcommittee on the Interior,
Environment, and Related Agencies
132 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Wayne Allard
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on the Interior,
Environment, and Related Agencies
123 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Madam Chairman and Ranking Member:

We ask for your continued support of three programs that are critical to our nation's fight against acid rain -- the Clean Air Status and Trends Network (CASTNET), the Temporary Integrated Monitoring of Ecosystems (TIME), and Long-Term Monitoring (LTM) Surface Water Monitoring programs.

Despite progress we have made over the last 30 years, acid rain continues to destroy our forests, kill our fish, and poison our waters. In addition, many scientific studies have identified a relationship between elevated levels of the fine particles that cause acid rain and increased illness and premature death from heart and lung disorders, such as asthma and bronchitis. The monitoring programs mentioned above are critical to enable ongoing assessment of progress. For example, CASTNET, which consists of over 80 sites spanning 40 states across the United States, is crucial to maintaining accountability of the Acid Rain Program, the Clean Air Interstate Rule (CAIR), and other programs for controlling transported air pollutants. Similarly, TIME and LTM surface water monitoring comprise much of the research on acidified waters. Beginning in 2009 through 2015, the CAIR calls for significant reductions in nitrogen oxides and sulfur dioxide emissions. With these critical new regulations pending, it is imperative that the programs principally charged with monitoring this progress are not effectively or otherwise eliminated.

We greatly appreciate the Committee's efforts in securing \$3.9 million for CASTNET and \$800,000 for TIME/LTM in Fiscal Year 2008 and respectfully request continued funding at last year's levels. The Administration's proposed 2009 budget would cut CASTNET funding by \$1 million from its Fiscal Year 2008 level of \$3.9 million to \$2.9 million in Fiscal Year 2009. Such a decrease would severely weaken the CASTNET program. Furthermore, the proposed budget completely eliminates the \$800,000 for the TIME and LTM programs, which are essential sources of data for measuring the response of sensitive ecosystems to key components of the Clean Air Act throughout the eastern United States. In addition, we ask that you fund these programs through the Office of Air and Radiation, where other deposition monitoring programs are located.

Thank you for your kind consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Charles E. Schumer

Benjamin L. Cardin

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