



August 26, 2025

The Honorable Lee M. Zeldin  
Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Zeldin:

Under President Trump's bold leadership, federal agencies and the Department of Government Efficiency have saved an estimated \$190 billion, including terminating more than 15,000 grants that saved approximately \$44 billion.<sup>1</sup> You have heeded President Trump's directive and achieved monumental savings for taxpayers. You canceled \$20 billion in climate grants under the Inflation Reduction Act.<sup>2</sup> You cancelled another \$1.7 billion in diversity, equity, and inclusion grants.<sup>3</sup> And you canceled 800 environmental justice grants.<sup>4</sup>

We write to bring to your attention grants made by EPA to the Environmental Law Institute ("ELI"). According to its 2024 financial statements, ELI received approximately 13% of its revenue in 2023, and 8.4% in 2024, from EPA awards.<sup>5</sup> ELI also apparently still expected to receive funds from the federal government; its financial statement warned that the collectability of federal grant funds "is subject to significant uncertainty related to collectability and continual funding due to [the federal grant] funding freeze or other federal actions."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Available at <https://doge.gov/savings> (updated June 29, 2025).

<sup>2</sup> Alex Guillén and Zack Colman, *EPA's Zeldin Terminates \$20B in Biden Climate Grants*, POLITICO (Mar. 11, 2025), at <https://www.politico.com/news/2025/03/11/zeldin-terminates-greenhouse-gas-reduction-fund-grants-00225481>.

<sup>3</sup> Kanishka Singh, *US EPA Administrator Says He Canceled DEI Grants Totaling \$1.7 Billion*, REUTERS (Mar. 11, 2025), at <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-epa-administrator-says-he-canceled-dei-grants-totaling-17-billion-2025-03-10/>.

<sup>4</sup> Rachel Frazin, *EPA Canceling Nearly 800 Environmental Justice Grants*, THE HILL (Apr. 29, 2025), at <https://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/5273712-epa-canceling-nearly-800-environmental-justice-grants/>.

<sup>5</sup> Environmental Law Institute, *Audited Financial Statements and Supplemental Information: Years Ended December 31, 2024 and 2023*, 17 (PDF p. 19), at [https://www.eli.org/sites/default/files/files-pdf/ENVIRONMENTAL\\_LAW\\_INSTITUTE\\_-\\_2024\\_-\\_Financial\\_Statements.pdf](https://www.eli.org/sites/default/files/files-pdf/ENVIRONMENTAL_LAW_INSTITUTE_-_2024_-_Financial_Statements.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> *Id.* at 20 (PDF p. 22); see also *id.* at 26 (PDF p. 28).

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

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ELI runs the Climate Judiciary Project, which claims that it “is a first-of-its-kind effort that provides judges with authoritative, objective, and trusted education on climate science, the impacts of climate change, and the ways climate science is arising in the law.”<sup>7</sup> According to the ELI team that operates the effort, the Climate Judiciary Project “organizes various seminars and workshops that connect judges with climate scientists, during which judges learn from and ask questions to scientists about their areas of expertise.”<sup>8</sup> Since its creation in 2018, the Climate Judiciary Project estimates that it has hosted more than 50 events and trained more than 2,000 judges.<sup>9</sup>

Because of how it has carried out these activities, the Climate Judiciary Project has been charged with “corruptly influencing the courts and destroying the rule of law to promote climate cult alarmism.”<sup>10</sup> This is because the Climate Judiciary Project “trainings attempt to influence the very judges who are hearing these cases, using a curriculum developed in part by individuals assisting with that litigation.”<sup>11</sup> Indeed, despite ELI’s denials to the contrary, “several CJP expert lawyers and judges have close ties to the curriculum and are deeply involved in climate litigation.”<sup>12</sup> As Senator Ted Cruz observed, the Climate Judiciary Project curriculum “reads like a playbook for judges to find in favor of plaintiffs in artificial climate change cases against traditional energy companies ....”<sup>13</sup>

The Climate Judiciary Project’s mission is clear: lobby judges in order to make climate change policy through the courts. An alumni magazine profile said the quiet part out loud, writing that the Climate Judiciary Project co-founder was “explaining the science of climate change to a group of people with real power to act on it: judges.”<sup>14</sup> The Climate Judiciary Project’s tampering raises serious legal and ethical questions.

The Climate Judiciary Project’s representations also may raise serious consumer protection concerns. For example, ELI claims that the Climate Judiciary Project’s goal is to “provide neutral, objective information to the judiciary about the science of climate change.”<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Home, <https://cjp.eli.org/>.

<sup>8</sup> Sandra Nichols Thiam *et al.*, *Weathering the Storm of Global Climate Litigation: Enabling Judges to Make Sense of Science*, 54 GEO. J. INT’L L. 563, 592 (2023).

<sup>9</sup> About CJP, <https://cjp.eli.org/about>.

<sup>10</sup> Brianna Herlihy, ‘Corruptly Influencing the Courts’: Climate Justice Group that Trains Federal Judges Under Scrutiny, FOX NEWS (Aug. 15, 2024), at <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/corruptly-influencing-courts-climate-justice-group-trains-federal-judges-under-scrutiny>.

<sup>11</sup> Scott Walter, *Written Testimony to the House Oversight and Government Reform Subcommittee Delivering on Government Efficiency (DOGE)*, June 4, 2025, 7, at <https://www.congress.gov/119/meeting/house/118332/witnesses/HHRG-119-GO16-Wstate-WalkerS-20250604.pdf>.

<sup>12</sup> Andrew Mark Miller, *Climate Justice Group Has Deep Ties to Judges, Experts Involved in Litigation Amid Claims of Impartiality*, FOX NEWS (Dec. 13, 2024), at <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/climate-justice-group-deep-ties-judges-experts-involved-litigation-claims-impartiality>.

<sup>13</sup> Letter from U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz to Jordan Diamond, Feb. 23, 2024, 2, at <https://www.commerce.senate.gov/services/files/F2BB1C79-7627-4CF5-A146-6814341CEB2B>.

<sup>14</sup> Elisabeth H. Daugherty, *Paul Hanle ’69 Is Educating Judges About Climate Science*, PRINCETON ALUMNI WEEKLY (Oct. 6, 2021), at <https://paw.princeton.edu/article/paul-hanle-69-educating-judges-about-climate-science>.

<sup>15</sup> About the Climate Judiciary Project, <https://www.eli.org/climate-judiciary-project>.

Similarly, the Climate Judiciary Project calls its education “objective and trusted”<sup>16</sup> and “reliable.”<sup>17</sup> Education is not “neutral,” “objective,” or “reliable” if it is provided by individuals who are working with one side in active litigation and is designed to sway judges to that party’s side.

State consumer protection laws prohibit deceptive and misleading statements to market a product. ELI is representing its training as objective when reality shows that it is not. State Attorneys General are responsible for protecting consumers, and we are concerned by ELI’s statements.

EPA should not be funding these activities or the organization that sponsors them. We respectfully request that EPA cancel any on-going grants to ELI and ensure that ELI does not receive any future grants while it is sponsoring the Climate Judiciary Project.

Sincerely,



Austin Knudsen  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF MONTANA



Steve Marshall  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF ALABAMA



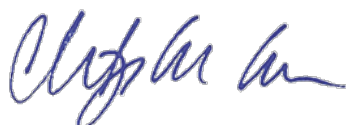
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ATTORNEY GENERAL OF FLORIDA



Chris Carr  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF GEORGIA



Raúl Labrador  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF IDAHO

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<sup>16</sup> Home, <https://cjp.eli.org/>.

<sup>17</sup> Curriculum Summary, <https://cjp.eli.org/curriculum>.



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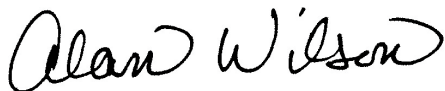
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