



AMERICAN STATISTICAL ASSOCIATION
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Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics

ADVANCING EXCELLENCE IN FEDERAL STATISTICS

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April 5, 2019

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chair
Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy
and Water Development
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Marcy Kaptur
Chair
Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy
and Water Development
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy
and Water Development
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Simpson
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy
and Water Development
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Alexander, Ranking Member Feinstein, Chair Kaptur, and Ranking Member Simpson,

We write in support of the fiscal year 2020 (FY20) budget for the Energy Information Administration (EIA). We respectfully request a level of \$127 million to maintain EIA's level of effort accounting for inflation. We recognize that difficult decisions must be made in the current environment and emphasize the importance of EIA data to our economy and security.

Energy issues are integrally tied to our economy and national security. Hundreds of billions of dollars ride on energy markets; investments in energy production and conservation; and investments in energy-consuming equipment, appliances, and vehicles. Our reliance on energy imports and the volatile nature of the global energy market make energy a security issue.

The EIA is the principal source of objective information to help us understand our needs and risks and guide our decisions. Policymakers, businesses, and regulators rely upon the EIA for data concerning domestic and global energy reserves, energy production, energy consumption, and energy efficiency. Also, the EIA has been a leader in making their data accessible to the public, including through innovative graphical displays exemplified by their new U.S. Energy Data Mapping System (<http://www.eia.gov/state/maps.cfm>).

Another indicator of EIA's importance is its broad data user community: private citizens, finance/consulting, energy sector, business, industry, education, government, and media. To better appreciate the value of EIA's work and its efforts to keep up with this dynamic sector of our economy, we highlight a couple items from impressive list of recent innovations in the FY20 budget justification: the Natural Gas Storage Dashboard, an interactive tool that provides weekly context to EIA's only Principal Federal Economic Indicator; provided hurricane status reports, Energy Disruptions Maps, and related information on hurricanes Florence's and Michael's potential to disrupt the energy system and analyses of the resulting impacts after landfall; and expanded the U.S. Energy Mapping System, a comprehensive visual reference for energy infrastructure in the United States.

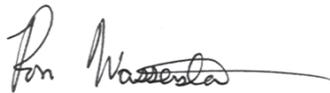
Given the importance of EIA data to our economy and security, we urge keeping the EIA budget at its FY19 level of effort so that EIA can maintain its important work to provide data and analysis of such regional issues as electricity transmission infrastructure and modernization, nuclear generators, and petroleum supply information. A level of \$127 million would also enable EIA to maintain its research on the use of alternative data collection modes to provide more timely and subnational data more efficiently and cost effectively.

In our opinion, EIA data should be viewed as a form of business intelligence that informs national policies. We must support that intelligence given that its strategic importance and economic value is critical to our decision-making in navigating the world energy conditions.

Again, we understand the current federal budget environment calls for painful choices and thank you for your support of EIA in FY19 and previous years.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Ron Wasserstein
Executive Director, American Statistical
Association



Cynthia Clark
Executive Director, COPAFS