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April 9, 2018

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

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

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

We write in support of the fiscal year 2019 (FY19) budget for the Energy Information Administration (EIA). We appreciate the FY18 levels provided by your committees for the EIA. Thank you. For FY19, 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 FY19 budget justification: a redesign of its three flagship reports on energy projections to better serve customer needs and increase operational efficiencies, and fuel market studies to support the department's "hurricane relief efforts by providing timely data and analyses about regional energy infrastructure and logistics".

Given the importance of EIA data to our economy and security, we urge keeping the EIA budget at its FY18 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.

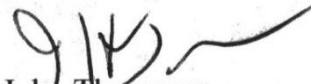
Again, we understand the current federal budget environment calls for painful choices and thank you for your support of EIA in FY18 and previous years. Considering the value of reliable energy data, we also respectfully urge \$127 million for EIA in FY19.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Lisa LaVange  
President, American Statistical Association



John Thompson  
Executive Director, COPAFS