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Attorney General Brown Files Amicus Brief Opposing Unlawful Termination of Environmental Justice Grants

BALTIMORE, MD (July 8, 2025) – Attorney General Anthony G. Brown joined a coalition of 20 attorneys general in filing an [amicus brief](#) supporting a lawsuit against the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for unlawfully terminating the Environmental and Climate Justice Block Grant Program. The grant program, created and funded by Congress through the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act, is designed to provide critical support to communities disproportionately impacted by pollution and climate change.

Attorney General Brown and the coalition argue that EPA’s abrupt and unlawful termination of the program and cancellation of grants have already caused widespread harm across their states, particularly in low-income communities and communities of color, and are urging the court to block the terminations while the lawsuit continues.

“The Trump administration terminated nearly \$63 million that Maryland’s universities, nonprofits, and local communities were counting on to combat the devastating impacts of pollution and climate change,” **said Attorney General Brown**. “Our Office will always fight to protect clean air and water for all Marylanders, especially those from marginalized communities that, for generations, have been unfairly burdened by environmental harms and excluded from participating in the decisions that would help protect their homes and families.”

In the brief filed in *Appalachian Voices v. EPA*, Attorney General Brown and the coalition emphasize that by terminating this grant program, the federal government is inflicting serious, lasting harm on vulnerable communities already grappling with disproportionate pollution burdens and the escalating effects of climate change. These communities, which are often low-income, communities of color, indigenous, or in rural areas, face overlapping environmental and public health crises.

The attorneys general explain that these challenges have been made worse by historical discriminatory policies including racial segregation, redlining, and a systemic lack of investment in disadvantaged neighborhoods. These communities are often under-resourced with limited access to vital needs like clean drinking water and are less equipped to recover from weather-related disasters or to mitigate the impacts of climate change on their communities.

In 2022, Congress created this grant program under the Inflation Reduction Act, mandating that EPA distribute \$3 billion in funding specifically to help address these disparities. Entities in Maryland are estimated to have received approximately \$62.7 million in federal funding under the program. Now, the sudden termination of these grants has forced grantees to lay off staff, halt programming, and freeze hiring.

Attorney General Brown and the coalition note that EPA's mass cancellation of the Environmental and Climate Justice Block Grant Program violates clear congressional mandates and fundamental constitutional principles. Congress directed the EPA to distribute these funds using mandatory language in the Inflation Reduction Act, leaving the agency no discretion to unilaterally withdraw this support.

The coalition is urging the court to grant plaintiffs' motion for a preliminary injunction and ensure that the environmental justice grants remain available for the communities that so desperately need them.

In filing this brief, Attorney General Brown joins the attorneys general of Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Hawai'i, Illinois, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington.

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