



PRESS RELEASE

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Environmental Council of the States (ECOS)

ECOS Commends U.S. EPA on EJ 2020 Action Agenda

Washington, DC – The Environmental Council of the States (ECOS) commends the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on today's release of the [Environmental Justice \(EJ\) 2020 Action Agenda \(EJ 2020\)](#). According to ECOS President John Linc Stine, Commissioner of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, "EJ 2020 continues EPA's strong leadership and demonstrates a deep commitment to equity. As President of ECOS, I appreciate the increased acknowledgement of the role of states as co-regulators, our shared responsibility, and the value of collaboration as partners in achieving EJ. Advancing equity at all levels is among our most important jobs in government. By working together and learning from each other, we can most effectively reduce disparities and strengthen the capacity of communities to create their own healthy futures." Stine made "equity in all that we do" one of his leadership priorities for his tenure.

Other ECOS leaders are commending EJ 2020, on which ECOS commented during development. "As South Carolina reflects on all that has been accomplished toward EJ since President Clinton's issuance of Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, we are even more encouraged about the future and all that will be achieved as a new chapter unfolds with the implementation of EPA's EJ 2020 strategy," said Myra Reece, ECOS Region 4 Executive Committee Representative and Director of Environmental Affairs at the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control. "South Carolina is proud to work collaboratively with EPA and other partners in supporting our priority of transforming overburdened and underserved communities into thriving communities that have a seat at the table and are engaged in decisions that impact their health, their environment, and their quality of life." Reece is an EJ leader among the states, serving on the National Environmental Justice Advisory Committee.

ECOS Executive Director and General Counsel Alexandra Dapolito Dunn said ECOS is delivering on Stine's goal by continuing its effort to build a national affinity group of state environmental agency officials responsible for community outreach, engagement, and EJ. ECOS will support this group through conference calls, webinars, and other peer-to-peer learning opportunities.

"EJ2020 sets us on a clear course for moving forward in how we make environmental decisions in this country," said Dunn. "We know it is critical to consider our communities in regulatory processes. We need to think about how regulatory and related decisions may impact people's lives, livelihoods, health, and economic opportunities, and then weave these considerations into our programs and outcomes." Dunn, who is featured on behalf of ECOS in EPA's short video released today – the [Promise of EJ 2020](#) – also teaches Environmental Justice as an Associate Adjunct Professor of Law at American University's Washington College of Law.

ECOS is the national nonprofit, nonpartisan association of state and territorial environmental commissioners. For more information, visit www.ecos.org.