

**From:** Message from the Administrator  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 07, 2016 12:38 PM  
**To:** Message from the Administrator  
**Subject:** Building a New Era of Partnerships

Dear EPA Colleagues,

When I began my tenure as Administrator, one of my objectives was to launch a new era of state, tribal and local Partnerships. As I look back over the past four years, I am so pleased to see how you – the dedicated staff of this agency – have fully embraced the effort to build cooperative, collaborative and lasting partnerships. We have become increasingly more intentional about the ways in which we engage with our partners, as they have with us; and among all of the programs and across the regions, we have wholeheartedly acknowledged that the “Environmental Enterprise” (in the words of our former Deputy Administrator, Bob Perciasepe) demands that every level of government work together in concert to support our shared mission to protect human health and the environment.

The state-federal structure of environmental protection is firmly embedded in our laws. It is also clear that in a very practical and pragmatic way, there is a direct correlation between the robustness of our partnerships with the breadth and pace of the progress in this country. That is why I asked you to strengthen our partnership – and you have done just that.

Our relationship with the states and territories is as strong as it has ever been due to your efforts and to the leadership of state environmental agencies across the country, together with the organization that brings state commissioners together: the Environmental Council of States (ECOS). Collectively, we have:

- embraced the importance of our shared responsibility to implement environmental statutes;
- identified challenges associated with state efforts to meet primacy and delegation responsibilities;
- shared the benefits of EPA’s world-class scientific and technological expertise;
- and so much more. ([See our list of many shared accomplishments.](#))

It has been particularly exciting to be a part of collectively entering into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century in full partnership with states, and tribes, through *E-Enterprise for the Environment* – a transformative model of shared governance that represents a true spirit of collaboration to modernize the implementation of our environmental programs and enhance service to the public.

Commissioner Bob Martineau from Tennessee and I have joked that over the course of the last several years, the state-EPA relationship has matured well past the dating stage and we are now acting more like an old married couple (not Bob and me – states and EPA!). While we disagree from time to time, we must continuously seek to find common ground where we can respectfully and constructively manage our differences for the benefit of the hundreds of millions of Americans who are counting on us.

In my experience, states, local communities and tribes are often the implementers of federal actions, as well as the engines of innovation that drive and support national actions. The closer you are to the people you serve, the easier it is to see the faces of those most vulnerable to the impacts of pollution. For the sake of our shared missions – and for the health of our families and the precious natural resources we need to survive and to thrive – it is imperative that we continue to talk openly and honestly with the states and to view ECOS as a platform for strengthening our partnership. EPA and our state partners have created something special, and I encourage everyone to keep it up!

Gina