



Resolution 16-1
Approved April 11, 2016
Nashville, Tennessee

Renewed April 10, 2019
Arlington, Virginia

Revised April 6, 2022
Asheville, North Carolina

Revised March 26, 2025
Arlington, Virginia

As certified by
Ben Grumbles
Executive Director

ECOS OPPOSITION TO SET-ASIDES IN CATEGORICAL GRANTS

WHEREAS, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) Categorical Grants within the State and Tribal Assistance Grants (STAG) to states, territories, and the District of Columbia (hereinafter referred to as “states”) assist in implementing core water, air, waste, and other programs that carry out federal environmental requirements; and

WHEREAS, Categorical Grant funding has been stagnant if not in decline since Fiscal Year 2002; and

WHEREAS, set-asides by Congress or the U.S. EPA in the Categorical Grants dictate where states spend their grant funding and limit states’ flexibility to effectively implement program activities; and

WHEREAS, set-asides of existing funding could reduce the ability of states to continue to implement environmental programs in the manner that U.S. EPA and states require by statute without further stressing state budgets; and

WHEREAS, previous ECOS resolutions have opposed set-asides in Clean Water Act Section 106 grant funding to state agencies “to administer programs for the prevention, reduction and elimination of water pollution;” and

WHEREAS, when federal funding is designated for specific activities by either Congress or U.S. EPA, these set-asides could limit the ability of states to address the expanding number of responsibilities of state environmental programs; and

WHEREAS, efforts to expand or assign priorities to elements of states’ administration of Categorical Grant programs are best accomplished through cooperative and open budget planning processes, jointly conducted by U.S. EPA and the states.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL OF THE STATES (ECOS):

Opposes set-asides of Categorical Grants funding provided to states by Congress or U.S. EPA, unless the set-asides are made with state concurrence and support joint priorities; and

Supports the continuation of routine and meaningful budget planning and priority setting discussions between states and U.S. EPA that result in agreed upon program enhancements and priorities.