



ASSOCIATION *of* ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING *and* SCIENCE PROFESSORS

AEESP Statement in Support of Clean Water, Air, Food, and Communities

You deserve to drink clean water. You deserve to breathe fresh air. You deserve to eat safe food. Your children and grandchildren deserve to grow up and play in unpolluted neighborhoods. Everyone deserves the same – clean water, air, food, and communities – to avoid dire consequences for their health and wellbeing. As environmental engineers and scientists, it's our job to provide these basic rights for society, but we need your help to continue doing so.

For over 50 years, our clean water and air regulations have saved millions of lives. We have removed lead, arsenic, and other toxic metals from drinking water, safeguarding communities. We advanced key technologies and policies to reduce smog in cities, improving air quality. We introduced new systems to capture mercury and other harmful chemicals from power plant emissions, ensuring food safety. We pioneered processes to filter and disinfect disease-causing organisms in water, saving more lives than any medicine. These advancements and many others are made possible by the education, training, scientific research, and innovation that happen at our universities and federal agencies. This work must continue to navigate new challenges and ensure that basic rights are shared by all.

As environmental engineers and scientists, we abide by a code of ethics that requires us to (i) protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public and (ii) express professional opinions truthfully and only when founded on adequate knowledge and honest conviction. This code of ethics compels us to speak out about recent actions that jeopardize our ability to continue delivering clean water, air, and food to you, your family, and your neighbors each day.

We are concerned about the increasing attacks on higher education, science, and the environment. Revoking the visas of faculty and students prevents them from making brilliant, creative, and impactful contributions to our society. Firing our partners in federal agencies, who have faithfully served the country, compromises decades of knowledge and experience that safeguard our communities. Canceling projects awarded by the National Science Foundation, Environmental Protection Agency, National Institutes of Health, and other federal agencies stifles American ingenuity, new technologies, and workforce development. Rolling back environmental regulations and ignoring the threat of climate change unnecessarily puts us all at risk.

Universities operate on the principle of academic freedom, ensuring our ability to pursue knowledge without outside interference. The recent attacks on higher education have resulted in censorship and retaliation. Our students – your family members, friends, and neighbors – deserve to pursue their education and goals of preserving the health, safety, and welfare of the public without fear or political interference. You deserve to benefit from the knowledge, ideas, and technologies they generate through the culture of innovation at American universities developed through decades of academic freedom and steady investments in scientific research.

As environmental engineers and scientists, we work behind the scenes every day to provide clean water, air, food, and communities. We love our job and take joy in our contributions to society, but we need your help to best protect you, your family, and your neighbors from current and future environmental threats. Please share this statement with your friends and family, professional network, and elected representatives and encourage them to speak out in support of higher education, science, and the environment. We need your help to ensure the highest quality of life for all.

The views expressed here are our own and not those of our home institutions.

Signed,
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