On February 28, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) released a statement regarding the Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 budget that would cut 30% of funding to State and Tribal Assistance Grant program, also known as STAG.

STAG is a grant program to assist states, tribes, and territories follow EPA regulations and proactively meet environmental issues and initiatives in their areas. This includes projects such as addressing water and infrastructure needs, cleaning up hazardous substances, and creating new climate change initiatives.

A document released by the White House signaled that the budget could drop from $8.1 billion to $6.1 billion a year, leaving states with less money in the form of grants. In 2016, 44% of the over $8 billion budget was allocated to STAG spending. Along with cuts in funding, the document indicates the administration's desire to decentralize and deregulate the functions of the agency, leaving states with more responsibilities and delegations.

Despite the budget’s fluidity, Scott Pruitt, head of the EPA, voiced his apprehensions with the proposal. “I am concerned about the grants that have been targeted, especially around water infrastructure, and those very important state revolving funds,” cautioned Pruitt. “What’s important for us is to educate OMB on what the priorities of the agency are, from water infrastructure to Superfund, providing some of those tangible benefits to our citizens while at the same time making sure that we reallocate, re-prioritize in our agency to do regulatory reform to get back within the bounds of Congress,” he said.

“STAG categorical grants and other state program cuts jeopardize the ability of EPA and the states’ shared efforts to efficiently implement these essential core programs,” said the Environmental Council of States, an organization which represents state environmental regulators.

While the Trump administration has released statements and documents pointing towards cuts in the EPA, they will officially submit a budget by March 16, which will then have to be passed in Congress.

To find out more about the eligibility and requirements for STAG visit https://www.epa.gov/grants/multipurpose-grants-states-and-tribes-frequent-questions