



the campaign for  
environmentally responsible  
health care

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The Honorable Scott Pruitt  
Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20460

cc: Ryan Jackson

Dear Administrator Pruitt:

Health Care Without Harm is writing to express strong support for a well-funded and fully staffed Environmental Protection Agency. For more than 20 years, our organization has worked with the health care sector to reduce its environmental impact and become an anchor for community resilience. The EPA has proven vital to this work. On behalf of the thousands of health care facilities across the country who rely on EPA programs to protect human and environmental health, we ask you to recognize the value of these programs to U.S. hospitals and commit to protecting program funding and staff.

Using 8 percent of the country's demand, the health care sector is the second largest consumer of energy in the United States. Hundreds of hospitals use [ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager](#) to benchmark energy data, run emissions reports, and support their participation in the Department of Energy's Better Buildings Challenge, which encourages facilities to reduce 20 percent of their energy usage by 2020. More than 700 facilities have shared Portfolio Manager benchmarking data through our Healthier Hospitals Leaner Energy Challenge.

Thanks to Portfolio Manager, hospitals can measure greenhouse gas emission reductions and compare their efforts to hospitals with similar profiles. Without ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager, hospitals would be left to private tools that are costly and limited in their data comparisons. In a time where there are more deaths from respiratory air pollution than HIV, tuberculosis, and malaria combined, the ability to measure and mitigate operations that contribute to air pollution is critical. The [EPA Waste Reduction Model](#) tool is also widely used by hospitals nationally to determine greenhouse gas emissions from solid waste sources and capture reductions based on smarter waste practices.

The [EPA WaterSense](#) program, which provides guidance around water-saving measures through product labeling, tools, and best management practices for buildings, is a valuable resource for

hospitals. Hospitals are the most water-intensive facilities in the country, accounting for 7 percent of all commercial and institutional use, and so water conservation is a high priority.

The [EPA's Food Recovery Challenge](#) addresses the issue of food waste in the supply chain. A landfill is comprised of 21 percent food waste, and 30-40 percent of food grown in the United States ends up as waste. One in seven Americans is food insecure, and food degrading in landfills emits methane, a potent greenhouse gas. The Food Recovery Challenge has helped hospitals reduce food waste and related greenhouse gasses, while also meeting the needs of food insecure individuals and families in their communities.

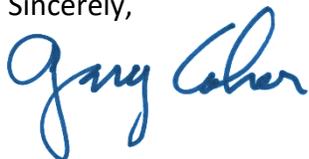
Hospitals use the [EPA Smartway Program](#) to identify and select more efficient freight carriers, transport modes, equipment, and operational strategies to advance supply chain sustainability. With more than \$200 billion spent annually on medical and non-medical products, improving the efficiency of product distribution significantly reduces health care's environmental impact.

Finally, we would like to bring to your attention the history of our partner organization, [Practice Greenhealth](#), which was born out of an agreement between the EPA and the American Hospital Association to advance pollution prevention efforts in our nation's health care facilities. With funding from the EPA, the organization that later became Practice Greenhealth established a network of 1,342 partners representing 7,148 health care facilities committed to reducing health care's environmental footprint. Today, Practice Greenhealth continues to work closely with a growing network of hospitals to support the successful implementation of EPA tools and resources.

Representing 18 percent of the nation's GDP, the health care sector has a tremendous impact on the environment through their energy use, waste, water consumption, and supply chains. Environmental quality is inextricably linked to human health, and the health care sector, guided by its promise to "do no harm," is committed to reducing its environmental footprint. The EPA programs outlined above offer essential tools and resources for supporting sustainable and resilient health care delivery and population health. Without these programs, both environmental and human health are at risk.

We respectfully ask that the Environmental Protection Agency and the dedicated programs included in this letter remain well-funded and available to health care and other industries.

Sincerely,



Gary Cohen

President and Co-Founder