

# **Biden Environmental Justice Adviser Received Millions in Taxpayer Funds After Personally Applying For EPA Grant**

## **LaTricea Adams's group received \$20 million 'environmental justice' grant while she served on Biden's Environmental Justice Advisory Council**

In the final weeks of the Biden administration, the Environmental Protection Agency awarded a lucrative environmental justice grant to a left-wing nonprofit whose CEO—LaTricea Adams—personally applied for the taxpayer funding while simultaneously serving as a member of a top White House advisory council.

The Biden EPA [announced in December](#) that it [selected](#) Young, Gifted & Green to receive a \$20 million grant under its so-called Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Program—the largest grant allowed under the program. The EPA dished out 105 grants—including the grant to Adams's Tennessee-based group—totaling \$1.6 billion as part of the program after receiving 2,801 applications from groups nationwide, according to internal agency documents reviewed by the *Washington Free Beacon*.

The EPA documents also show that Adams was listed as the individual applicant for the grant, which she applied for on behalf of Young, Gifted & Green in late September. Adams personally submitted the application [while serving](#) as a member of former president Joe Biden's Environmental Justice Advisory Council, which was housed at the EPA. She served on the council [from March 2021](#) through the end of the Biden administration.

It remains unclear the extent to which Adams, in her role on the Environmental Justice Advisory Council, advised the EPA on its grantmaking activity or implementation of the Community Change Program. Young, Gifted & Green did not respond to requests for comment.

But the revelation adds further weight to questions about the Biden administration's process for doling out grants and whether the administration played favorites when it came to such programs. Federal officials are generally expected to avoid even the appearance of impropriety when carrying out their duties.

The *Free Beacon* [previously reported](#) that groups whose leaders served on Biden's Environmental Justice Advisory Council were the recipients of EPA grants totaling hundreds of millions of dollars during the previous administration. The Young, Gifted & Green grant, though, represents the only known instance in which a council member personally applied for the funding their group ultimately received from the EPA.

The Trump administration has taken aim at both environmental justice programs as part of its energy agenda. It has also initiated audits of climate spending executed under the Biden administration as part of its efforts to cut government waste and abuse.

"The deep ties between the Biden-Harris administration, their donors, advisers, and grant recipients are a staggering wake-up call," EPA administrator Lee Zeldin told the *Free Beacon* in a statement. "There will be zero tolerance for waste or abuse at EPA under the Trump administration."

"Being a good steward of American hard-earned tax dollars to protect human health and the environment is my top priority, not following the corrupt example of those who funneled funds through kickbacks and pass throughs to far-left activists," Zeldin said.

The EPA's billion-dollar Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Program [was created by](#) the Democrats' Inflation Reduction Act, which Biden signed into law in August 2022. The purpose of the initiative is to fund local efforts to fight climate change in ways that "benefit disadvantaged communities."

Young, Gifted & Green said it would use its \$20 million grant to finance energy efficiency upgrades in 150 low-income homes in Memphis, Tenn., and support small businesses that seek to install solar panels or replace gas appliances with electric alternatives. The group added that it would construct new greenspaces.

The size of the EPA grant dwarfs the amount of money Young, Gifted & Green had previously handled. Since it registered as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit in 2020, the group has reported a total revenue of \$2.7 million, about 14 percent the size of its EPA grant, according to [tax filings reviewed](#) by the *Free Beacon*.

"These shocking revelations solidify the Biden administration's legacy as the most corrupt in modern history," Tom Jones, the executive director of right-leaning watchdog group the American Accountability Foundation, told the *Free Beacon*.

"While everyday Americans suffered under Bidenflation, rampant cronyism flourished—a disgrace that demands full investigation and accountability and proves once again the necessity for all these grants to be impounded by the Office of Management and Budget immediately," Jones continued. "The American people deserve nothing less."

Daren Bakst, the director of the Competitive Enterprise Institute's Center for Energy and Environment, argued that Zeldin should consider investigating the full extent of the Biden administration's environmental justice initiatives. He said the case involving Young, Gifted & Green could expose deeper issues with how the Biden administration approached such programs.

"The entire Environmental and Climate Justice Program should be in his sights," Bakst told the *Free Beacon*. "As part of this, the EPA should ensure that grant recipients were eligible for the money."

"It is quite possible that White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council members can be leaders of organizations receiving the grants," he said. "But this would be yet again another example of the problems with the Inflation Reduction Act and how the Biden EPA implemented the programs."

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