



Know your environment.  
Protect your health.

December 12, 2017

James Lentz, chief executive officer  
Toyota Motor North America  
P.O. Box 259001  
Plano, TX 75025-9001

Dear Mr. Lentz:

We were shocked to learn that Toyota is “partnering” with Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt and his staff “to begin a lean process at the agency to evaluate management practices.” Mr. Pruitt described this partnership on Dec. 7, in the context of telling Chairman John Shimkus of the House Energy and Commerce Committee that there are numerous, major deficiencies in the agency’s management and accountability systems.

A Toyota spokeswoman later told HuffPost reporter Alexander C. Kaufman that the company is considering working with the EPA, but has not yet reached an agreement. But the very prospect of such a partnership is cause for concern.

Nothing in Mr. Pruitt’s actions or public statements to date as head of the EPA, or in his prior role as Oklahoma’s attorney general, suggests that he comes to issues of EPA’s performance, management and effectiveness with an impartial interest in improving the agency through any management techniques, much less the precepts of the vaunted “Toyota Way.”

To the contrary, Mr. Pruitt already has an overarching objective for EPA: To destroy its ability to achieve its mission. His management decisions to date make his intent clear:

- With no review whatsoever, Mr. Pruitt has publicly and enthusiastically embraced a 30 percent cut in the EPA’s budget, which would gut core programs, state grants, initiatives such as Energy Star, and the capacity of EPA’s scientists to base policy on the best available science.
- He has routinely isolated or ignored career scientists, attorneys and regulators in favor of granting power and authority to political appointees drawn from the ranks of the industries they now regulate.

1436 U Street NW, Suite 100, Washington, DC 20009

p. 202.667.6982 | f. 202.232.2592

ewg.org



Know your environment.  
Protect your health.

- He has summarily fired independent scientists who play a vital role advising the agency and replaced them with industry experts who are burdened with deep conflicts of interest.
- And he has reversed, or is seeking to reverse, major environmental regulatory decisions affecting automobile fuel economy standards, clean air, clean water, pesticides and toxic chemicals.

To the degree they can do so without risk of retaliation, EPA career staff—scientists, regulators, staff attorneys, enforcement officials—have strenuously objected to and opposed the substance of Mr. Pruitt’s decisions and the manner in which they have been made. It is an open secret that EPA staff morale is lower than it has been since the Gorsuch years of the 1980s, a fact confirmed not only by news reports but by the professional interactions I and my colleagues in the environmental community have had with dozens of EPA employees. Indeed, former EPA administrators who have served in Republican administrations have been at the forefront of critics of Mr. Pruitt’s anti-environmental decisions and his disrespect and disregard of the agency’s culture and heritage.

Mr. Lentz, if you were managing Toyota the way Scott Pruitt is managing the EPA, your annual "Toyotathan" would be featuring showrooms stocked with Edsels and Studebaker, not the fleet of advanced, pioneering, energy-efficient models that for decades have strongly appealed to environmentally conscious American buyers.

The “partnership” Mr. Pruitt announced in his testimony inevitably appropriates the credibility of Toyota’s brand, and the integrity of the "Toyota Way," to his campaign to degrade and dismantle the most important force for environmental protection on the planet.

As a non-profit organization deeply involved in federal policy and that also works to engage consumers in campaigns that encourage corporations to adopt responsible practices, we urge you to immediately and unambiguously announce Toyota’s rejection of any management partnership with EPA and Administrator Scott Pruitt.

To do otherwise risks irreparable harm to Toyota’s brand and reputation in the American marketplace.

Your company’s [website](#) states: “Let’s face it: there’s only one planet Earth. That’s why we focus on environmentally sustainable solutions in everything we do and every vehicle we make.”

1436 U Street NW, Suite 100, Washington, DC 20009

p. 202.667.6982 | f. 202.232.2592

ewg.org



Know your environment.  
Protect your health.

Based on Mr. Pruitt's career performance to date on environmental matters, it would be hard to find a management record more at odds with this statement from Toyota.

By partnering with Mr. Pruitt's EPA, you are aiding and publicly aligning yourself with his irresponsible agenda. Again, I urge you to completely disassociate Toyota from Mr. Pruitt's testimony and any "partnership" in his relentless campaign to "manage" EPA into the ground. I would welcome any opportunity to meet with you or other Toyota executives to discuss this matter in more detail.

Sincerely,

Ken Cook, President  
Environmental Working Group