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EPA Announces New Regional Administrator for USVI, Puerto Rico, Other Jurisdictions

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Lisa Garcia

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Michael S. Regan on Thursday announced that President Joe Biden will appoint Lisa Garcia to become EPA's Regional Administrator for Region 2.

Garcia will lead the implementation of the Biden-Harris environmental agenda in New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and eight Indian Nations, the EPA.

The announcement was made the same day as St. Croix Energy's [successful bid](#) for the Limetree Bay Refinery, which was ordered shut by the EPA following [a May 12 flare incident](#) that sent plumes of smoke mixed with oil droplets billowing west of St. Croix.

“Lisa’s leadership will be instrumental to EPA’s work addressing the complicated intersection of environmental and economic challenges in Region 2. She brings a wealth of experience in fighting for climate justice and equity that will be invaluable as we deliver on our mission to protect communities from Puerto Rico to the U.S. Virgin Islands, and in New Jersey and New York, from pollution,” said EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan.

“I am honored to be appointed as Regional Administrator for EPA Region 2, and to help advance President Biden’s and Administrator Regan’s priorities to integrate environmental justice in all we do to tackle climate change, ensure all communities have clean drinking water and reduce toxic pollution in our air, water, and soil,” Garcia said. “With the passage of the historic infrastructure deal in Congress, I stand ready to serve with the amazing EPA staff and take action toward a more just and resilient planet.”

According to the EPA, Garcia is a lawyer that has been using the power of law and policy over the past 20 years to advocate for environmental and climate justice. She was appointed to EPA in 2009, serving as associate administrator and advisor to EPA Administrators Jackson and McCarthy. She helped to lead the team responsible for the creation and implementation of Plan EJ 2014 -EPA’s first EJ strategic plan - and the design of EJSCREEN.

Garcia then worked as Vice President for Litigation at Earthjustice, and in 2019 joined GRIST magazine to lead a new program called Fix, Grist’s climate solutions lab focused on amplifying the voices of climate justice leaders. Earlier in her career, Garcia served as the Director of EJ and Indian Affairs at the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and as Assistant Attorney General at the NYS Attorney General’s Environmental Protection Bureau.

She was also an Associate Professor at Rutgers Law School, staff attorney at NYPIRG, and a legislative fellow for Senator Robert Torricelli and NJ State Senator Byron Baer, according to the EPA.