

March 25, 2019

✓ The Hon. Raul M. Grijalva, Chairman
The Hon. Rob Bishop, Ranking Member
The Hon. Alan Lowenthal, Subcommittee on Energy and Natural Resources, Chairman
U.S. House Committee on Natural Resources
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Reauthorization of the Collection Fees Supporting the Abandoned Mine Land Fund

Dear Representatives,

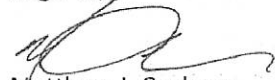
I am writing to highlight the need for reauthorization of the collection fees associated with the Surface Mine Control and Reclamation Act (SMCRA) of 1977. Over a century of environmentally unregulated mining practices took a huge toll on the land and water where mining occurred. However, SMCRA changed the face of the coal mining industry into one that is vastly safer with a significantly smaller environmental impact and allowed for reclamation of pre-regulation hazards and scars across the nation.

There are twelve (12) waste coal power plants that were specially designed and located in and among the affected areas. These plants rely upon SMCRA to assist with reclaiming the costly abandoned mine lands that would otherwise continue to pollute the air and water sheds.

Hundreds of direct and thousands of indirect citizens support these plants. The affected lands require extensive excavation and reclamation utilizing equipment, labor, engineering and environmental resources to minimize the harmful impact of these sites. These sites also require Federal, State, local Government, and national non-profit agency resources to tackle the enormous tasks so that the land can be reclaimed and rejuvenated. Upon completion the land is utilized by municipalities and businesses to develop the land so that homes or other structures can be constructed. This reclamation and subsequent construction provides valuable revenue to the local towns and municipalities.

Funding for reclamation activities is derived from a fee on every ton of coal mined in the U.S. since 1977. Those fees are placed into an account known as the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund. The collection of these fees is set to expire in September of 2021. However, our work is not done. The affected lands require intervention and the collected fees support the reclamation efforts.

Regards,



Matthew J. Cochran
Authorized Representative
Northampton Generating Company, L.P.
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Northampton Fuel Supply Company, Inc.
Keystone Reclamation Fuel Management, LLC
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