



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

August 12, 2019

The Honorable Matthew Cartwright
United States House of Representatives
1034 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Cartwright:

As you know, Pennsylvania has a rich industrial heritage founded on the abundant availability of coal, which helped fuel the industrial revolution and prevail in two world wars. However, as a result of this history dating back to the 1800s, we have also been left with a legacy of abandoned mine lands and abandoned mine drainage which scar our landscape, present hazards to our citizens, and degrade our environment. Abandoned unreclaimed mining areas cover nearly 300 square miles of our state, at over 5,000 sites. The total coal refuse at these sites may be as much as 8 billion cubic yards. Pennsylvania has more abandoned mine land and more miles of streams impaired by abandoned mine drainage than any other state in the nation.

In order to help address this pressing environmental challenge, in 2016 I signed House Bill 1198 (Act 84 of 2016) which created a \$10 million Coal Refuse Energy and Reclamation Tax Credit program in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The purpose of this program is to incentivize the continued reclamation of coal refuse from mining-affected lands which pollute the air and waterways of Pennsylvania and downstream states. Earlier this year, House Bill 262 (Act 13 of 2019) doubled the size of the program to \$20 million.

While the program has been successful in providing additional resources for the environmental remediation of polluting waste coal, due to budgetary restrictions, even with the recent increase, the state program will prove insufficient to fully incentivize the coal refuse reclamation to energy industry to operate at its full environmental remediation potential.

Pennsylvania's program will at best serve as a short-term bridge to a permanent federal solution of this environmental issue. Thus, included in Act 13 of 2019 was a provision that would eliminate Pennsylvania's state tax credit program if a similar coal refuse tax credit program were created at the federal level.

I am requesting your support for legislation creating a federal coal refuse tax credit program. Not only will this relieve the Pennsylvania state budget of a \$20 million per year environmental remediation cost, but I believe this would put the program where it most appropriately belongs – at the federal level. These coal refuse piles are the remnants of more than a century of coal mining in Pennsylvania that powered the growth of our nation as a military and industrial superpower. Now the residents of Pennsylvania are burdened with the pollution and



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remediation costs of an industry from which our entire country benefited. In my view, the United States should step up and share these costs.

Thank you for your consideration of this request to protect the Pennsylvania taxpayers and environment by supporting the creation of a federal coal refuse tax credit program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom Wolf".

TOM WOLF
Governor

CC:

Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick
Congressman Brendan Boyle
Congressman Dwight Evans
Congresswoman Madeleine Dean
Congresswoman Mary Gay Scanlon
Congresswoman Chrissy Houlahan
Congresswoman Susan Wild
Congressman Dan Meuser
Congressman Scott Perry
Congressman Lloyd Smucker
Congressman Fred Keller
Congressman John Joyce
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