



SUSQUEHANNA RIVER
BASIN COMMISSION

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NY ■ PA ■ MD ■ USA

November 26, 2019

The Honorable Dan Meuser
Pennsylvania 9th District
326 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Matt Cartwright
Pennsylvania 17th District
1034 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Support for H.R. 4735, the Mine Affected Community Energy and Environment Act

Dear Congressmen Meuser and Cartwright:

I write to you on behalf of the nation's sixteenth largest river in support of the Mine Affected Community Energy and Environmental Act, H.R. 4735.

We urge the United States Congress to pass this important legislation encouraging continued coal refuse reclamation that would address the legacy of coal mining by restoring our land, air and streams.

The legacy of this nation's mining industry has been left to our current citizens, who must cope with the myriad issues posed by abandoned mine lands (AML) and millions of tons of coal refuse strewn across the landscape of our communities. Coal refuse piles pollute the land, water and air with uncontrolled emissions from burning refuse piles and contamination of land and water resources with acid runoff and sedimentation.

The Susquehanna River Basin Commission, a federal-interstate compact which went into effect on January 23rd, 1971, was established to coordinate water resources management and preserve and enhance the River's value as a scenic and recreational asset for the people who live in the watershed. Restoring the health of our streams polluted by legacy coal refuse continues to be one of our more challenging water resource issues, and this industry has been a key partner in the recovery efforts.

The coal refuse reclamation-to-energy industry delivers substantial economic and environmental benefits as a vital partner in the effort to address the problems associated with AML sites. In Pennsylvania alone, over the past 30 years this industry has removed more than 225 million tons of coal refuse, reclaimed at least 7,200 acres of mine-scarred land and restored over 1,200 miles of impaired streams, but there is still more work to be done.

*A water resource agency serving
the Susquehanna River Watershed*

The industry also represents a major source of economic activity and family-sustaining employment. The facilities in Pennsylvania alone produce \$615 million in annual economic benefit, supporting the equivalent of 3,000 full-time jobs annually. These benefits are concentrated in historic coal communities that face ongoing challenges in generating economic opportunities for residents.

We support the Mine Affected Community Energy and Environment Act, H.R. 4735 and ask the United States Congress to pass this legislation encouraging the continued efforts of coal refuse reclamation to energy facilities while providing an alternative source of electricity and thousands of family-sustaining jobs.

Respectfully submitted,



Andrew D. Dehoff
Executive Director