



# OHIO RIVER VALLEY WATER SANITATION COMMISSION

5735 KELLOGG AVENUE, CINCINNATI, OHIO 45230 (513) 231-7719 FAX: (513) 231-7761

JOHN KUPKE  
CHAIRMAN  
RICHARD HARRISON, P.E.  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

December 19, 2019

Congressman Matt Cartwright  
1034 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Support for H.R. 4735: Mine Affected Community Energy and Environment Act

Dear Congressmen Cartwright:

The Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission (ORSANCO) is the water pollution control agency for the interstate waters of the Ohio River Basin including the Ohio River. The 981 mile long Ohio River is an incredible natural resource that serves as an abundant and high quality drinking water source and recreational asset while supporting a robust industrial community that helps serve as a vital economic engine for our nation. ORSANCO brings together eight signatory states and the federal government, through its 1948 Compact, to work cooperatively to improve water quality in the Ohio River Basin. The control of Coal refuse piles through reclamation to energy facilities is very relevant to ORSANCO's mission and serves to enhance the water quality of Ohio River Basin interstate waters.

The legacy of this nation's mining industry has been left to our current citizens, who must cope with the myriad of 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 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.

We commend your leadership on this issue by introducing H.R. 4735, the Mine Affected Community Energy and Environment Act. This legislation is critical to address the health, safety and environmental costs imposed on local communities by our nation's coal mining legacy and continues a longstanding public-private partnership with coal refuse reclamation to energy facilities that remove polluting coal refuse piles and reclaim AML sites.

We support the Mine Affected Community Energy and Environment Act, H.R. 4735 and urge the United States Congress to pass this legislation encouraging the continued efforts of coal refuse reclamation to energy facilities to address the legacy of coal mining by restoring our land, air and streams while providing an alternative source of electricity and thousands of family-sustaining jobs.

Sincerely,

Richard Harrison, PE  
Executive Director  
Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission (ORSANCO)  
O: 513-231-7719 ext. 105, C: 859-393-4661  
rharrison@orsanco.org



# OHIO RIVER VALLEY WATER SANITATION COMMISSION

5735 KELLOGG AVENUE, CINCINNATI, OHIO 45230 (513) 231-7719 FAX: (513) 231-7761

JOHN KUPKE  
CHAIRMAN  
RICHARD HARRISON, P.E.  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

December 19, 2019

Congressman Dan Meuser  
326 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Support for H.R. 4735: Mine Affected Community Energy and Environment Act

Dear Congressmen Meuser:

The Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission (ORSANCO) is the water pollution control agency for the interstate waters of the Ohio River Basin including the Ohio River. The 981 mile long Ohio River is an incredible natural resource that serves as an abundant and high quality drinking water source and recreational asset while supporting a robust industrial community that helps serve as a vital economic engine for our nation. ORSANCO brings together eight signatory states and the federal government, through its 1948 Compact, to work cooperatively to improve water quality in the Ohio River Basin. The control of Coal refuse piles through reclamation to energy facilities is very relevant to ORSANCO's mission and serves to enhance the water quality of Ohio River Basin interstate waters.

The legacy of this nation's mining industry has been left to our current citizens, who must cope with the myriad of 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 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.

We commend your leadership on this issue by introducing H.R. 4735, the Mine Affected Community Energy and Environment Act. This legislation is critical to address the health, safety and environmental costs imposed on local communities by our nation's coal mining legacy and continues a longstanding public-private partnership with coal refuse reclamation to energy facilities that remove polluting coal refuse piles and reclaim AML sites.

We support the Mine Affected Community Energy and Environment Act, H.R. 4735 and urge the United States Congress to pass this legislation encouraging the continued efforts of coal refuse reclamation to energy facilities to address the legacy of coal mining by restoring our land, air and streams while providing an alternative source of electricity and thousands of family-sustaining jobs.

Sincerely,

Richard Harrison, PE  
Executive Director  
Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission (ORSANCO)  
O: 513-231-7719 ext. 105, C: 859-393-4661  
rharrison@orsanco.org