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2204 Anna Mae Drive
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March 3, 2020

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

Congressman Matt Cartwright
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:

Coal has higher carbon content and with comparatively lower conversion efficiencies leads it to be a less desired fossil fuel for generating electricity. There are however exceptions for the use of coal when considering the holistic environmental impacts. The coal refuse to energy industry is one of those exceptions.

It was coal that fueled the United States industrial revolution and powered our country through two World Wars and other conflicts. Early mining and cleaning of coal had numerous unintended consequences that have scarred our landscapes and polluted our waters. I have lived these impacts my entire life as I was born, raised and live in western Pennsylvania, a historic Appalachian coal mining region. As a former Deputy Secretary for Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Protection, I dealt with these mining legacies on a daily basis.

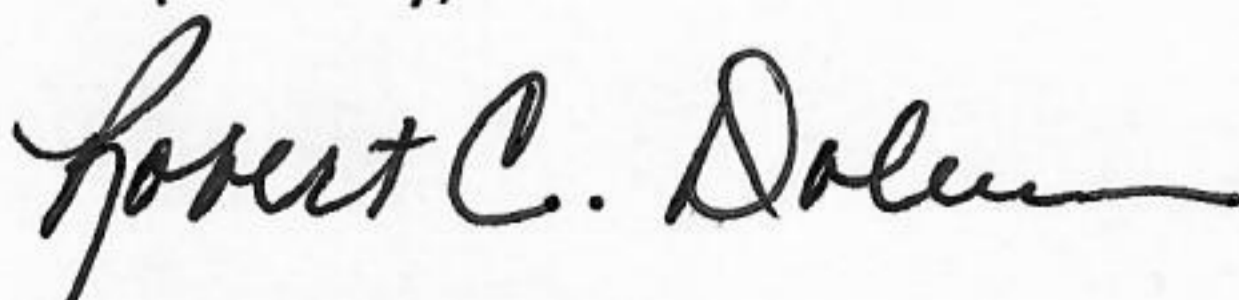
The current coal field citizens have no choice but to cope with the myriad of issues posed by abandoned mine lands (AML) and millions of tons of coal refuse that can be found across the landscapes of our communities. Coal refuse piles continue to pollute the land, water and air with uncontrolled emissions from burning refuse piles and contamination of land and water resources with acid runoff and sedimentation.

With a holistic approach, 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.

I personally and professionally 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.

Respectfully,



Robert C. Dolence, P.E.