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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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# HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 190 Session of  
1997

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INTRODUCED BY S. H. SMITH, LEVDANSKY, DALEY, LUCYK, RAMOS,  
COLAIZZO, FARGO, FICHTER, DeWEESE, GEIST, RUBLEY, TIGUE,  
SERAFINI, BELARDI, BAKER, OLASZ, THOMAS, ITKIN, JADLOWIEC,  
ARGALL, SAYLOR, EACHUS, McNAUGHTON, HASAY, SURRA, HENNESSEY,  
CAWLEY, STEELMAN, YOUNGBLOOD, SHANER, LYNCH, PISTELLA,  
STABACK, McCALL, HESS, BENNINGHOFF, ROSS, SATHER, GIGLIOTTI,  
HERMAN, MELIO, McILHATTAN, HALUSKA, WOJNAROSKI, JOSEPHS,  
ROBERTS, TRELLO, BROWN, COLAFELLA, HERSHEY, HUTCHINSON AND  
HORSEY, JUNE 3, 1997

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON RULES, JUNE 3, 1997

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## A RESOLUTION

1 Memorializing the President of the United States and Congress to  
2 make the more than \$1 billion already earmarked for abandoned  
3 mine reclamation available to states.

4 WHEREAS, The biggest water pollution problem facing the  
5 Commonwealth today is polluted water draining from abandoned  
6 coal mines; and

7 WHEREAS, Over half the streams do not meet water quality  
8 standards in this Commonwealth because of mine drainage; and

9 WHEREAS, The Commonwealth has over 250,000 acres of abandoned  
10 mine lands, refuse banks and old mine shafts in 45 of  
11 Pennsylvania's 67 counties, more than any other state in the  
12 nation; and

13 WHEREAS, The Department of Environmental Protection estimates  
14 it will cost more than \$15 billion to reclaim and restore  
15 abandoned mine lands; and

1 WHEREAS, The Commonwealth now receives about \$20 million per  
2 year from the Federal Government to do reclamation projects; and

3 WHEREAS, There is now a \$1 billion balance in the Federal  
4 Abandoned Mine Reclamation Trust Fund that is set aside by law  
5 to take care of pollution and safety problems caused by old coal  
6 mines; and

7 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania is the fourth largest coal-producing  
8 state in the nation, and coal operators contribute significantly  
9 to the fund by paying a special fee for each ton of coal they  
10 mine; and

11 WHEREAS, The Department of Environmental Protection and 39  
12 county conservation districts through the Western and Eastern  
13 Pennsylvania Coalitions for Abandoned Mine Reclamation have  
14 worked as partners to improve the effectiveness of mine  
15 reclamation programs; and

16 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania has been working with the Interstate  
17 Mining Compact Commission, the National Association of Abandoned  
18 Mine Land Programs and other states to free more of these funds  
19 to clean up abandoned mine lands; and

20 WHEREAS, Making more funds available to states for abandoned  
21 mine reclamation should preserve the interest revenues now being  
22 made available for the United Mine Workers Combined Benefit  
23 Fund; and

24 WHEREAS, The Federal Office of Surface Mining, the  
25 Environmental Protection Agency and the Congress of the United  
26 States have not agreed to make more funds available to states  
27 for abandoned mine reclamation; therefore be it

28 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the  
29 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania memorialize the President of the  
30 United States and Congress to make \$1 billion already earmarked

1 for abandoned mine land reclamation available to states to clean  
2 up and make their abandoned mine lands safe; and be it further  
3 RESOLVED, That the Chief Clerk of the House of  
4 Representatives transmit a copy of this resolution to the  
5 President of the United States and all members of Congress.