

MEMORANDUM

TO: All House Members
FROM: Rep. Camille "Bud" George
DATE: Sept. 4, 2012

RE: Resolution urging U.S. Congress to repeal \$15 million cap to Abandoned Mine Lands Fund

NO HARD COPY WILL FOLLOW

I soon will be introducing a resolution urging the U.S. Congress to repeal an amendment made to the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act through the Surface Transportation Bill (HR 4348) that caps the total annual payments from the Abandoned Mine Lands (AML) Fund to a certified state at \$15 million.

Although Pennsylvania is not a certified state because it has not completed reclamation of all of its high-priority coal mining AML features, it appears that, when the rest of the SMCRA is taken into account, this amendment would also result in reduced payments to uncertified states. This amendment could result in an annual loss of anywhere between \$17.8 million to \$23.2 million to Pennsylvania's AML Program. The decrease in funding to PA's AML Program would also result in a corresponding loss to Pennsylvania's Acid Mine Drainage (AMD) Set-Aside Program of \$5.3 million to \$7 million annually. The DEP estimates that the total loss to these Pennsylvania reclamation programs over the remaining 10 years of the federal AML Program could very well exceed \$200 million.

Mine reclamation projects are crucial in Pennsylvania because they create jobs and clean up our water. It is estimated that Pennsylvania has more than 29,000 acres of high-priority, coal-mining-related problems with an estimated reclamation cost of more than \$1.1 billion. To see this funding disappear could halt decades of progress.

Please contact my office by phone at (717) 787-7316 or by e-mail at cgeorge@pahouse.net if you wish to co-sponsor this legislation or have any questions,

Thank you for your consideration.