

United Mine Workers of America

CECIL E. ROBERTS
INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT



TELEPHONE
(703) 291-2420
FAX (703) 291-2451

UNITED MINE WORKERS' HEADQUARTERS
18354 QUANTICO GATEWAY DRIVE, SUITE 200

Triangle, VA

22172-1779

January 30, 2017

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
United States Senator
172 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader McConnell and Senator Capito:

I write to thank you for introducing a Joint Resolution to overturn the Stream Protection Rule (SPR) under the Congressional Review Act. The United Mine Workers of America wholeheartedly supports your legislation and will work to see that it is passed.

We have expressed our serious concerns about the SPR to the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement on multiple occasions, including in oral and written comments on the proposed rule. We are especially concerned with the long-term negative impact this rule is very likely to have on future longwall coal mining in the United States and associated employment impacts on our members.

More than 40,000 coal miners in Appalachia alone have lost their jobs since 2011. Even using conservative methods of estimating overall employment impacts associated with those lost mining jobs, one arrives at a total job loss amount in excess of 200,000 jobs. The last thing America's coal-producing regions need at this time is another regulation that will have the effect of reducing employment even more and further stifling economic development.

You know as well as I that the current economic condition in Appalachia and many other coal producing areas is simply catastrophic. Teachers and first responders are losing their jobs because local communities no longer have the revenue to pay their salaries. Small businesses have closed by the thousands. Illegal drug use is rampant. The basic structure of society is quite simply crumbling.

This cannot go on, especially when it is fostered by government regulations like the SPR which will have the effect of making the problem worse. The United Mine Workers of America and our members want clean water. We want a cleaner environment. We live in the areas where this rule would be applied, and we want our families to be able to enjoy living there for generations to come.

But we are very concerned that the Stream Protection Rule will keep that from happening. I again thank you for introducing the Joint Resolution to overturn it, and I pledge the UMWA's support in your efforts to get it passed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cecil E. Roberts". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "C" and "R".

Cecil E. Roberts

cc: Bob Scaramozzino, International Secretary-Treasurer
Levi Allen, Executive Assistant to the Secretary-Treasurer
UMWA International Executive Board members
Phil Smith, Director of Governmental Affairs
Adam Banig, Legislative Assistant