

**WHEREAS**, Substantial coal mining has occurred in Pennsylvania for more than 130 years providing the fuel for the United States Industrial Revolution and for support of two World War efforts , and the industry has been a significant employer of our citizens for most of these years; and

**WHEREAS**, Abandoned mines pose hazards in Pennsylvania of dangerous shafts, mountains of black waste, scarred landscapes, acidic drainages polluting more than 5,500 miles of our streams and other hazards threatening human health and safety and depressing local economies; and

**WHEREAS**, At least 44 of Pennsylvania's 67 counties are affected by abandoned coal mines; and at least 1.4 million Pennsylvanians live within one mile of abandoned mine lands; and Pennsylvania's estimated cleanup cost is \$15 billion; and

**WHEREAS**, Abandoned mines and abandoned mine lands create negative impacts on local economies by destroying recreational opportunities, lowering land values, leaving desolate communities once the mines are exhausted and ruining sites for further residential, forestry, commercial or agricultural uses, and threaten the human health and safety of people living in our coal field communities; and

**WHEREAS**, The scope of the abandoned mine problem in Pennsylvania continues to outpace available resources; and

**WHEREAS**, Reclamation of abandoned mine sites can add to the economy by creating jobs, increasing community pride, increasing property values, decreasing stress-related costs through stream-based recreation, restoring the health of the environment and providing future sites for commercial or industrial endeavors; and

**WHEREAS**, Congress established the Abandoned Mine Land (AML) Program under Title IV of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 funded by a fee on active coal mining to be used to reclaim areas abandoned before 1977 and establish the modern environmental standards requiring mine operators to reclaim their sites; and

**WHEREAS**, Those fees were sent to the Secretary of Interior for deposit in the AML Fund for the purpose of paying for the reclamation and remediation of lands mined prior to 1977; and

**WHEREAS**, In 2006, the Congress of the United States re-authorized the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to extend fee collection through 2021 and provide for mandatory distribution of AML funds; and

**WHEREAS**, , The fees collected and deposited into the federal AML Fund are derived from a per-ton fee assessed on each ton of coal mined by the active mining industry and can only be used for purposes authorized under Title IV of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act. The AML Fund is not derived from a tax and is not funded from the US Treasury.; and

**WHEREAS**, Pennsylvania has relied upon the AML Fund as a primary source of money to clean up toxic mine water in our water supplies, restore land, extinguish mine fires, and eliminate other dangerous abandoned mine hazards; and

**WHEREAS**, the people in Pennsylvania have the right to safe homes, viable communities, and clean water free from abandoned mine drainage.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** That XXXX County urges Congress of the United States to maintain all existing provisions of the Abandoned Mine Lands (AML) Program authorized under Title IV of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (SMCRA) as amended.

**FURTHER:** That the annual distribution of funds as currently established under SMCRA be maintained to help states address the abandoned mine problems and to allow the states with the most problems to correct them much more quickly and that any reduction in AML funds to Pennsylvania will delay projects and, in turn, will further delay the economic recovery in the already depressed coal fields of the Commonwealth.

**FURTHER:** That future allocations from the AML Fund be used by the states in ways that promote reclamation, leverage private investment, and encourage development where appropriate, and be used to complement or match other funds available for redevelopment of abandoned mine land sites.

**Resolved** that the undersigned organization/ interested citizen/ government entity supports the initiative to reclaim more old mine sites, to clean up more water resources of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and to provide more jobs for the citizens of the Commonwealth and also urges Congress through the Secretary of the Interior to maintain the Abandoned Mine Land Fund and funding levels at their full levels to the Commonwealth for the purposes for which they were collected.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Please return to the Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation , 226 Donohoe Road, Suite 110, Greensburg, PA 15601. Or scan and email to [andy@wpcamr.org](mailto:andy@wpcamr.org)

Please copy and distribute this form to other individuals, organizations, and units of government. Contact WPCAMR for additional copies by phone at (724) 832.3625 or e-mail at [andy@wpcamr.org](mailto:andy@wpcamr.org).