



The RECLAIM Act (H.R. 2156)

A vital economic boost for communities struggling with the decline of the coal industry.

The RECLAIM Act commits \$1 billion to help clean up dangerous and polluting abandoned coal mines, which will spur immediate job creation and create the conditions for longer term, locally driven economic development efforts to build better, brighter futures in coal communities across the country.

The RECLAIM Act is a major opportunity for areas that have historically depended on the coal industry for good jobs and economic stability to rebuild themselves by growing new, diverse industries on their own terms. It is by no means a cure-all for regions adversely affected by America's shift away from coal, but it is a strong answer to the call from community members for more diversification in their economies.



TOP PHOTO CREDIT: APPALACHIAN VOICES. THE BEAUTIFUL JOHN FLANNAGAN DAM AND RESEVOIR HAS DOZENS OF UNRECLAIMED AML FEATURES AND A DANGEROUS HIGH WALL.

LOWER PHOTO CREDIT: APPALACHIAN VOICES. IN RUSSELL COUNTY, VIRGINIA, SEALING TWO OPEN MINE PORTALS ARE A KEY PART OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF MULTI-USE TRAILS.

The RECLAIM Act could help create a strong, just and sustainable economy at a time when the economy of coal-impacted communities is in dire straits.

Under the status quo, this \$1 billion is scheduled to be disbursed in 2023 and thereafter. If passed, the RECLAIM Act will distribute more than \$1 billion to states and tribes over five years, starting in fiscal year 2020.

The funds would strategically reclaim sites that are linked to a future economic or community development project, on the site or surrounding area, or in agriculture, renewable energy, recreational tourism, and other industry sectors. These locations could serve as long-term economic opportunities to create permanent local jobs, helping to lay a foundation for future economic development and diversification in coal communities.



PHOTO CREDIT: EPCAMR. PENNSYLVANIA STUDENTS COLLECT IRON OXIDE FROM ACID MINE DRAINAGE TO MAKE PIGMENTS.

The RECLAIM Act is a powerful step toward revitalizing communities hit hardest by the coal industry's downturn.

Abandoned mine sites create problems such as polluted streams, hazardous erosion and land subsidence, underground mine fires, and piles of coal waste. The funding is intended to help resource-strapped states and tribes clean up over 20,000 high priority sites that remain unaddressed. Funds would be prioritized for projects in communities that are economically distressed and that have been impacted by coal industry job losses.

The RECLAIM Act would create thousands of reclamation jobs across the country, providing an immediate economic boost to communities that could put laid off miners – who possess the skills necessary for this type of reclamation work – and others to work.

Across the country, abandoned mine sites have already been leveraged to create jobs through sustained revitalization efforts, but frequently funding is hard to come by. The RECLAIM Act would alter that landscape.



PHOTO CREDIT: COAL COUNTRY SOCCER COMPLEX. IN GILLESPIE, IL, A DANGEROUS FORMER MINE HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO AN ACTIVE COMMUNITY HUB.

Now more than ever, it is imperative that Congress pass The RECLAIM Act as quickly as possible. We're calling on members of Congress to show their support for the RECLAIM Act by joining the growing list of co-sponsors of this legislation.

