

Abandoned Mine Land Reauthorization Virginia

What is Abandoned Mine Land reauthorization?

The Abandoned Mine Land (AML) Reclamation Program was created by Congress in 1977 to reclaim mines abandoned prior to that date. Since then, the program has funded the remediation of mine sites that threaten public health and safety, including open mine shafts, mine fires, and acid mine drainage. The program is financed through a per-ton fee on coal production, which is set to expire in 2021 without Congressional action.

The Numbers

- There is over \$10.6 billion of AML remaining across the United States
- Currently the fund has \$2.6 billion
- In 2018, coal companies operating in Virginia paid \$2 million into the fund
- In 2018, Virginia received \$5.8 million from the fund
- In total, Virginia has received about \$155 million from the fund for AML reclamation
- Virginia still has \$423 million worth of AML to reclaim

The Bill - H.R. 4248

- Extends the AML fee at its current rate for an additional 15 years
- Increases state mandatory minimum distribution from \$3 million to \$5 million
- Reimburse states for AML fees that were sequestered since Fiscal Year 2013

Virginia AML unfunded cost by County

- Buchanan: \$152 million outstanding, \$3.7 million funded
- Dickenson: \$80 million outstanding, \$14.1 million funded
- Lee: \$27 million outstanding, \$11.4 million funded
- Russell: \$19 million outstanding, \$7 million funded
- Wise: \$110 million outstanding, \$46 million funded

Other Materials

[AML fee analysis](#)

[AML web story](#)

[House bill](#)

Abandoned Mine Land Fund Reauthorization RESOLUTION

Whereas [town name] is a community in Southwest Virginia with a long history of coal mining, which has fueled the United States; and

Whereas [town name] has Abandoned Mine Land (AML) sites, which were abandoned prior to the passage of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act and are therefore eligible for federal AML funding for reclamation; and

Whereas the reclamation of such sites is vital to the health and safety of our communities and the future of our region; and

Whereas reclamation of such sites provide local job opportunities at a time when economic growth is needed; and

Whereas the Abandoned Mine Land fee is set to expire in 2021 unless reauthorized by Congress; and

Whereas over \$10.6 billion dollars of AML sites have yet to receive funding for reclamation across the country; and

Whereas [county name] has over [insert amount] dollars of AML sites that have yet to receive funding for reclamation; and

Whereas the fund is financed by a fee on current coal production, so as to ensure that Southwest Virginia's coal legacy is a positive legacy that leaves our communities better situated for the future;

NOW, THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT the city of [name] urges U.S. Senator Mark Warner and Senator Timothy Kaine, along with U.S. Representatives Robert Wittman (VA-1), Elaine Luria (VA-2), Robert Scott (VA-3), Donald McEachin (VA-4), Denver Riggleman (VA-5), Ben Cline (VA-6), Abigail Spanberger (VA-7), Donald Beyer (VA-8), Morgan Griffith (VA-9), Jennifer Wexton (VA-10) and Gerald Connolly (VA-11) to support and vote for legislation that reauthorizes the AML program, including fee collection at no less than the current rate, for an additional 15 years.

Specifically we urge the passage of H.R. 4248, sponsored by U.S. Representative Matt Cartwright, which would extend the existing fees for 15 years, expanded funding for states with the greatest need, and reimburse states for AML fees that were sequestered since Fiscal Year 2013.