



APPALACHIAN VOICES

Bringing People Together To Protect the Land, Air, Water and Communities of the Central and Southern Appalachians

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 18, 2011

EMPLOYMENT AT APPALACHIAN COAL MINES HITS 15-YEAR HIGH

Increased federal oversight of mountaintop removal coal mining corresponds with jobs increase, data shows

Contact: Matt Wasson, Ph.D., matt@appvoices.org, (828) 262-1500

WASHINGTON, DC - House Republicans continue to claim that federal oversight of mountaintop removal mining in Appalachia threatens domestic coal production and coal mining jobs in Appalachia, but new government data points to an opposite trend.

Data recently released by the Mine Safety and Health Administration show that the number of jobs at Appalachian coal mines in the first three quarters of 2011 is at its highest level since 1997. In contrast to previous predictions by coal industry supporters, the number of miners in Appalachia has increased by six percent since the Obama Administration announced plans to strengthen the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's scrutiny of mountaintop removal permits in June 2009.

Since the April 2010 issuance of an interim guidance on surface mine permitting in Appalachia by the EPA, the number of Appalachian miners has grown by 10 percent.

"What these data show is that strengthened enforcement of mine safety and environmental rules is creating jobs in Appalachia, not destroying them" said Dr. Matt Wasson, program director for regional environmental organization Appalachian Voices. "The opposition of coal companies to any and all regulations to protect the safety of workers and communities near their mines is really about profits — specifically, that they will be forced to spend more on workers at the expense of shareholder dividends."

On Friday Nov. 18, House Republicans held the 15th House hearing this year aimed at promoting the idea that government regulation of surface mining leads to fewer mining jobs. The Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources hearing involved legislation introduced by Representative Bill Johnson (R-OH) called the "Coal Miner Employment and Domestic Energy Infrastructure Protection Act." Johnson's bill would stop the federal Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement from rewriting the federal stream buffer zone rule. But the bill would also greatly restrict OSMRE's ability to regulate coal mines by prohibiting the agency from taking any actions that would reduce coal mine employment, reduce the amount of coal available for mining, consumption, or export, or designate an area as unsuitable for surface mining techniques such as mountaintop removal.

Some members of Congress have claimed that deregulation of coal mining is necessary to increase domestic coal production. But, according to Federal Reserve data released Nov. 17, the capacity of active and permitted coal mines is the highest it has been in 25 years. At the same time, the utilization of coal mine capacity thus far in 2011 is the lowest it has been in 25 years.

"The idea of a 'Permitorium' on coal mine permitting that House Republicans are pushing out is completely and demonstrably false," said Wasson. "So is the idea that coal production in the U.S. is constrained by permits in any way. It's entirely constrained by demand for coal."

Mountaintop removal is a destructive form of surface mining that removes the tops of mountains to access thin seams of coal. Much of the remaining rubble is dumped in adjacent valleys, burying and poisoning valuable headwater streams with what is called a "valley fill."

191 Howard Street • Boone, NC 28607 828-262-1500 877-APP-VOICE

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA OFFICE
408 E. Market Street, Suite 201C, Charlottesville, VA 22902

WASHINGTON, D.C. OFFICE
122 C St NW, Ste 240, Washington, DC 20001



www.AppalachianVoices.org

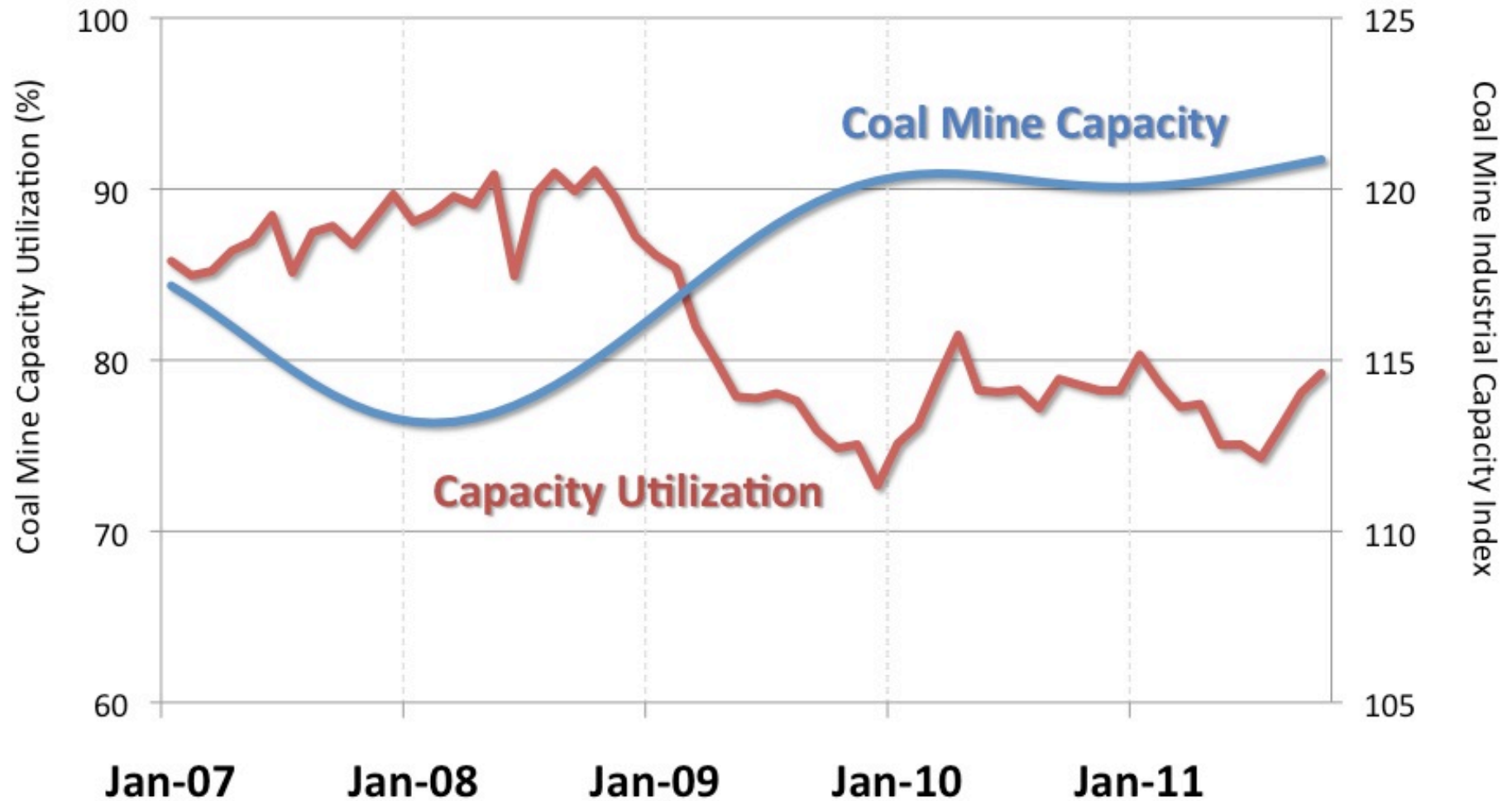
Average Number of Mining Jobs, Q1-Q3

	U.S. Total	Appalachia	Appalachian States and Regions			
			CAPP	VA	WV	KY
1983	174,294	122,989	63,912	12,683	38,027	32,688
1984	183,916	131,345	70,122	13,995	40,206	35,835
1985	171,940	119,489	64,253	13,133	35,502	34,186
1986	161,081	112,573	61,682	12,599	32,469	33,152
1987	147,217	101,532	56,218	11,734	28,633	31,603
1988	140,764	97,993	55,491	11,681	28,364	30,310
1989	135,819	94,845	53,911	10,467	28,602	29,024
1990	137,454	96,318	55,563	10,737	29,259	30,279
1991	126,698	87,359	50,952	10,077	27,605	27,135
1992	117,872	80,706	47,701	9,460	25,687	25,158
1993	104,747	71,755	43,849	8,899	21,532	23,938
1994	105,366	71,270	42,881	8,223	22,279	23,581
1995	97,432	66,270	39,806	7,163	21,387	21,091
1996	90,728	61,853	36,600	6,426	20,050	18,715
1997	88,181	60,488	36,006	6,534	19,150	18,326
1998	84,563	57,248	33,473	5,849	17,770	17,798
1999	78,691	52,274	30,600	5,128	15,838	16,453
2000	71,314	47,289	28,470	5,052	15,047	14,768
2001	74,024	50,069	30,905	5,165	16,466	15,622
2002	74,383	49,415	31,161	4,861	16,358	16,123
2003	69,853	45,293	28,030	4,510	15,276	14,340
2004	72,127	47,434	28,944	4,682	16,276	14,480
2005	77,660	51,985	32,313	5,046	18,487	15,980
2006	81,605	54,283	34,783	4,994	20,157	17,159
2007	80,966	53,203	34,037	4,811	20,508	16,222
2008	84,344	56,377	35,966	4,629	22,127	17,318
2009	87,590	57,556	36,506	4,594	22,235	18,320
2010	84,825	55,253	34,109	4,808	21,424	16,954
2011	90,354	59,059	36,514	5,164	23,353	18,022

* Most recent year that had higher employment is shown in red

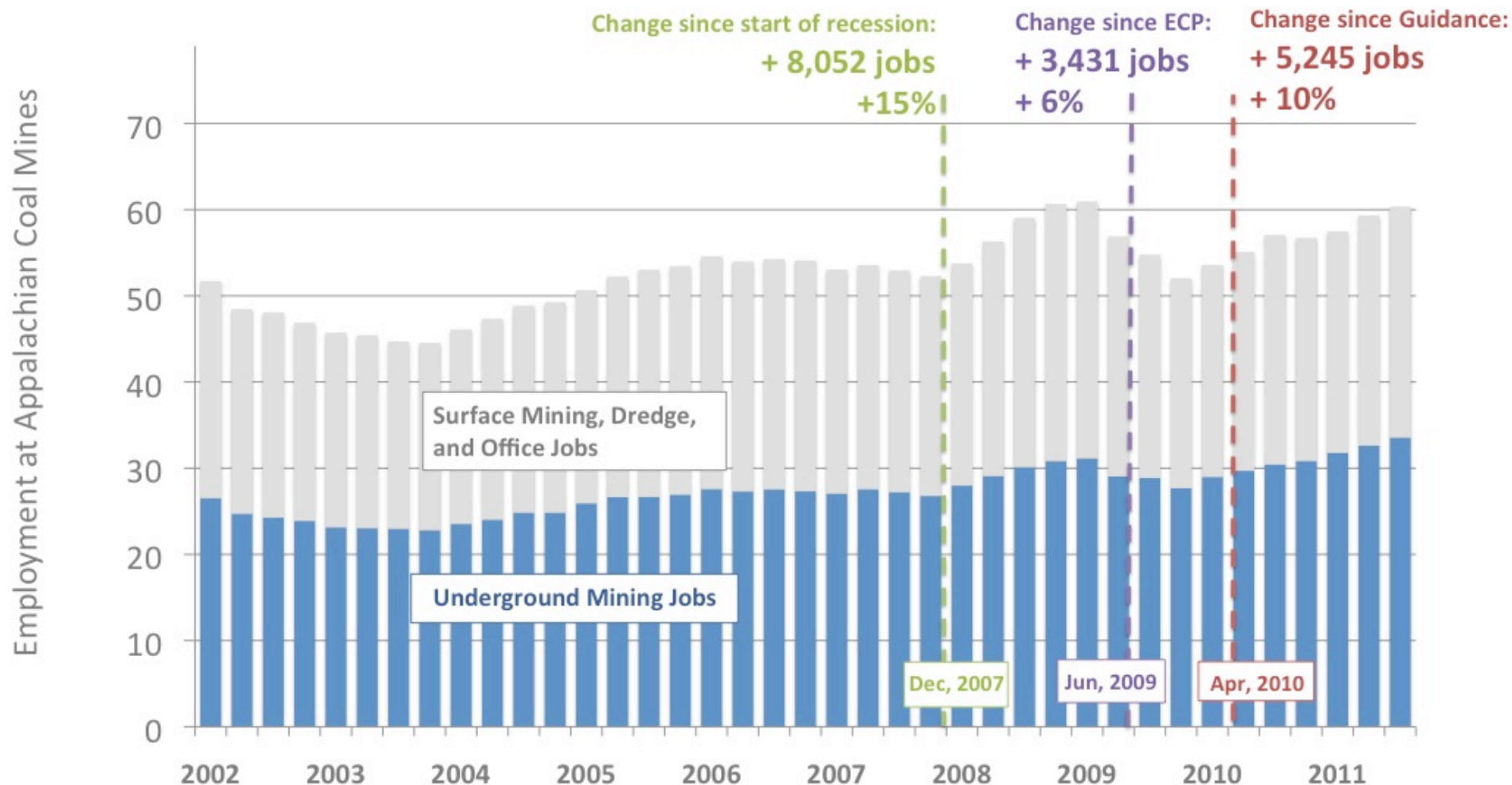
Sources: MSHA Quarterly "Part 50: Address/Employment" data file; Analysis by Appalachian Voices - November, 2011

The productive capacity of active US coal mines reached a new record in 2011, while falling demand for coal drove capacity utilization to a 25-year low



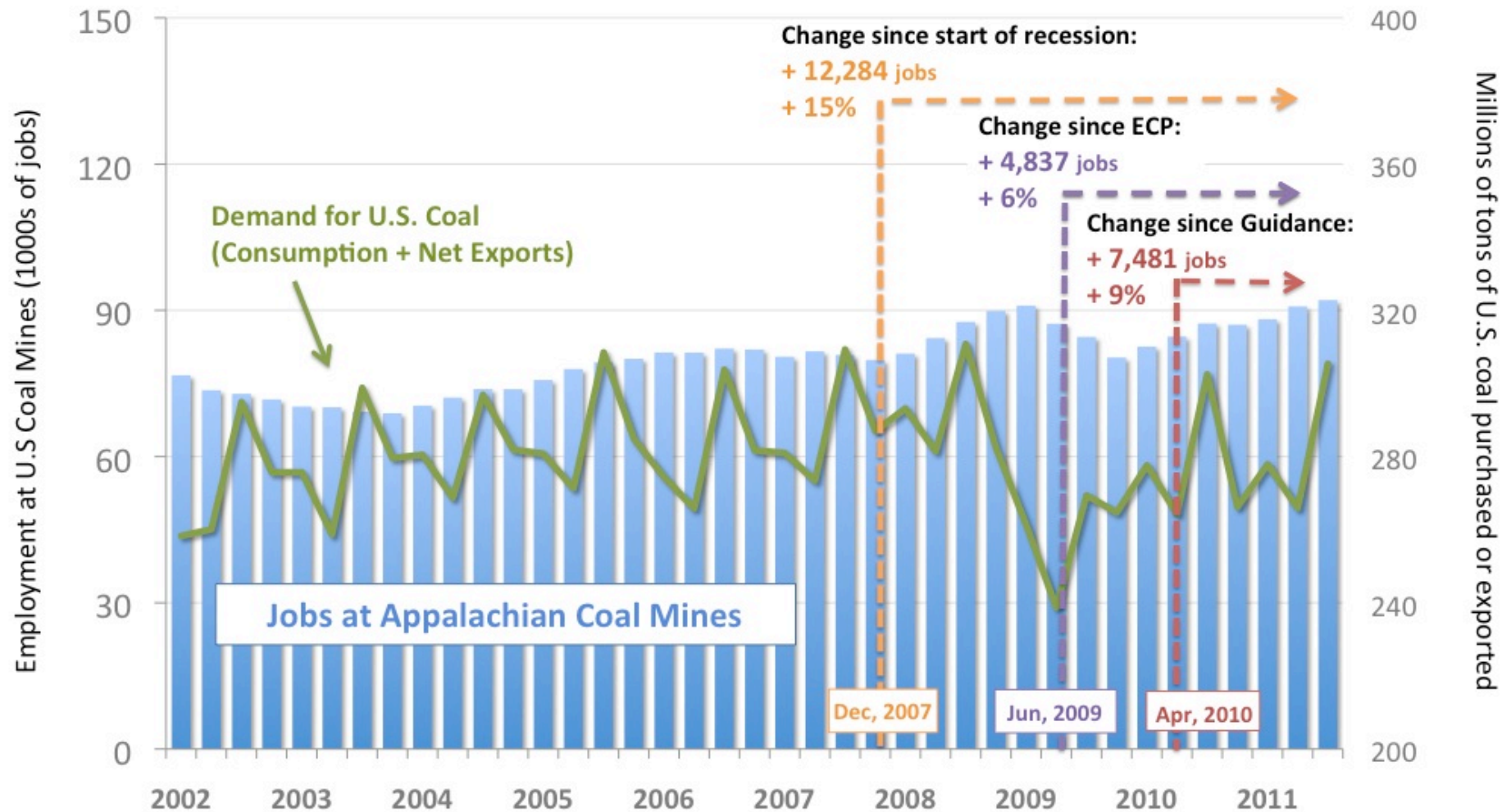
Source: Federal Reserve, Industrial Production and Capacity Utilization - Table G.17 (<http://www.federalreserve.gov/releases/g17/caputl.htm>— accessed Nov 18, 2011). Analysis by Appalachian Voices

Appalachian mining jobs in 2011 are at their highest level in more than a decade* and have increased since EPA began enhanced scrutiny of mountaintop removal permits



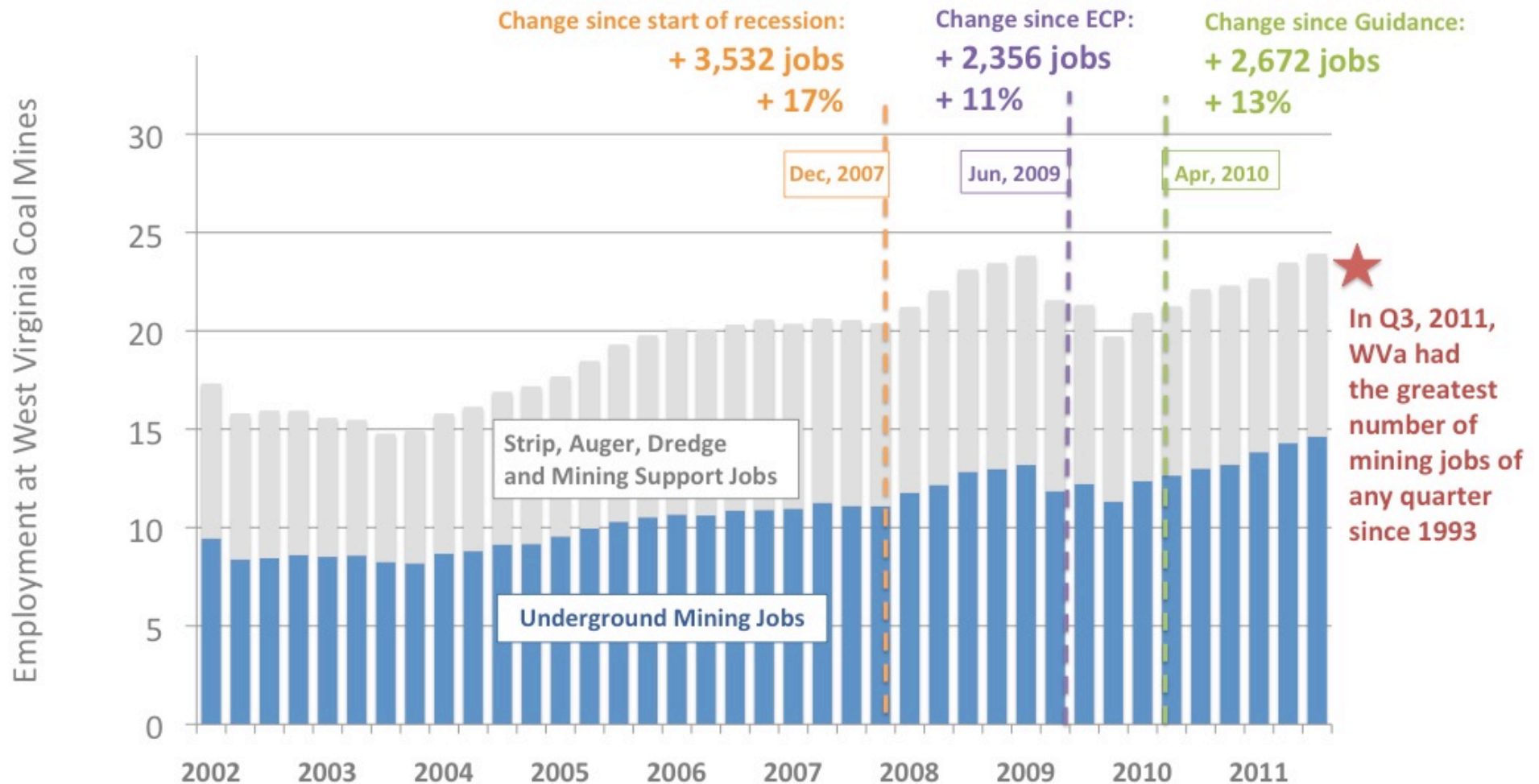
* Based on average Q1-Q3 employment: data from MSHA Quarterly "Part 50: Address/Employment" data files; Analysis by Appalachian Voices - November, 2011

U.S. Mining jobs are at their highest level in 15 years, despite a recent decline in the demand for U.S. coal



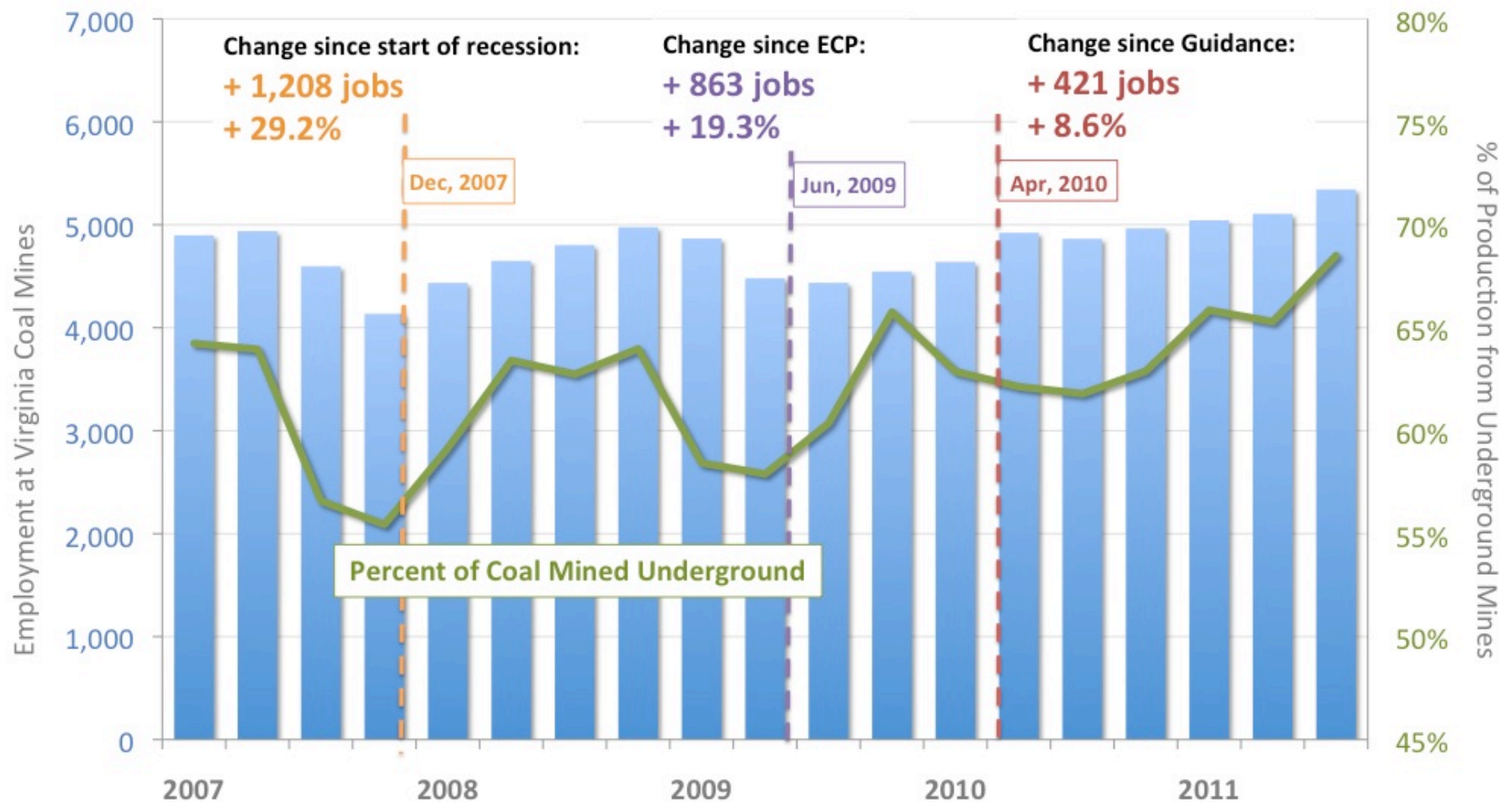
Sources: Employment data from MSHA Quarterly "Part 50: Address/Employment Information" data files; Demand data from EIA Short Term Energy Outlook (accessed on 11/15/2011); Analysis by Appalachian Voices - Nov, 2011

Mining jobs have increased in West Virginia to their highest level in 18 years, despite (or because of) EPA's enhanced scrutiny of mountaintop removal permits



* Based on average Q1-Q3 employment data from MSHA Quarterly "Part 50: Address/Employment" data files; Analysis by Appalachian Voices - November, 2011

Mining Jobs in Virginia are at a 10-year high and underground production is up since EPA began stricter review of mountaintop removal permits



Sources: Coal production and employment data from MSHA Quarterly "Part 50: Address/Employment" data files, 2002-2011; Analysis by Appalachian Voices - November, 2011

-----Hearings Held on Coal/Mining Jobs in 2011 by House Republicans-----

1) February 9th

-Committee on Energy and Commerce

--Subcommittee on Energy and Power

---Legislative Hearing on The Energy Tax Prevention Act of 2011.

<http://energycommerce.house.gov/hearings/hearingdetail.aspx?NewsID=8179>

<http://energycommerce.house.gov/hearings/hearingdetail.aspx?NewsID=8179>

2) March 2nd - T&I

- Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

-- Full Committee

--- Review of the FY 2012 Budget and Priorities of the Environmental Protection Agency: Impacts, on Jobs, Liberty, and the Economy

<http://transportation.house.gov/hearings/hearingdetail.aspx?NewsID=1137>

<http://transportation.house.gov/hearings/hearingdetail.aspx?NewsID=1137>

3) April 7th

- Committee on Natural Resources

--Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources

--- Effect of the President's FY-2012 Budget and Legislative Proposals for the Office of Surface Mining on Private Sector Job Creation, Domestic Energy Production, State Programs and Deficit Reduction

<http://naturalresources.house.gov/Calendar/EventSingle.aspx?EventID=231936>

<http://naturalresources.house.gov/Calendar/EventSingle.aspx?EventID=231936>

4) May 5th - (T&I)

- Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

-- Subcommittee on Water Resources and the Environment

--- EPA Mining Policies, Assault on Appalachian Mining Jobs; Part I

<http://transportation.house.gov/hearings/hearingdetail.aspx?NewsID=1252>

<http://transportation.house.gov/hearings/hearingdetail.aspx?NewsID=1252>

5) May 11th - (T&I)

- Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

-- Subcommittee on Water Resources and the Environment

--- EPA Mining Policies, Assault on Appalachian Mining Jobs; Part II

<http://transportation.house.gov/hearings/hearingdetail.aspx?NewsID=1251>

6) June 22nd

- Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

-- Subcommittee on Water Resources and the Environment

--- Markup on "The Clean Water Cooperative Federalism Act of 2011" and related amendments

<http://transportation.house.gov/hearings/hearingdetail.aspx?NewsID=1315>

<http://transportation.house.gov/hearings/hearingdetail.aspx?NewsID=1315>

7) July 8th

- Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

-- Full Committee Markup

--- Markup on "The Clean Water Cooperative Federalism Act of 2011" and related amendments

<http://transportation.house.gov/hearings/hearingdetail.aspx?NewsID=1315>

<http://transportation.house.gov/hearings/hearingdetail.aspx?NewsID=1315>

8) July 11th

-Committee on Energy and Commerce

--Full Committee Markup

--- Markup on HR 2273 and HR 2401

<http://energycommerce.house.gov/news/PRArticle.aspx?NewsID=8779>

<http://energycommerce.house.gov/news/PRArticle.aspx?NewsID=8779>

9) July 14th - Oversight

-House Energy and Commerce Committee

-- Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs

---EPA's Energy Permittorium: Job Killer or Job Creator?

http://oversight.house.gov/index.php?option=com_jcalpro&Itemid=1&extmode=view&extid=307

http://oversight.house.gov/index.php?option=com_jcalpro&Itemid=1&extmode=view&extid=307

10) September 19th (field hearing in Grand Junction, CO)

- Committee on Small Business

--Subcommittee on Agriculture, Energy, and Trade

---Are Excessive Energy Regulations and Policies Limiting Energy Independence, Killing Jobs, and Increasing Prices for Consumers?

<http://smbiz.house.gov/Calendar/EventSingle.aspx?EventID=250917>

<http://smbiz.house.gov/Calendar/EventSingle.aspx?EventID=250917>

11) September 22nd

-Oversight and Government Reform

-- Full Committee

---How Obama's Green Energy Agenda is Killing Jobs

http://oversight.house.gov/index.php?option=com_jcalpro&Itemid=1&extmode=view&extid=325

http://oversight.house.gov/index.php?option=com_jcalpro&Itemid=1&extmode=view&extid=325

12) September 26th (field hearing, Charleston, WV)

-Committee on Natural Resources

--Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources

--- Jobs, Local Economies and Livelihoods Threatened by Obama Administration's Onerous Coal Mining Regulations

<http://naturalresources.house.gov/Calendar/EventSingle.aspx?EventID=260381>

<http://naturalresources.house.gov/Calendar/EventSingle.aspx?EventID=260381>

13) October 13th

-Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

--Subcommittee on Energy and Environment

--- Advancing Coal Research and Development for a Secure Energy Future

<http://science.house.gov/hearing/energy-and-environment-subcommittee-hearing-advancing-coal-research-and-development-secure>

<http://science.house.gov/hearing/energy-and-environment-subcommittee-hearing-advancing-coal-research-and-development-secure>

14) November 4th

-Committee on Natural Resources

--Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources

---Jobs at Risk: Waste and Mismanagement by the Obama Administration in Rewriting the Stream Buffer Zone Rule

<http://naturalresources.house.gov/Calendar/EventSingle.aspx?EventID=266149>

<http://naturalresources.house.gov/Calendar/EventSingle.aspx?EventID=266149>

15) November 18th

-Committee on Natural Resources

--Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources

---"Legislative Hearing on HR____"

<http://naturalresources.house.gov/Calendar/EventSingle.aspx?EventID=268683>