

September 7, 2022

**Senator Joseph Manchin III**

Hart Senate Office Building, 306  
Washington, DC 20510

**Senator John Barrasso**

Dirksen Senate Office Building, 307  
Washington, DC 20510

**Senator Catherine Cortez Masto**

Hart Senate Office Building, 313  
Washington, DC 20510

**Senator Mike Lee**

Russell Senate Office Building, 363  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairperson Manchin, Ranking Member Barrasso, Subcommittee Chair Cortez Masto, and Ranking Member Lee,

On behalf of the 87 undersigned organizations, we write to express our profound appreciation for the reauthorization of the Abandoned Mine Land program and substantial new funding for this program contained in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). Now we urge the committee to add another important piece of the puzzle that will ensure that the state Abandoned Mine Land programs are able to effectively use the IIJA funds to provide clean water for our coal country communities for years to come. We urge you to prioritize the swift passage of the STREAM Act (S. 3957). In July, this bill (H.R.7283) passed the House of Representatives with near unanimous support. We are eager to see this bill passed through the Senate so our communities and state agencies can have certainty in the future implementation of this important program.

The STREAM Act is necessary to the future of abandoned mine lands cleanup in our nation. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) contained a historic investment to create jobs by cleaning up abandoned mine lands. Unfortunately this historic allotment of funding does not allow for the creation of long term set aside accounts for acid mine drainage (AMD) clean up. These "savings accounts" are essential because acid mine drainage requires permanent treatment systems. They allow states to ensure that projects funded by the BIL will have perpetual treatment, thereby sustaining the thousands of stream miles that will be restored by AMD treatment. It should be noted that AMD set aside funds facilitate the creation of permanent AMD treatment jobs.

Historically, states have been permitted to set-aside up to 30% of their traditional AML Fee Funded program funds into an Acid Mine Drainage set-aside account, but these set aside accounts aren't permitted with the new Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Abandoned Mine Land funds. **The STREAM Act simply resets the status quo and gives states the freedom to choose how to allocate their AML clean up funds.**

For many years, state agencies have been forced to prioritize the most severe public safety hazards from AML over acid mine drainage and other issues due to budget limitations. We are hopeful that with the expanded budget, states can begin fully addressing acid mine drainage, which presents an enormous burden to local communities and decimates stream life.

Thousands of miles of streams and rivers still run orange from abandoned coal mine pollution. These streams present an enormous liability to the economic futures of our communities, please act swiftly to move this simple but powerful solution out of committee and pass it into law.

Sincerely,

**National and Regional Partners**

The Alliance for Appalachia  
American Canoe Association (ACA)  
Appalachian Voices  
Chesapeake Conservancy  
Chesapeake Legal Alliance  
Christians For The Mountains  
Citizens Coal Council  
Climate Institute  
Climate Justice Alliance  
Defenders of Wildlife  
Earth Ethics, Inc.  
Environment America  
Envroneers  
Environmental Law & Policy Center  
Friends For Environmental Justice  
Green Industrial Manufacturing Ecosystem  
Hispanic Access Foundation  
National Wildlife Federation  
The Nature Conservancy  
Ohio River Foundation  
Ohio River Valley Institute  
Potomac Riverkeeper Network  
ReImagine Appalachia  
Sierra Club  
Trout Unlimited  
Valley Watch, Inc.  
Waterkeepers Chesapeake  
Waterway Advocates, Inc.

**Alabama**

Alabama Rivers Alliance  
Black Warrior Riverkeeper  
Shoals Environmental Alliance

**California**

Richmond Local Action in Neighborhood Development  
Sacramento River Council

**Illinois**

Eco-Justice Collaborative  
Central Illinois Healthy Community Alliance  
Mining Issues Team Illinois Chapter Sierra Club  
Prairie Rivers Network

**Indiana**

Indiana Wildlife Federation  
Owen-Putnam Friends of the Forest

**Kentucky**

Appalachian Citizens' Law Center  
Kentuckians For The Commonwealth  
Kentucky Conservation Committee  
Kentucky Resources Council  
Kentucky Waterways Alliance

**Maryland**

Beaverdam Creek Watershed Watch Group  
Catoctin Land Trust  
Chapman Forest Foundation  
Friends of Quincy Run  
Mattawoman Watershed Society

**Missouri**

Missouri Confluence Waterkeeper

**Montana**

Northern Plains Resource Council

**New York**

Butternut Valley Alliance

New York State Division, Izaak Walton League of America

**North Carolina**

NC Climate Justice Collective

**Ohio**

FreshWater Accountability Project

Ohio Conservation Federation

Ohio Environmental Council

Ohio Scenic Rivers Association

Rural Action

**Pennsylvania**

Breathe Project

Center for Coalfield Justice

Conservation Voters of Pennsylvania

Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation (EPCAMR)

League of Women Voters Pennsylvania

Mountain Watershed Association

Pennsylvania Jewish Earth Alliance

PennFuture

Pennsylvania Council of Churches

Three Rivers Waterkeeper

**Tennessee**

Clearfork Community Institute

Statewide Organizing for Community eMpowerment

Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning

Woodland Community Development Corporation

**Virginia**

The Clinch Coalition

Southern Appalachian Mountain Stewards

Virginia Conservation Network

**West Virginia**

Cacapon Institute

Coal River Mountain Watch

Dunkard Creek Watershed Assn., Inc.  
Friends of Blackwater, Inc.  
Friends of the Cheat  
Guardians of the West Fork River Watershed  
Rise Up WV  
Upper Monongahela River Assn., Inc.  
West Virginia Citizen Action  
West Virginia Environmental Council  
West Virginia Rivers Coalition