

117TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 1733

To amend the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to provide funds to States and Indian tribes for the purpose of promoting economic revitalization, diversification, and development in economically distressed communities through the reclamation and restoration of land and water resources adversely affected by coal mining carried out before August 3, 1977, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 10, 2021

Mr. CARTWRIGHT (for himself, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mr. BEYER, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Ms. DEGETTE, Ms. BROWNLEY, Mr. LAMB, Ms. NORTON, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. CASE, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mrs. AXNE, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. QUIGLEY, Ms. WILD, Ms. HOULAHAN, Ms. SEWELL, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. SIRES, Mr. MEUSER, Mr. COHEN, Mr. BOWMAN, and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

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## A BILL

To amend the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to provide funds to States and Indian tribes for the purpose of promoting economic revitalization, diversification, and development in economically distressed communities through the reclamation and restoration of land and water resources adversely affected by coal mining carried out before August 3, 1977, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Revitalizing the Econ-  
5 omy of Coal communities by Leveraging local Activities  
6 and Investing More Act of 2021” or the “RECLAIM Act  
7 of 2021”.

8 **SEC. 2. ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION FOR COAL COUNTRY.**

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—Title IV of the Surface Mining  
10 Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (30 U.S.C. 1231  
11 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

12 **“SEC. 416. ABANDONED MINE LAND ECONOMIC REVITAL-**  
13 **IZATION.**

14 “(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to  
15 promote economic revitalization, diversification, and devel-  
16 opment in economically distressed mining communities  
17 through the reclamation and restoration of land and water  
18 resources adversely affected by coal mining carried out be-  
19 fore August 3, 1977.

20 “(b) IN GENERAL.—From amounts deposited into  
21 the fund under section 401(b) before October 1, 2007, and  
22 not otherwise appropriated to the extent such funds are  
23 available, \$200,000,000 shall be made available to the  
24 Secretary, without further appropriation, for each of fiscal  
25 years 2022 through 2026 for distribution to States and

1 Indian tribes in accordance with this section for reclama-  
2 tion and restoration projects at sites identified as prior-  
3 ities under section 403(a): *Provided*, That if less than  
4 \$200,000,000 is available in any fiscal year to the Sec-  
5 retary, such remaining amount shall be made available to  
6 the Secretary, without further appropriation, and such fis-  
7 cal year shall end distributions made available under this  
8 section.

9 “(c) USE OF FUNDS.—Funds distributed to a State  
10 or Indian tribe under subsection (d) shall be used only  
11 for projects classified under the priorities of section 403(a)  
12 that meet the following criteria:

13 “(1) CONTRIBUTION TO FUTURE ECONOMIC OR  
14 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.—

15 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The project, upon  
16 completion of reclamation, is intended to create  
17 favorable conditions for the economic develop-  
18 ment of the project site or create favorable con-  
19 ditions that promote the general welfare  
20 through economic and community development  
21 of the area in which the project is conducted.

22 “(B) DEMONSTRATION OF CONDITIONS.—  
23 Such conditions are demonstrated by—

24 “(i) documentation of the role of the  
25 project in such area’s economic develop-

1           ment strategy or other economic and com-  
2           munity development planning process;

3           “(ii) any other documentation of the  
4           planned economic and community use of  
5           the project site after the primary reclama-  
6           tion activities are completed, which may in-  
7           clude contracts, agreements in principle, or  
8           other evidence that, once reclaimed, the  
9           site is reasonably anticipated to be used  
10          for one or more industrial, commercial,  
11          residential, agricultural, or recreational  
12          purposes; or

13          “(iii) any other documentation agreed  
14          to by the State or Indian tribe that dem-  
15          onstrates the project will meet the criteria  
16          set forth in this subsection.

17          “(2) LOCATION IN ECONOMICALLY DISTRESSED  
18          COMMUNITY AFFECTED BY RECENT DECLINE IN  
19          MINING.—

20                 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The project will be  
21                 conducted in a community—

22                         “(i) that has been adversely affected  
23                         economically by a recent reduction in coal  
24                         mining related activity, as demonstrated by

1 employment data, per capita income, or  
2 other indicators of economic distress; or

3 “(ii)(I) that has historically relied on  
4 coal mining for a substantial portion of its  
5 economy; and

6 “(II) in which the economic contribu-  
7 tion of coal mining has significantly de-  
8 clined.

9 “(B) SUBMISSION AND PUBLICATION OF  
10 EVIDENCE OR ANALYSIS.—Any evidence or  
11 analysis relied upon in selecting the location of  
12 a project under this subparagraph shall be sub-  
13 mitted to the Secretary for publication. The  
14 Secretary shall publish such evidence or anal-  
15 ysis in the Federal Register within 30 days  
16 after receiving such submission.

17 “(3) STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION.—

18 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The project has been  
19 the subject of project planning under subsection  
20 (g) and has been the focus of collaboration, in-  
21 cluding partnerships, as appropriate, with inter-  
22 ested persons or local organizations.

23 “(B) PUBLIC NOTICE.—As part of project  
24 planning the public has been notified of the  
25 project, including not less than 45 days before

1 submission of the project to the Office of Sur-  
2 face Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, the  
3 State or Indian Tribe has published notice of  
4 the proposed project in local newspapers of gen-  
5 eral circulation, on the Internet, and by any  
6 other means considered desirable by the Sec-  
7 retary, and has provided an opportunity to re-  
8 quest a public meeting convened in a commu-  
9 nity near the proposed project site.

10 “(C) ELECTRONIC NOTIFICATION.—The  
11 State or Indian tribe established a way for in-  
12 terested persons to receive electronically all  
13 public notices issued under subparagraph (B)  
14 and any written declarations submitted to the  
15 Secretary under paragraph (5).

16 “(4) ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS.—The project has  
17 been proposed by entities of State, local, county, or  
18 tribal governments, or local organizations, and will  
19 be approved and executed by State or tribal pro-  
20 grams, approved under section 405 or referred to in  
21 section 402(g)(8)(B) which may include subcon-  
22 tracting project-related activities, as appropriate.

23 “(5) WAIVER.—If the State or Indian tribe—

24 “(A) cannot provide documentation de-  
25 scribed in paragraph (1)(B) for a project con-

1 ducted under a priority stated in paragraph (1)  
2 or (2) of section 403(a), or

3 “(B) is unable to meet the requirements  
4 under paragraph (2), the State or Indian tribe  
5 shall submit a written declaration to the Sec-  
6 retary requesting an exemption from the re-  
7 quirements of those subparagraphs. The dec-  
8 laration must explain why achieving favorable  
9 conditions for economic or community develop-  
10 ment at the project site is not practicable, or  
11 why the requirements of paragraph (2) cannot  
12 be met, and that sufficient funds distributed  
13 annually under section 401 are not available to  
14 implement the project. Such request for an ex-  
15 emption is deemed to be approved, except the  
16 Secretary shall deny such request if the Sec-  
17 retary determines the declaration to be substan-  
18 tially inadequate. Any denial of such request  
19 shall be resolved at the State’s or Indian tribe’s  
20 request through the procedures described in  
21 subsection (e).

22 “(d) DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.—

23 “(1) STATES.—

24 “(A) IN GENERAL.—From the amount  
25 made available in subsection (b), the Secretary

1 shall distribute \$195,000,000 annually for each  
2 of fiscal years 2022 through 2026 to States and  
3 Indian tribes that have a State or tribal pro-  
4 gram approved under section 405 or are re-  
5 ferred to in section 402(g)(8)(B), and have not  
6 made a certification under section 411(a) in  
7 which the Secretary has concurred, as follows:

8 “(i) Four-fifths of such amount shall  
9 be distributed based on the proportion of  
10 the amount of coal historically produced in  
11 each State or from the lands of each In-  
12 dian tribe concerned before August 3,  
13 1977.

14 “(ii) One-fifth of such amount shall be  
15 distributed based on the proportion of rec-  
16 lamation fees paid during the period of fis-  
17 cal years 2012 through 2016 for lands in  
18 each State or lands of each Indian tribe  
19 concerned.

20 “(B) SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDS.—Funds dis-  
21 tributed under this section—

22 “(i) shall be in addition to, and shall  
23 not affect, the amount of funds distributed  
24 to States and Indian tribes under section  
25 401(f) and section 411(h)(2); and



1           “(ii) shall not reduce any funds dis-  
2           tributed to a State or Indian tribe by rea-  
3           son of the application of section 402(g)(8).

4           “(2) ADDITIONAL FUNDING TO CERTIFIED  
5 STATES AND INDIAN TRIBES.—

6           “(A) ELIGIBILITY.—From the amount  
7           made available in subsection (b), the Secretary  
8           shall distribute \$5,000,000 annually for each of  
9           the five fiscal years beginning with fiscal year  
10          2022 to States and Indian tribes that have a  
11          State program approved under section 405 and  
12          have made a certification under section 411(a)  
13          in which the Secretary has concurred.

14          “(B) APPLICATION FOR FUNDS.—Using  
15          the process in section 405(f), any State or In-  
16          dian tribe described in subparagraph (A) may  
17          submit a grant application to the Secretary for  
18          funds under this paragraph. The Secretary  
19          shall review each grant application to confirm  
20          that the projects identified in the application  
21          for funding are eligible under subsection (c).

22          “(C) DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.—The  
23          amount of funds distributed to each State or  
24          Indian tribe under this paragraph shall be de-  
25          termined by the Secretary based on the dem-

1           onstrated need for the funding to accomplish  
2           the purpose of this section.

3           “(3)   REALLOCATION    OF    UNCOMMITTED  
4   FUNDS.—

5           “(A)   COMMITTED   DEFINED.—For pur-  
6           poses of this paragraph the term ‘committed’—

7                   “(i) means that funds received by the  
8           State or Indian tribe—

9                           “(I) have been exclusively applied  
10           to or reserved for a specific project  
11           and therefore are not available for any  
12           other purpose; or

13                           “(II) have been expended or des-  
14           ignated by the State or Indian tribe  
15           for the completion of a project;

16                   “(ii) includes use of any amount for  
17           project planning under subsection (g); and

18                   “(iii) reflects an acknowledgment by  
19           Congress that, based on the documentation  
20           required under subsection (c)(2)(B), any  
21           unanticipated delays to commit such funds  
22           that are outside the control of the State or  
23           Indian tribe concerned shall not affect its  
24           allocations under this section.

1           “(B) FISCAL YEAR 2026.—For fiscal year  
2           2026, the Secretary shall reallocate in accord-  
3           ance with subparagraph (C) any amount avail-  
4           able for distribution under this subsection that  
5           has not been committed to eligible projects or  
6           distributed under paragraph (1)(A), among the  
7           States and Indian tribes that have committed to  
8           eligible projects the full amount of their annual  
9           allocation for the preceding fiscal years.

10           “(C) AMOUNT OF REALLOCATION.—The  
11           amount reallocated to each State or Indian  
12           tribe under each of subparagraph (B) shall be  
13           determined by the Secretary to reflect, to the  
14           extent practicable—

15                   “(i) the proportion of unreclaimed eli-  
16                   gible lands and waters the State or Indian  
17                   tribe has in the inventory maintained  
18                   under section 403(c);

19                   “(ii) the average of the proportion of  
20                   reclamation fees paid for lands in each  
21                   State or lands of each Indian tribe con-  
22                   cerned; and

23                   “(iii) the proportion of coal mining  
24                   employment loss incurred in the State or  
25                   on lands of the Indian tribe, respectively,

1 as determined by the Mine Safety and  
2 Health Administration, over the 5-year pe-  
3 riod preceding the fiscal year for which the  
4 reallocation is made.

5 “(e) RESOLUTION OF SECRETARY’S CONCERNS; CON-  
6 GRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION.—If the Secretary does not  
7 agree with a State or Indian tribe that a proposed project  
8 meets the criteria set forth in subsection (c)—

9 “(1) the Secretary and the State or tribe shall  
10 meet and confer for a period of not more than 45  
11 days to resolve the Secretary’s concerns, except that  
12 such period may be shortened by the Secretary if the  
13 Secretary’s concerns are resolved;

14 “(2) during that period, at the State’s or In-  
15 dian tribe’s request, the Secretary may consult with  
16 any appropriate Federal agency; and

17 “(3) at the end of that period, if the Secretary’s  
18 concerns are not resolved the Secretary shall provide  
19 to the Committee on Natural Resources of the  
20 House of Representatives and the Committee on En-  
21 ergy and Natural Resources of the Senate an expla-  
22 nation of the concerns and such project proposal  
23 shall not be eligible for funds distributed under this  
24 section.

25 “(f) ACID MINE DRAINAGE TREATMENT.—

1           “(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), a  
2 State or Indian tribe that receives funds under this  
3 section may use up to 30 percent of such funds as  
4 necessary to supplement the State’s or tribe’s acid  
5 mine drainage abatement and treatment fund estab-  
6 lished under section 402(g)(6)(A), for future oper-  
7 ation and maintenance costs for the treatment of  
8 acid mine drainage associated with the individual  
9 projects funded under this section. A State or Indian  
10 tribe shall specify the total funds allotted for such  
11 costs in its application submitted under subsection  
12 (d)(2)(B).

13           “(2) CONDITION.—A State or Indian tribe may  
14 use funds under this subsection only if the State or  
15 tribe can demonstrate that the annual grant distrib-  
16 uted to the State or tribe pursuant to section 401(f),  
17 including any interest from the State’s or tribe’s  
18 acid mine drainage abatement and treatment fund  
19 that is not used for the operation or maintenance of  
20 preexisting acid mine drainage treatment systems, is  
21 insufficient to fund the operation and maintenance  
22 of any acid mine drainage treatment system associ-  
23 ated with an individual project funded under this  
24 section.

25           “(g) PROJECT PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION.—

1           “(1) STATES AND INDIAN TRIBES.—A State or  
2 Indian tribe may use up to 10 percent of its annual  
3 distribution under this section for costs of admin-  
4 istering this section consistent with existing practice  
5 under sections 401(e)(7) and 402(g)(1)(C) and the  
6 Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforce-  
7 ment Assistance Manual.

8           “(2) SECRETARY.—The Secretary may expend,  
9 from amounts made available to the Secretary under  
10 section 402(g)(3)(D), not more than \$3,000,000  
11 during the fiscal years for which distributions occur  
12 under subsection (b) for staffing and other adminis-  
13 trative expenses necessary to carry out this section.

14           “(h) DEADLINES.—

15           “(1) RULES AND GUIDELINES.—To the extent  
16 necessary to implement this Act, the Secretary shall  
17 propose rules or develop guidelines (or both) not  
18 later than 90 days after the date of enactment of  
19 this section and shall publish them as final rules or  
20 guidelines, respectively, not later than 90 days there-  
21 after. Within 60 days after the issuance of any such  
22 final rules or guidelines, the Secretary shall dis-  
23 tribute the funds under subsection (d).

1           “(2) PROJECT PROPOSALS.—The appropriate  
2 field office of the Office of Surface Mining Reclama-  
3 tion and Enforcement shall—

4           “(A) initially review, vet, and approve or  
5 disapprove of each project proposal under this  
6 section within 45 days after receipt by the field  
7 office of the proposal; and

8           “(B) issue an authorization to proceed on  
9 an approved project within 45 days after receipt  
10 by the field office of a request for such author-  
11 ization from a State or Indian tribe.

12       “(i) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The Secretary shall  
13 provide to the Committee on Natural Resources of the  
14 House of Representatives, the Committees on Appropria-  
15 tions of the House of Representatives and the Senate, and  
16 the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the  
17 Senate at the end of each fiscal year for which such funds  
18 are distributed a detailed report—

19           “(1) on the various projects that have been un-  
20 dertaken with such funds;

21           “(2) the extent and degree of reclamation using  
22 such funds that achieved the priorities described in  
23 paragraph (1) or (2) of section 403(a);

24           “(3) the community and economic benefits that  
25 are resulting from, or are expected to result from,

1 the use of the funds that achieved the priorities de-  
 2 scribed in paragraph (3) of section 403(a); and

3 “(4) the reduction since the previous report in  
 4 the inventory referred to in section 403(c).

5 “(j) PROHIBITION ON CERTAIN USE OF FUNDS.—  
 6 Any State or Indian tribe that uses the funds distributed  
 7 under this section for purposes other than reclamation or  
 8 drainage abatement expenditures, as made eligible by sec-  
 9 tion 404, and for the purposes authorized under sub-  
 10 sections (f) and (g), shall be barred from receiving any  
 11 subsequent funding under this section.”.

12 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents  
 13 in the first section of the Surface Mining Control and Rec-  
 14 lamation Act of 1977 is amended by adding at the end  
 15 of the items relating to title IV the following:

“Sec. 416. Abandoned mine land economic revitalization.”.

16 **SEC. 3. TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**

17 The Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of  
 18 1977 is amended—

19 (1) in section 401(c) (30 U.S.C. 1231(c)), by  
 20 striking “and” after the semicolon at the end of  
 21 paragraph (10), by redesignating paragraph (11) as  
 22 paragraph (12), and by inserting after paragraph  
 23 (10) the following:

24 “(11) to implement section 416; and”;



1           (2) in section 401(d)(3) (30 U.S.C.  
2           1231(d)(3)), by striking “subsection (f)” and insert-  
3           ing “subsection (f) and section 416(a)”;

4           (3) in section 402(g) (30 U.S.C. 1232(g))—

5           (A) in paragraph (1), by inserting “and  
6           section 416” after “subsection (h)”;

7           (B) by adding at the end of paragraph (3)  
8           the following:

9           “(F) For the purpose of section  
10           416(d)(2)(A).”;

11           (4) in section 403(c) (30 U.S.C. 1233(e)), by  
12           inserting after the second sentence the following:  
13           “As practicable, States and Indian tribes shall offer  
14           such amendments based on the use of remote sens-  
15           ing, global positioning systems, and other advanced  
16           technologies.”.

17 **SEC. 4. MINIMUM STATE PAYMENTS.**

18           Section 402(g)(8)(A) of the Surface Mining Control  
19           and Reclamation Act of 1977 (30 U.S.C. 1232(g)(8)) is  
20           amended by striking “\$3,000,000” and inserting  
21           “\$5,000,000”.

22 **SEC. 5. GAO STUDY OF USE OF FUNDS.**

23           Not later than two years after the date of the enact-  
24           ment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United

1 States shall study and report to the Congress on uses of  
2 funds authorized by this Act, including regarding—

3 (1) the solvency of the Abandoned Mine Rec-  
4 lamation Fund; and

5 (2) the impact of such use on payments and  
6 transfers under the Surface Mining Control and  
7 Reclamation Act of 1977 (30 U.S.C. 1201) to—

8 (A) States and Indian Tribes for which a  
9 certification has been made under section 411  
10 of such Act (30 U.S.C. 1241);

11 (B) States and Indian Tribes for which  
12 such a certification has not been made; and

13 (C) transfers to United Mine Workers of  
14 America Combined Benefit Fund.

15 **SEC. 6. PAYMENTS TO CERTIFIED STATES NOT AFFECTED.**

16 Nothing in this Act shall be construed to reduce or  
17 otherwise affect payments under section 402(g) of the  
18 Surface Mining Reclamation and Control Act of 1977 (30  
19 U.S.C. 1232(g)) to States that have made a certification  
20 under section 411(a) of such Act (30 U.S.C. 1240a(a))  
21 in which the Secretary of the Interior has concurred.

○