

United Mine Workers of America

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Dear Representatives,

The United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) is writing to express our strong support for H.R. 2273, the Coal Residuals Reuse and Management Act, which establishes new federal standards for the management of Coal Combustion Residuals (CCRs). We believe that H.R. 2273 provides the federal oversight needed to ensure the safe disposal or recycling of CCRs while building on existing state authorities to manage their solid waste programs.

As you know, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has proposed new federal regulations governing the disposition of coal ash and other CCRs under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). In its proposed rule, the EPA presented two options: regulate CCRs as hazardous waste under RCRA subtitle C or regulate them as non-hazardous waste under RCRA subtitle D. We believe the designation of CCRs as hazardous waste under RCRA Subtitle C would immediately have negative economic impacts on electricity consumers, particularly those in coal-dependent states, on industries that recycle coal ash and on the nation's economy and jobs recovery.

According to a June study by Veritas Economic Consulting, the United States would experience the net loss of an estimated 183,900–316,000 jobs under a Subtitle C designation.

H.R. 2273 strengthens state programs by establishing a federal baseline for the regulation of CCR disposal under RCRA Subtitle D, the municipal solid waste program. The bill also provides a federal backstop that gives the EPA the authority to intervene if a state is unable or unwilling to meet the federal baseline program. While the bill moves forward with these new federal standards, it applies them in a way that maximizes the flexibility for state implementation, such as allowing existing safe and well engineered facilities to operate to the end of their design life, yet it mandates diligent monitoring and compliance by utilities. This gives states the ability to strengthen their disposal programs, protecting the environment, while preserving beneficial reuse programs and avoiding unacceptable job losses.

Again, we strongly support H.R. 2273 and urge Members to vote for passage in the House this week.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cecil E. Roberts".

Cecil E. Roberts