

H. R. 2029

One Hundred Fourteenth Congress of the United States of America

AT THE FIRST SESSION

*Begun and held at the City of Washington on Tuesday,
the sixth day of January, two thousand and fifteen*

An Act

Making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of
the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016”.

SEC. 2. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

DIVISION G—DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016

Title I—Department of the Interior

Title II—Environmental Protection Agency

Title III—Related Agencies

Title IV—General Provisions

H. R. 2029

OFFICE OF SURFACE MINING RECLAMATION AND ENFORCEMENT REGULATION AND TECHNOLOGY

ABANDONED MINE RECLAMATION FUND

In addition, \$90,000,000, to remain available until expended, for grants to States for reclamation of abandoned mine lands and other related activities in accordance with the terms and conditions in the explanatory statement described in section 4 (in the matter preceding division A of this consolidated Act): *Provided*, That such additional amount shall be used for economic and community development in conjunction with the priorities in section 403(a) of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (30 U.S.C. 1233(a)): *Provided further*, That such additional amount shall be distributed in equal amounts to the 3 Appalachian States with the greatest amount of unfunded needs to meet the priorities described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of such section: *Provided further*, That such additional amount shall be allocated to States within 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

House of Representatives

(House of Representatives - December 17, 2015)

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT SUBMITTED BY MR. ROGERS OF KENTUCKY, CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS REGARDING HOUSE AMENDMENT NO. 1 TO THE SENATE AMENDMENT ON [H.R. 2029](#)

CONSOLIDATED APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016

SEC. 4. EXPLANATORY STATEMENT.

The explanatory statement regarding this Act, printed in the House of Representatives section of the Congressional Record on or about December 17, 2015 by the Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations of the House, shall have the same effect with respect to the allocation of funds and implementation of divisions A through L of this Act as if it were a joint explanatory statement of a committee of conference.

ABANDONED MINE RECLAMATION FUND

The bill provides \$117,303,000 for the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund. Of the funds provided, \$27,303,000 shall be derived from the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund and \$90,000,000 shall be derived from the General Fund. The agreement provides \$90,000,000 for grants to States for the reclamation of abandoned mine lands in conjunction with economic and community development and reuse goals. Such grants shall be distributed to States in accordance with the goals, intent and direction provided under this heading in House Report 114-170.

*H. Rept. 114-170 - 114th Congress (2015-2016)
June 18, 2015, As Reported by the Appropriations Committee*

House Report 114-170 - DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT,
AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2016

The Committee provides \$30,000,000 (**changed to \$90,000,000**) for grants to States for the reclamation of abandoned mine lands in conjunction with economic and community development and reuse goals. It is the Committee's intent that States shall use these funds to accelerate the remediation of AML sites with economic and community development end uses in mind. In doing so, the Committee envisions a collaborative partnership between the State AML programs and their respective State and local economic and community development programs that will explore ways to return legacy coal sites to productive reuse. The Committee notes that these grants are provided from the General Fund and are therefore separate from the estimated \$185 million in mandatory payments from the Abandoned Mine Land fund in fiscal year 2016. The Committee believes that an incremental approach is warranted to better understand programmatic impacts of proposing criteria changes to the underlying law. As such, the Committee expects that State efforts under this pilot program will inform future policy discussions, possibly under a reauthorization of SMCRA, which the Committee supports.

Grants shall be provided to the three Appalachian States with the largest unfunded needs for the reclamation of Priority 1 and Priority 2 sites as delineated in the Abandoned Mine Land Inventory System. State AML programs, in consultation with State economic and community development authorities, shall develop a list of eligible AML projects in **Appalachian counties** that have a nexus to economic and community development, and select qualifying AML projects that have the potential to create long-term economic benefits. State AML programs should consider whether a model similar to the Appalachian Regional Commission grants process could streamline project selection, and whether an interagency agreement or other contracting mechanisms could streamline program implementation. **Eligible grant recipients are limited to State and local governmental entities who may subcontract project-related activities as appropriate.**