



**INTERNATIONAL
BROTHERHOOD
OF ELECTRICAL
WORKERS®**

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LONNIE R. STEPHENSON
International President

KENNETH W. COOPER
International
Secretary-Treasurer

December 9, 2019

VIA EMAIL

The Honorable Dan Meuser
U.S. House of Representatives
326 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Matt Cartwright
U.S. House of Representatives
1034 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

**Re: The Mine Affected Community Energy and Environment Act
(H.R. 4735)**

Dear Congressman Meuser and Congressman Cartwright:

On behalf of the approximately 775,000 active and retired members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, I write to express support for H.R. 4735, the Mine Affected Community Energy and Environment Act. The legislation would create a refundable tax credit for power plants generating electricity through coal refuse remediation at abandoned mine lands.

This bill makes it economically viable to clean up sites struggling with the environmental legacy of the coal industry. It would also benefit communities hard hit by coal plant closures by putting IBEW members to work at family-sustaining wages.

The IBEW represents 80 utility workers at Robindale Energy's Seward Generation facility, whose work demonstrates the importance of this legislation. The 525-megawatt plant, in Indiana County, Pennsylvania, recovers and combusts coal refuse to sell as electricity, which pays for the environmental remediation efforts.

Seward is the world's largest waste coal-fired plant, utilizing circulating fluidized bed technology to burn nearly 100 percent waste coal and lower harmful emissions. Since opening, the facility has removed more than 36 million tons of refuse from the Pennsylvania landscape. It is also a major employer in Western Pennsylvania.

Coal refuse piles on the abandoned mine lands of Pennsylvania alone cover more than 8,300 acres and contain as much as 220,000 million tons of coal refuse. These sites pollute the land, water and air with uncontrolled emissions.

Defying cleanup due to their cost and scale, such places hamper additional economic development and scar the landscape. The Mine Affected Community Energy and Environment Act's refundable performance-based tax credit of \$12.50 for each ton of coal refuse removed would allow other plants like Seward to flourish, contributing necessary baseload electricity onto the grid while eliminating pollution. Due to low natural gas prices and subsidized renewables, no other viable





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environmentally efficient cost-effective alternative exists to address these properties.

This legislation is a boon for the environmental and economic rehabilitation of communities struggling with the aftermath of the coal boom and the IBEW commends your bipartisan leadership on the Mine Affected Community Energy and Environment Act.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lonnie R. Stephenson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "L" and "S".

Lonnie R. Stephenson
International President

LRS:nl

