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PRESS RELEASE

**RECLAIM Act Offers Hope of Revitalization for Coal
Communities**

Advocates from Across the United States Pressure Legislators for Bipartisan Support

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today on Capitol Hill, advocates met with a multitude of legislators followed by a teleconference, urging the passing of H.R. 2156, the RECLAIM Act of 2019. The RECLAIM Act proposes to distribute \$1 billion over five years to clean up abandoned mine lands (AML) and would provide an economic boost for coal communities with a projected creation of 4,600 reclamation jobs per year. Currently, there are nearly 40 bipartisan co-sponsors for the bill that would cost taxpayers no additional expense and ultimately lift up coal communities in desperate need of economic diversification.

“The RECLAIM Act will reclaim abandoned coal lands, generate jobs, and spur economic development,” said Roger Carver, a retired miner from Nucla, Colorado and member of Western Colorado Alliance. “But it’s not just about the present, it’s about the future of our community and small towns and cities like ours. RECLAIM funding would be a kick start to former coal communities, and help us begin to diversify our economy.”

Across the United States, abandoned mine lands have already been leveraged successfully to create jobs in agriculture, recreational tourism, retail, and even renewable energy production through sustained revitalization efforts. The RECLAIM Act would accelerate dispersals from the federal Abandoned Mine Land Fund to reclaim more abandoned coal sites, faster. If passed, Colorado alone could see \$45 million invested in our rural communities to clean up mines and put high-skill coal miners back to work. The bill would prioritize public input and community participation in determining which projects are chosen based on economic potential.

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The Western Colorado Alliance for Community Action n brings people together to build grassroots power through community organizing and leadership development. We are made up of 2,000 members and supporters across Western Colorado. We believe that right now, today, we have the ability and opportunity to create a future where engaged local voices are leading communities across Western Colorado that are healthy, just and self-reliant.

The Western Organization of Resource Councils (WORC) is a network of grassroots organizations that span seven of the Western states with more than 15,000 members. Many WORC members live on lands overlying and neighboring federal, tribal, state and privately owned oil and gas deposits, and experience numerous impacts due to federal oil and gas production. Headquartered in Billings, Montana, WORC also has offices in Colorado and Washington, D.C.