

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

April 2, 2008

**Protect the Right to Clean Drinking Water for Every  
American:  
Co-sponsor HR 2169, the Clean Water Protection Act**

Dear Colleague:

The Environmental Protection Agency reported in 2001 that over 1,200 miles of headwater streams were buried and polluted by the toxic waste from a destructive form of mining called mountaintop removal. From 2001 to 2005, another 535 miles of headwater streams were permitted to be buried by toxic mountaintop removal waste. These once pristine streams serve as vital headwaters for people living along the Mississippi River and other American rivers, from the Great Lakes, to the Chesapeake Bay, to the Gulf of Mexico.

In 2002, the Bush Administration and Army Corps of Engineers acted without Congressional approval to amend the definition of "fill material" in the Clean Water Act to include toxic mining waste. This waste contains many heavy metals such as arsenic, lead and mercury, and is often shoved directly into headwater streams and valleys. By relaxing rules and regulations regarding mountaintop removal in Appalachia, the Bush Administration is compromising the water quality of the millions of people who live downstream.

As profiled in a National Geographic Article, the residents of Rawl, West Virginia believe they have been drinking the byproducts of coal waste for more than two decades. Rather than clean and clear water running out of their faucets, residents have complained of an orange or black liquid instead. The health problems caused by exposure to these chemicals and heavy metals include cancers, organ failure, and learning disabilities. Unfortunately, the communities beneath valley fills are often in some of the most impoverished areas in America, and the residents have neither the resources nor the time to fight long legal battles.

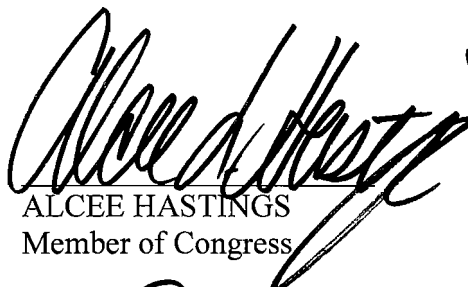
The Clean Water Protection Act, HR 2169 would amend the Water Pollution Control Act to clarify that "fill material" regulated under federal law cannot be waste material so that we can protect communities from the destruction caused by valley-fills. Residents will rest easier knowing their children will not be exposed to water polluted from mountaintop removal mining waste.


We are writing to urge your support of H.R. 2169, the Clean Water Protection Act as a way to ensure that every American has access to clean drinking water.

Please join 129 other members by co-sponsoring the bipartisan Clean Water Protection Act (HR 2169) to protect the waters that serve as vital sources of life for our cities and communities throughout the east. To become a cosponsor, or for more information, please contact Tim Del Monico (Pallone).

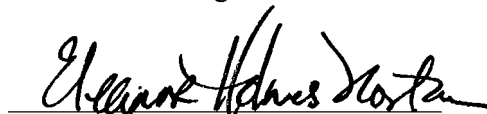
Sincerely,

  
FRANK PALLONE, JR.  
Member of Congress

  
ALCEE HASTINGS  
Member of Congress

  
BOBBY L. RUSH  
Member of Congress

  
EDOLPHUS TOWNS  
Member of Congress

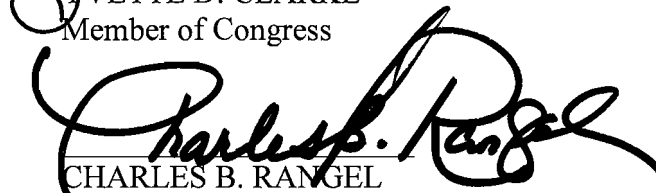
  
ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON  
Member of Congress

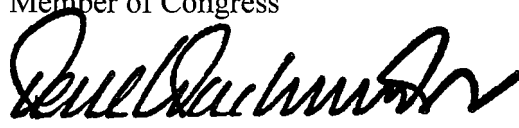
  
SHEILA JACKSON LEE  
Member of Congress

  
JOHN LEWIS  
Member of Congress

  
YVETTE D. CLARKE  
Member of Congress

  
KEITH ELLISON  
Member of Congress

  
CHARLES B. RANGEL  
Member of Congress

  
JESSE L. JACKSON, JR.  
Member of Congress