

112TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1579

To improve compliance with mine safety and health laws, empower miners to raise safety concerns, prevent future mine tragedies, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 15, 2011

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California (for himself, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. HOLT, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. SUTTON, Mr. PAYNE, and Mr. GRIJALVA) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

A BILL

To improve compliance with mine safety and health laws, empower miners to raise safety concerns, prevent future mine tragedies, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

4 (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the
5 “Robert C. Byrd Mine Safety Protection Act of 2011”.

6 (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for
7 this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. References.

TITLE I—ADDITIONAL INSPECTION AND INVESTIGATION
AUTHORITY

- Sec. 101. Independent accident investigations.
- Sec. 102. Subpoena authority and miner rights during inspections and investigations.
- Sec. 103. Designation of miner representative.
- Sec. 104. Additional amendments relating to inspections and investigations.

TITLE II—ENHANCED ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITY

- Sec. 201. Technical amendment.
- Sec. 202. A pattern of recurring noncompliance or accidents.
- Sec. 203. Injunctive authority.
- Sec. 204. Revocation of approval of plans.
- Sec. 205. Challenging a decision to approve, modify, or revoke a coal or other mine plan.
- Sec. 206. GAO Study on MSHA Mine Plan Approval.

TITLE III—PENALTIES

- Sec. 301. Civil penalties.
- Sec. 302. Civil and criminal liability of officers, directors, and agents.
- Sec. 303. Criminal penalties.
- Sec. 304. Commission review of penalty assessments.
- Sec. 305. Delinquent payments and prejudgment interest.

TITLE IV—MINERS' RIGHTS AND PROTECTIONS

- Sec. 401. Protection from retaliation.
- Sec. 402. Protection from loss of pay.
- Sec. 403. Underground coal miner employment standard for mines placed in pattern status.

TITLE V—MODERNIZING HEALTH AND SAFETY STANDARDS

- Sec. 501. Pre-shift review of mine conditions.
- Sec. 502. Rock dust standards.
- Sec. 503. Atmospheric monitoring systems.
- Sec. 504. Technology related to respirable dust.
- Sec. 505. Refresher training on miners' rights and responsibilities.
- Sec. 506. Authority to mandate additional training.
- Sec. 507. Brookwood-Sago Mine Safety Grants.
- Sec. 508. Certification of personnel.

TITLE VI—ADDITIONAL MINE SAFETY PROVISIONS

- Sec. 601. Definitions.
- Sec. 602. Assistance to States.
- Sec. 603. Black lung medical reports.
- Sec. 604. Authorization of cooperative agreements by NIOSH Office of Mine Safety and Health.
- Sec. 605. Rules of application to certain mines.

1 **SEC. 2. REFERENCES.**

2 Except as otherwise expressly provided, whenever in
3 this Act an amendment is expressed as an amendment to
4 a section or other provision, the reference shall be consid-
5 ered to be made to a section or other provision of the Fed-
6 eral Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 (30 U.S.C. 801
7 et seq.).

8 **TITLE I—ADDITIONAL INSPEC-**
9 **TION AND INVESTIGATION**
10 **AUTHORITY**

11 **SEC. 101. INDEPENDENT ACCIDENT INVESTIGATIONS.**

12 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 103(b) (30 U.S.C.
13 813(b)) is amended by striking “(b) For the purpose” and
14 inserting the following:

15 “(b) ACCIDENT INVESTIGATIONS.—

16 “(1) IN GENERAL.—For all accident investiga-
17 tions under this Act, the Secretary shall—

18 “(A) determine why the accident occurred;

19 “(B) determine whether there were viola-
20 tions of law, mandatory health and safety
21 standards, or other requirements, and if there
22 is evidence of conduct that may constitute a
23 violation of Federal criminal law, the Secretary
24 may refer such evidence to the Attorney Gen-
25 eral; and

1 “(C) make recommendations to avoid any
2 recurrence.

3 “(2) INDEPENDENT ACCIDENT INVESTIGA-
4 TIONS.—

5 “(A) IN GENERAL.—There shall be, in ad-
6 dition to an accident investigation under para-
7 graph (1), an independent investigation by an
8 independent investigation panel (referred to in
9 this subsection as the ‘Panel’) appointed under
10 subparagraph (B) for—

11 “(i) any accident involving 3 or more
12 deaths; or

13 “(ii) any accident that is of such se-
14 verity or scale for potential or actual harm
15 that, in the opinion of the Secretary of
16 Health and Human Services, the accident
17 merits an independent investigation.

18 “(B) APPOINTMENT.—

19 “(i) IN GENERAL.—As soon as prac-
20 ticable after an accident described in sub-
21 paragraph (A), the Secretary of Health
22 and Human Services shall appoint 5 mem-
23 bers for the Panel required under this
24 paragraph from among individuals who
25 have expertise in accident investigations,

1 mine engineering, or mine safety and
2 health that is relevant to the particular in-
3 vestigation.

4 “(ii) CHAIRPERSON.—The Panel shall
5 include, and be chaired by, a representative
6 from the Office of Mine Safety and Health
7 Research, of the National Institute for Oc-
8 cupational Safety and Health (referred to
9 in this subsection as NIOSH).

10 “(iii) CONFLICTS OF INTEREST.—
11 Panel members, and staff and consultants
12 assisting the Panel with an investigation,
13 shall be free from conflicts of interest with
14 regard to the investigation, and be subject
15 to the same standards of ethical conduct
16 for persons employed by the Secretary.

17 “(iv) COMPOSITION.—The Secretary
18 of Health and Human Services shall ap-
19 point as members of the Panel—

20 “(I) 1 operator of a mine or indi-
21 vidual representing mine operators,
22 and

23 “(II) 1 representative of a labor
24 organization that represents miners,

1 and may not appoint more than 1 of either
2 such individuals as members of the Panel.

3 “(v) STAFF AND EXPENSES.—The Di-
4 rector of NIOSH shall designate NIOSH
5 staff to facilitate the work of the Panel.
6 The Director may accept as staff personnel
7 on detail from other Federal agencies or
8 re-employ annuitants. The detail of per-
9 sonnel under this paragraph may be on a
10 non-reimbursable basis, and such detail
11 shall be without interruption or loss of civil
12 service status or privilege. The Director of
13 NIOSH shall have the authority to procure
14 on behalf of the Panel such materials, sup-
15 plies or services, including technical ex-
16 perts, as requested in writing by a majority
17 of the Panel.

18 “(vi) COMPENSATION AND TRAVEL.—
19 All members of the Panel who are officers
20 or employees of the United States shall
21 serve without compensation in addition to
22 that received for their services as officers
23 or employees of the United States. Each
24 Panel member who is not an officer or em-
25 ployee of the United States shall be com-

1 compensated at a rate equal to the daily equiv-
2 alent of the annual rate of basic pay pre-
3 scribed for level IV of the Executive Sched-
4 ule under section 5315 of title 5, United
5 States Code, for each day (including travel
6 time) during which such member is en-
7 gaged in the performance of duties of the
8 Panel. The members of the Panel shall be
9 allowed travel expenses, including per diem
10 in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized
11 for employees of agencies under subchapter
12 1 of chapter 57 of title 5, United States
13 Code, while away from their homes or reg-
14 ular places of business in the performance
15 of services for the Panel.

16 “(C) DUTIES.—The Panel shall—

17 “(i) assess and identify any factors
18 that caused the accident, including defi-
19 ciencies in safety management systems,
20 regulations, enforcement, industry prac-
21 tices or guidelines, or organizational fail-
22 ures;

23 “(ii) identify and evaluate any con-
24 tributing actions or inactions of—

25 “(I) the operator;

1 “(II) any contractors or other
2 persons engaged in mining-related
3 functions at the site;

4 “(III) any State agency with
5 oversight responsibilities;

6 “(IV) any agency or office within
7 the Department of Labor;

8 “(V) the Federal Mine Safety
9 and Health Review Commission; or

10 “(VI) any other person or entity
11 (including equipment manufacturers);

12 “(iii) review the determinations and
13 recommendations by the Secretary under
14 paragraph (1);

15 “(iv) prepare a report that—

16 “(I) includes the findings regard-
17 ing the causal factors described in
18 clauses (i) and (ii);

19 “(II) identifies any strengths and
20 weaknesses in the Secretary’s inves-
21 tigation; and

22 “(III) includes recommendations,
23 including interim recommendations
24 where appropriate, to industry, labor
25 organizations, State and Federal

1 agencies, or Congress, regarding pol-
2 icy, regulatory, enforcement, adminis-
3 trative, or other changes, which in the
4 judgment of the Panel, would prevent
5 a recurrence at other mines; and

6 “(v) publish such findings and rec-
7 ommendations (excluding any portions
8 which the Attorney General requests that
9 the Secretary withhold in relation to a
10 criminal referral) and hold public meetings
11 to inform the mining community and fami-
12 lies of affected miners of the Panel’s find-
13 ings and recommendations.

14 “(D) HEARINGS; APPLICABILITY OF CER-
15 TAIN FEDERAL LAW.—The Panel shall have the
16 authority to conduct public hearings or meet-
17 ings, but shall not be subject to the Federal Ad-
18 visory Committee Act. All public hearings of the
19 Panel shall be subject to the requirements
20 under section 552b of title 5, United States
21 Code.

22 “(E) MEMORANDUM OF UNDER-
23 STANDING.—Not later than 90 days after the
24 date of enactment of the Robert C. Byrd Mine
25 Safety Protection Act of 2011, the Secretary of

1 Labor and the Secretary of Health and Human
2 Services shall conclude and publically issue a
3 memorandum of understanding that—

4 “(i) outlines administrative arrange-
5 ments which will facilitate a coordination
6 of efforts between the Secretary of Labor
7 and the Panel, ensures that the Secretary’s
8 investigation under paragraph (1) is not
9 delayed or otherwise compromised by the
10 activities of the Panel, and establishes a
11 process to resolve any conflicts between
12 such investigations;

13 “(ii) ensures that Panel members or
14 staff will be able to participate in inves-
15 tigation activities (such as mine inspections
16 and interviews) related to the Secretary of
17 Labor’s investigation and will have full ac-
18 cess to documents that are assembled or
19 produced in such investigation, and en-
20 sures that the Secretary of Labor will
21 make all of the authority available to such
22 Secretary under this section, including sub-
23 poena authority, to obtain information and
24 witnesses which may be requested by such
25 Panel; and

1 “(iii) establishes such other arrange-
2 ments as are necessary to implement this
3 paragraph.

4 “(F) PROCEDURES.—Not later than 90
5 days after the date of enactment of the Robert
6 C. Byrd Mine Safety Protection Act of 2011,
7 the Secretary of Health and Human Services
8 shall establish procedures to ensure the consist-
9 ency and effectiveness of Panel investigations.
10 In establishing such procedures, such Secretary
11 shall consult with independent safety investiga-
12 tion agencies, sectors of the mining industry,
13 representatives of miners, families of miners in-
14 volved in fatal accidents, State mine safety
15 agencies, and mine rescue organizations. Such
16 procedures shall include—

17 “(i) authority for the Panel to use evi-
18 dence, samples, interviews, data, analyses,
19 findings, or other information gathered by
20 the Secretary of Labor, as the Panel deter-
21 mines valid;

22 “(ii) provisions to ensure confiden-
23 tiality if requested by any witness, to the
24 extent permitted by law, and prevent con-

1 flicts of interest in witness representation;
2 and

3 “(iii) provisions for preservation of
4 public access to the Panel’s records
5 through the Secretary of Health and
6 Human Services.

7 “(G) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIA-
8 TIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated
9 to carry out this subsection such sums as may
10 be necessary.

11 “(3) POWERS AND PROCESSES.—For the pur-
12 pose”.

13 (b) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—Section 511(a)
14 (30 U.S.C. 958(a)) is amended by inserting after “501,”
15 the following: “the status of implementation of rec-
16 ommendations from each independent investigation panel
17 under section 103(b) received in the preceding 5 years”.

18 **SEC. 102. SUBPOENA AUTHORITY AND MINER RIGHTS DUR-**
19 **ING INSPECTIONS AND INVESTIGATIONS.**

20 Section 103(b) (as amended by section 101) (30
21 U.S.C. 813(b)) is further amended by adding at the end
22 the following:

23 “(4) ADDITIONAL POWERS.—For purposes of
24 making inspections and investigations, the Secretary
25 or the Secretary’s designee, may sign and issue sub-

1 poenas for the attendance and testimony of wit-
2 nesses and the production of information, including
3 all relevant data, papers, books, documents, and
4 items of physical evidence, and administer oaths.
5 Witnesses summoned shall be paid the same fees
6 that are paid witnesses in the courts of the United
7 States. In carrying out inspections and investiga-
8 tions under this subsection, authorized representa-
9 tives of the Secretary and attorneys representing the
10 Secretary are authorized to question any individual
11 privately. Under this section, any individual who is
12 willing to speak with or provide a statement to such
13 authorized representatives or attorneys representing
14 the Secretary may do so without the presence, in-
15 volvement, or knowledge of the operator or the oper-
16 ator's agents or attorneys. The Secretary shall keep
17 the identity of an individual providing such a state-
18 ment confidential to the extent permitted by law.
19 Nothing in this paragraph prevents any individual
20 from being represented by that individual's personal
21 attorney.".

22 **SEC. 103. DESIGNATION OF MINER REPRESENTATIVE.**

23 Section 103(f) (30 U.S.C. 813(f)) is amended by in-
24 serting before the last sentence the following: "If any
25 miner is entrapped or otherwise prevented as the result

1 of an accident in such mine from designating such a rep-
2 resentative directly, such miner's closest relative may act
3 on behalf of such miner in designating such a representa-
4 tive. If any miner is not currently working in such mine
5 as the result of an accident in such mine, but would be
6 currently working in such mine but for such accident, such
7 miner may designate such a representative. A representa-
8 tive of miners shall have the right to participate in any
9 accident investigation the Secretary initiates pursuant to
10 subsection (b), including the right to participate in inves-
11 tigative interviews and to review all relevant papers, books,
12 documents and records produced in connection with the
13 accident investigation, unless the Secretary in consultation
14 with the Attorney General excludes such representatives
15 from the investigation on the grounds that inclusion would
16 interfere with or adversely impact a criminal investigation
17 that is pending or under consideration.”.

18 **SEC. 104. ADDITIONAL AMENDMENTS RELATING TO IN-**
19 **SPECTIONS AND INVESTIGATIONS.**

20 (a) HOURS OF INSPECTIONS.—Section 103(a) (30
21 U.S.C. 813(a)) is amended by inserting after the third
22 sentence the following: “Such inspections shall be con-
23 ducted during the various shifts and days of the week dur-
24 ing which miners are normally present in the mine to en-

1 sure that the protections of this Act are afforded to all
2 miners working all shifts.”.

3 (b) REVIEW OF MINE PATTERN STATUS.—Section
4 103(a) is further amended by inserting before the last sen-
5 tence the following: “The Secretary shall, upon request by
6 an operator, review with the appropriate mine officials the
7 Secretary’s most recent evaluation for pattern status (as
8 provided in section 104(e)) for that mine during the
9 course of a mine’s regular quarterly inspection of an un-
10 derground mine or a biannual inspection of a surface
11 mine, or, at the discretion of the Secretary, during the
12 pre-inspection conference.”.

13 (c) INJURY AND ILLNESS REPORTING.—Section
14 103(d) (30 U.S.C. 813(d)) is amended by striking the last
15 sentence and inserting the following: “The records to be
16 kept and made available by the operator of the mine shall
17 include man-hours worked and occupational injuries and
18 illnesses with respect to the miners in their employ or
19 under their direction or authority, and shall be maintained
20 separately for each mine and be reported at a frequency
21 determined by the Secretary, but at least annually. Inde-
22 pendent contractors (within the meaning of section 3(d))
23 shall be responsible for reporting accidents, occupational
24 injuries and illnesses, and man-hours worked for each
25 mine with respect to the miners in their employ or under

1 their direction or authority, and shall be reported at a fre-
2 quency determined by the Secretary, but at least annually.
3 Reports or records of operators and contractors required
4 and submitted to the Secretary under this subsection shall
5 be signed and certified as accurate and complete by a
6 knowledgeable and responsible person possessing a certifi-
7 cation, registration, qualification, or other approval, as
8 provided for under section 118. Knowingly falsifying such
9 records or reports shall be grounds for revoking such cer-
10 tification, registration, qualification, or other approval
11 under the standards established under subsection (b)(1)
12 of such section.”.

13 (d) ORDERS FOLLOWING AN ACCIDENT.—Section
14 103(k) (30 U.S.C. 813(k)) is amended by striking “, when
15 present,”.

16 (e) CONFLICT OF INTEREST IN THE REPRESENTA-
17 TION OF MINERS.—Section 103(a) (30 U.S.C. 813(a)) is
18 amended by adding at the end the following: “During in-
19 spections and investigations under this section, and during
20 any litigation under this Act, no attorney shall represent
21 or purport to represent both the operator of a coal or other
22 mine and any other individual, unless such individual has
23 knowingly and voluntarily waived all actual and reasonably
24 foreseeable conflicts of interest resulting from such rep-
25 resentation. The Secretary is authorized to take such ac-

1 tions as the Secretary considers appropriate to ascertain
2 whether such individual has knowingly and voluntarily
3 waived all such conflicts of interest. If the Secretary finds
4 that such an individual cannot be represented adequately
5 by such an attorney due to such conflicts of interest, the
6 Secretary may petition the appropriate United States Dis-
7 trict Court which shall have jurisdiction to disqualify such
8 attorney as counsel to such individual in the matter. The
9 Secretary may make such a motion as part of an ongoing
10 related civil action or as a miscellaneous action.”.

11 **TITLE II—ENHANCED**
12 **ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITY**

13 **SEC. 201. TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.**

14 Section 104(d)(1) (30 U.S.C. 814(d)(1)) is amend-
15 ed—

16 (1) in the first sentence—

17 (A) by striking “any mandatory health or
18 safety standard” and inserting “any provision
19 of this Act, including any mandatory health or
20 safety standard or regulation promulgated
21 under this Act”; and

22 (B) by striking “such mandatory health or
23 safety standards” and inserting “such provi-
24 sions, regulations, or mandatory health or safe-
25 ty standards”; and

1 (2) in the second sentence, by striking “any
2 mandatory health or safety standard” and inserting
3 “any provision of this Act, including any mandatory
4 health or safety standard or regulation promulgated
5 under this Act,”.

6 **SEC. 202. A PATTERN OF RECURRING NONCOMPLIANCE OR**
7 **ACCIDENTS.**

8 Section 104(e) (30 U.S.C. 814(e)) is amended to read
9 as follows:

10 “(e) PATTERN OF RECURRING NONCOMPLIANCE OR
11 ACCIDENTS.—

12 “(1) PATTERN STATUS.—

13 “(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this
14 subsection, a coal or other mine shall be placed
15 in pattern status if such mine has, as deter-
16 mined based on the regulations promulgated
17 under paragraph (8)—

18 “(i) a pattern of—

19 “(I) citations for significant and
20 substantial violations;

21 “(II) citations and withdrawal or-
22 ders issued for unwarrantable failure
23 to comply with mandatory health and
24 safety standards under section 104(d);

1 “(III) citations for flagrant viola-
2 tions within the meaning of section
3 110(b);

4 “(IV) withdrawal orders issued
5 under any other section of this Act
6 (other than orders issued under sub-
7 sections (j) or (k) of section 103); and

8 “(V) accidents and injuries; or

9 “(ii) a pattern consisting of any com-
10 bination of citations, orders, accidents, or
11 injuries described in subclauses (I) through
12 (V).

13 “(B) MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES.—Not-
14 withstanding subparagraph (A), if the Sec-
15 retary, after conducting an assessment of a coal
16 or other mine that otherwise qualifies for pat-
17 tern status, certifies that there are mitigating
18 circumstances wherein the operator has already
19 implemented remedial measures that have re-
20 duced risks to the health and safety of miners
21 to the point that such risks are no longer ele-
22 vated and has taken sufficient measures to en-
23 sure such elevated risk will not recur, the Sec-
24 retary may deem such mine to not be in pattern
25 status under this subsection. The Secretary

1 shall issue any such certification of such miti-
2 gating circumstances that would preclude the
3 placement of a mine in pattern status as a writ-
4 ten finding, which shall, not later than 10 days
5 after the certification is made, be—

6 “(i) made available on the public Web
7 site of the Mine Safety and Health Admin-
8 istration; and

9 “(ii) transmitted to the Committee on
10 Education and the Workforce of the House
11 of Representatives and the Committee on
12 Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of
13 the Senate.

14 “(C) FREQUENCY.—Not less frequently
15 than every 6 months, the Secretary shall iden-
16 tify any mines which meet the criteria set forth
17 in paragraph (8).

18 “(2) ACTIONS FOLLOWING PLACEMENT OF
19 MINE IN PATTERN STATUS.—For any coal or other
20 mine that is in pattern status, the Secretary shall—

21 “(A) notify the operator of such mine that
22 the mine is being placed in pattern status;

23 “(B) issue an order requiring such oper-
24 ator to cause all persons to be withdrawn from
25 such mine, except those persons referred to in

1 subsection (c) or authorized by an order of the
2 Secretary issued under this subsection;

3 “(C) issue a remediation order described in
4 paragraph (3) to such operator within 3 days;
5 and

6 “(D) require that the number of regular
7 inspections of such mine required under section
8 103 be increased to 8 per year for an under-
9 ground mine and 4 per year for a surface mine
10 while the mine is in pattern status.

11 Notice advising operators that they face potential
12 placement in pattern status shall not be a require-
13 ment for issuing a withdrawal order to operators
14 under this subsection.

15 “(3) REMEDIATION ORDER.—

16 “(A) IN GENERAL.—A remediation order
17 issued to an operator under paragraph (2)(C)
18 may require the operator to carry out one or
19 more of the following requirements, pursuant to
20 a timetable for commencing and completing
21 such actions or as a condition of miners reen-
22 tering the mine:

23 “(i) Provide specified training, includ-
24 ing training not otherwise required under
25 this Act.

1 “(ii) Institute and implement an effective health and safety management program approved by the Secretary, including—

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5 “(I) the employment of safety professionals, certified persons, and adequate numbers of personnel for the mine, as may be required by the Secretary;

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10 “(II) specific inspection, record-keeping, reporting and other requirements for the mine as the Secretary may establish; and

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14 “(III) other requirements to ensure compliance and to protect the health and safety of miners or prevent accidents or injuries as the Secretary may determine are necessary.

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19 “(iii) Facilitate any effort by the Secretary to communicate directly with miners employed at the mine outside the presence of the mine operators or its agents, for the purpose of obtaining information about mine conditions, health and safety prac-

1 tices, or advising miners of their rights
2 under this Act.

3 “(B) MODIFICATION OF AND FAILURE TO
4 COMPLY WITH REMEDIATION ORDER.—The Sec-
5 retary may modify the remediation order, as
6 necessary, to protect the health and safety of
7 miners. If the mine operator fails to fully com-
8 ply with the remediation order during the time
9 a mine is in pattern status, the Secretary shall
10 reinstate the withdrawal order under paragraph
11 (2)(B).

12 “(C) EXTENSION OF DEADLINES.—An ex-
13 tension of a deadline under the remediation
14 order may be granted on a temporary basis and
15 only upon a showing that the operator took all
16 feasible measures to comply with the order and
17 only to the extent that the operator’s failure to
18 comply is beyond the control of the operator.

19 “(4) CONDITIONS FOR LIFTING A WITHDRAWAL
20 ORDER.—A withdrawal order issued under para-
21 graph (2)(B) shall not be lifted until the Secretary
22 verifies that—

23 “(A) any and all violations or other condi-
24 tions in the mine identified in the remediation
25 order have been or are being fully abated or

1 corrected as outlined in the remediation order;
2 and

3 “(B) the operator has completed any other
4 actions under the remediation order that are re-
5 quired for reopening the mine.

6 “(5) PERFORMANCE EVALUATION.—

7 “(A) PERFORMANCE BENCHMARKS.—The
8 Secretary shall evaluate the performance of
9 each mine in pattern status every 90 days dur-
10 ing which the mine is producing and determine
11 if, for such 90-day period—

12 “(i) the rate of citations at such mine
13 for significant and substantial violations—

14 “(I) is in the top performing
15 35th percentile of such rates, respec-
16 tively, for all mines of similar size and
17 type; or

18 “(II) has been reduced by 70
19 percent from the date on which such
20 mine was placed in pattern status,
21 provided that the rate of such viola-
22 tions is not greater than the mean for
23 all mines of similar size and type;

24 “(ii) the accident and injury rates at
25 such mine are in the top performing 35th

1 percentile of such rates, respectively, for all
2 mines of similar size and type; and

3 “(iii) no citations or withdrawal or-
4 ders for a violation under section 104(d),
5 no withdrawal orders for imminent danger
6 under section 107 (issued in connection
7 with a citation), and no flagrant violations
8 within the meaning of section 110(b), were
9 issued for such mine.

10 “(B) REISSUANCE OF WITHDRAWAL OR-
11 DERS.—If an operator being evaluated fails to
12 achieve the performance benchmarks described
13 in subparagraph (A), the Secretary may reissue
14 a withdrawal order under paragraph (2)(B) to
15 remedy any recurring conditions that led to pat-
16 tern status under this subsection, and may
17 modify the remediation order, as necessary, to
18 protect the health and safety of miners.

19 “(6) TERMINATION OF PATTERN STATUS.—

20 “(A) PERFORMANCE BENCHMARKS.—The
21 Secretary shall remove a coal or other mine
22 from pattern status if, for a 1-year period dur-
23 ing which the mine is producing—

24 “(i) the rate of citations at such mine
25 for significant and substantial violations—

1 “(I) is in the top performing
2 25th percentile of such rates, respec-
3 tively, for all mines of similar size and
4 type; or

5 “(II) has been reduced by 80
6 percent from the date on which such
7 mine was placed in pattern status,
8 provided that the rate of such viola-
9 tions is not greater than the mean for
10 all mines of similar size and type;

11 “(ii) the accident and injury rates at
12 such mine are in the top performing 25th
13 percentile of such rates, respectively, for all
14 mines of similar size and type; and

15 “(iii) no citations or withdrawal or-
16 ders for violations under section 104(d), no
17 withdrawal orders for imminent danger
18 under section 107 (issued in connection
19 with a citation), and no flagrant violations
20 within the meaning of section 110(b), were
21 issued for such mine.

22 “(B) CONTINUATION OF PATTERN STA-
23 TUS.—Should the mine operator fail to meet
24 the performance benchmarks described in sub-
25 paragraph (A), the Secretary shall extend the

1 mine’s placement in pattern status until such
2 benchmarks are achieved.

3 “(C) CONSTRUCTION.—A withdrawal order
4 issued as the result of a condition that was en-
5 tirely beyond the operator’s ability to prevent or
6 control shall not preclude the operator from
7 being removed from pattern status, provided
8 the operator did not cause or allow miners to
9 be exposed to the condition in violation of any
10 provision of this Act or a mandatory health or
11 safety standard or regulation promulgated
12 under this Act.

13 “(7) EXPEDITED REVIEW.—If any order under
14 this subsection is contested, the review of such order
15 shall be conducted on an expedited basis, in accord-
16 ance with section 105(d).

17 “(8) REGULATIONS.—

18 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120
19 days after the date of enactment of the Robert
20 C. Byrd Mine Safety Protection Act of 2011,
21 the Secretary shall issue interim final regula-
22 tions that shall define—

23 “(i) the threshold benchmarks to trig-
24 ger pattern status under paragraph (1)

1 and cause a withdrawal order to be issued
2 or reissued; and

3 “(ii) the performance benchmarks de-
4 scribed in paragraphs (5)(A) and (6)(A).

5 “(B) THRESHOLD BENCHMARKS.—In es-
6 tablishing threshold benchmarks to trigger pat-
7 tern status for mines with significantly poor
8 compliance that contributes to unsafe or
9 unhealthy conditions, the Secretary—

10 “(i) shall—

11 “(I) consider rates of citations
12 and orders described in paragraph
13 (1)(A) and rates of reportable acci-
14 dents and injuries within the pre-
15 ceding 180-day period; and

16 “(II) assign appropriate weight
17 to various types of citations, orders,
18 accidents, injuries, or other factors;
19 and

20 “(ii) may include—

21 “(I) factors such as mine type,
22 production levels, number of miners,
23 hours worked by miners, number of
24 mechanized mining units (or similar
25 production characteristics), and the

1 presence of a representative of miners
2 at the mine for purposes of collective
3 bargaining;

4 “(II) the mine’s history of cita-
5 tions, violations, orders, and other en-
6 forcement actions, or rates of report-
7 able accidents and injuries, over any
8 period determined relevant by the Sec-
9 retary; and

10 “(III) other factors the Secretary
11 may determine appropriate to protect
12 the safety and health of miners.

13 “(C) FINAL REGULATION.—Not later than
14 2 years after the date of enactment of the Rob-
15 ert C. Byrd Mine Safety Protection Act of
16 2011, the Secretary shall promulgate a final
17 regulation implementing this paragraph.

18 “(9) PUBLIC DATABASE AND INFORMATION.—
19 The Secretary shall establish and maintain a pub-
20 lically available electronic database containing the
21 data used to determine pattern status for all coal or
22 other mines which shall be updated as frequently as
23 practicable. Such database shall be searchable and
24 have the capacity to provide comparative data about
25 the health and safety at mines of similar sizes and

1 types. The Secretary shall also make publicly avail-
2 able—

3 “(A) a list of all mines the Secretary
4 places in pattern status, updated within 7 days
5 of placing an additional mine in pattern status;

6 “(B) the metrics, including percentile in-
7 formation, used for the purposes of the per-
8 formance benchmarks and threshold bench-
9 marks described in paragraphs (5), (6), and
10 (8); and

11 “(C) guidance for the use of such metrics
12 and benchmarks to assist operators in deter-
13 mining the performance their mines under cri-
14 teria established by the Secretary.

15 “(10) OPERATOR FEES FOR ADDITIONAL IN-
16 SPECTIONS.—

17 “(A) ASSESSMENT AND COLLECTION.—Be-
18 ginning 120 days after the date of enactment of
19 the Robert C. Byrd Mine Safety Protection Act
20 of 2011, the Secretary shall assess and collect
21 fees, in accordance with this paragraph, from
22 each coal or other mine in pattern status for
23 the costs of additional inspections under this
24 subsection. The Secretary shall issue, by rule, a
25 schedule of fees to be assessed against coal or

1 other mines of varying types and sizes, and
2 shall collect and assess amounts under this
3 paragraph based on the schedule.

4 “(B) USE.—Amounts collected as provided
5 in subparagraph (A) shall only be available to
6 the Secretary for making expenditures to carry
7 out the additional inspections required under
8 paragraph (2)(D).

9 “(C) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIA-
10 TIONS.—In addition to any other amounts au-
11 thorized to be appropriated under this Act,
12 there is authorized to be appropriated to the
13 Secretary for each fiscal year in which fees are
14 collected under subparagraph (A) an amount
15 equal to the total amount of fees collected
16 under such subparagraph during that fiscal
17 year. Such amounts are authorized to remain
18 available until expended. If on the first day of
19 a fiscal year a regular appropriation to the
20 Commission has not been enacted, the Commis-
21 sion shall continue to collect fees (as offsetting
22 collections) under this subsection at the rate in
23 effect during the preceding fiscal year, until 5
24 days after the date such regular appropriation
25 is enacted.

1 “(D) COLLECTION AND CREDITING OF
2 FEES.—Fees authorized and collected under
3 this paragraph shall be deposited and credited
4 as offsetting collections to the account providing
5 appropriations to the Mine Safety and Health
6 Administration and shall not be collected for
7 any fiscal year except to the extent and in the
8 amount provided in advance in appropriation
9 Acts.”.

10 **SEC. 203. INJUNCTIVE AUTHORITY.**

11 Section 108(a)(2) (30 U.S.C. 818(a)(2)) is amended
12 by striking “a pattern of violation of” and all that follows
13 and inserting “a course of conduct that in the judgment
14 of the Secretary constitutes a continuing hazard to the
15 health or safety of miners, including violations of this Act
16 or of mandatory health and safety standards or regula-
17 tions under this Act.”.

18 **SEC. 204. REVOCATION OF APPROVAL OF PLANS.**

19 Section 105 (30 U.S.C. 815) is amended—

20 (1) by redesignating subsection (d) as sub-
21 section (e); and

22 (2) by inserting after subsection (c) the fol-
23 lowing:

24 “(d) REVOCATION OF APPROVAL OF PLANS.—

1 “(1) REVOCATION.—If the Secretary finds that
2 any program or plan of an operator, or part thereof,
3 that was approved by the Secretary under this Act
4 is based on inaccurate information or that cir-
5 cumstances that existed when such plan was ap-
6 proved have materially changed and that continued
7 operation of such mine under such plan constitutes
8 a hazard to the safety or health of miners, the Sec-
9 retary shall revoke the approval of such program or
10 plan.

11 “(2) WITHDRAWAL ORDERS.—Upon revocation
12 of the approval of a program or plan under sub-
13 section (a), the Secretary may immediately issue an
14 order requiring the operator to cause all persons, ex-
15 cept those persons referred to in section 104(e), to
16 be withdrawn from such mine or an area of such
17 mine, and to be prohibited from entering such mine
18 or such area, until the operator has submitted and
19 the Secretary has approved a new plan.”.

20 **SEC. 205. CHALLENGING A DECISION TO APPROVE, MOD-**
21 **IFY, OR REVOKE A COAL OR OTHER MINE**
22 **PLAN.**

23 Section 105(e) (as redesignated by section 204(1))
24 (30 U.S.C. 815(e)) is amended by adding at the end the
25 following: “In any proceeding in which a party challenges

1 the Secretary’s decision whether to approve, modify, or re-
2 voke a coal or other mine plan under this Act, the Com-
3 mission shall affirm the Secretary’s decision unless the
4 challenging party establishes that such decision was arbi-
5 trary, capricious, an abuse of discretion, or otherwise not
6 in accordance with law.”.

7 **SEC. 206. GAO STUDY ON MSHA MINE PLAN APPROVAL.**

8 Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment
9 of this Act, the Comptroller General shall provide a report
10 to Congress on the timeliness of the Mine Safety and
11 Health Administration’s approval of underground coal
12 mines’ required plans and plan amendments, including—

13 (1) factors that contribute to any delays in the
14 approval of these plans; and

15 (2) as appropriate, recommendations for im-
16 proving timeliness of plan review and for achieving
17 prompt decisions.

18 **TITLE III—PENALTIES**

19 **SEC. 301. CIVIL PENALTIES.**

20 (a) **TECHNICAL CORRECTION.**—Section 110(a)(1)
21 (30 U.S.C. 820(a)(1)) is amended by inserting “including
22 any regulation promulgated under this Act,” after “this
23 Act,”.

1 (b) INCREASED CIVIL PENALTIES DURING PATTERN
2 STATUS.—Section 110(b) (30 U.S.C. 820(b)) is amended
3 by adding at the end the following:

4 “(3) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act,
5 an operator of a coal or other mine that is in pattern sta-
6 tus under section 104(e) and that fails to meet the per-
7 formance benchmarks set forth by the Secretary under
8 section 104(e)(5)(A) during any performance review of the
9 mine following the first performance review shall be as-
10 sessed an increased civil penalty for any violation of this
11 Act, including any mandatory health or safety standard
12 or regulation promulgated under this Act. Such increased
13 penalty shall be twice the amount that would otherwise
14 be assessed for the violation under this Act, including the
15 regulations promulgated under this Act, subject to the
16 maximum civil penalty established for the violation under
17 this Act. This paragraph shall apply to violations at such
18 mine that occur during the time period after the operator
19 fails to meet the performance benchmarks in this para-
20 graph, and ending when the Secretary determines at a
21 subsequent performance review that the mine meets the
22 performance benchmarks under section 104(e)(5)(A).”.

23 (c) CIVIL PENALTY FOR RETALIATION.—Section
24 110(a) (30 U.S.C. 820(a)) is further amended—

1 (1) by redesignating paragraph (4) as para-
2 graph (5); and

3 (2) by inserting after paragraph (3) the fol-
4 lowing:

5 “(4) If any person violates section 105(c), the Sec-
6 retary shall propose, and the Commission shall assess, a
7 civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 or more than
8 \$100,000 for the first occurrence of such violation, and
9 not less than \$20,000 or more than \$200,000 for any sub-
10 sequent violation, during any 3-year period.”.

11 **SEC. 302. CIVIL AND CRIMINAL LIABILITY OF OFFICERS, DI-**
12 **RECTORS, AND AGENTS.**

13 Section 110(c) (30 U.S.C. 820(c)) is amended to read
14 as follows:

15 “(c) CIVIL AND CRIMINAL LIABILITY OF OFFICERS,
16 DIRECTORS, AND AGENTS.—

17 “(1) CIVIL PENALTIES.—Whenever an operator
18 engages in conduct for which the operator is subject
19 to civil penalties under this section, any director, of-
20 ficer, or agent of such operator who knowingly au-
21 thorizes, orders, or carries out such conduct, or who
22 knowingly authorizes, orders, or carries out any pol-
23 icy or practice that results in such conduct and hav-
24 ing reason to believe it would so result, shall be sub-

1 ject to the same civil penalties under this section as
2 if it were an operator engaging in such conduct.

3 “(2) CRIMINAL PENALTIES.—Whenever an op-
4 erator engages in conduct for which the operator
5 may be subject to criminal penalties under sub-
6 section (d), any director, officer, or agent of such
7 operator who knowingly authorizes, orders, or car-
8 ries out such conduct, or who knowingly authorizes,
9 orders, or carries out a policy or practice that re-
10 sults in such conduct, and knowing that it will so re-
11 sult, shall be subject to the same penalties under
12 paragraphs (1) or (2) of subsection (d) as if such
13 person were an operator engaging in such conduct.”.

14 **SEC. 303. CRIMINAL PENALTIES.**

15 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 110 (30 U.S.C. 820) is
16 amended by striking subsection (d) and—

17 (1) by inserting the following new heading:

18 “(d) CRIMINAL PENALTIES.—”;

19 (2) by inserting after the heading (as added by
20 paragraph (1) of this subsection), the following new
21 paragraph:

22 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Whoever, being an oper-
23 ator, knowingly—

24 “(A) violates a mandatory health or safety
25 standard, or

1 “(B) violates or fails or refuses to comply
2 with any order issued under section 104 or sec-
3 tion 107, or any order incorporated in a final
4 decision issued under this Act (except an order
5 incorporated in a decision under subsection
6 (a)(1) or section 105(c)), shall, upon conviction,
7 be fined not more than \$250,000, or imprisoned
8 for not more than 1 year, or both, except that
9 if the operator commits the violation after hav-
10 ing been previously convicted of a violation
11 under this paragraph and, if the operator
12 knows or has reason to know that such subse-
13 quent violation has the potential to expose a
14 miner to risk of serious injury, serious illness,
15 or death, the operator shall, upon conviction, be
16 fined not more than \$1,000,000, or imprisoned
17 for not more than 5 years, or both.”;

18 (3) by inserting after paragraph (1) (as added
19 by paragraph (2) of this subsection), the following
20 new paragraph:

21 “(2) SIGNIFICANT RISK OF SERIOUS INJURY,
22 SERIOUS ILLNESS, OR DEATH.—Whoever, being an
23 operator, knowingly—

1 “(A) tampers with or disables a required
2 safety device (except with express authorization
3 from the Secretary),

4 “(B) violates a mandatory health or safety
5 standard, or

6 “(C) violates or fails or refuses to comply
7 with an order issued under section 104 or 107,
8 or any order incorporated in a final decision
9 issued under this Act (except an order incor-
10 porated in a decision under subsection (a)(1) or
11 section 105(e)), and thereby recklessly exposes
12 a miner to significant risk of serious injury, se-
13 rious illness, or death, shall, upon conviction, be
14 fined not more than \$1,000,000, or imprisoned
15 for not more than 5 years, or both, except that
16 if the operator commits the violation after hav-
17 ing been previously convicted of a violation
18 under this paragraph, the operator shall, upon
19 conviction, be fined not more than \$2,000,000,
20 or imprisoned for not more than 10 years, or
21 both.”; and

22 (4) by inserting after paragraph (2) (as added
23 by paragraph (3) of this subsection), the following
24 new paragraph:

1 “(3) CRIMINAL PENALTIES FOR RETALIA-
2 TION.—Whoever knowingly—

3 “(A) with the intent to retaliate, interferes
4 with the lawful employment or livelihood of a
5 person, or the spouse, sibling, child, or parent
6 of a person, because any of them provides infor-
7 mation to an authorized representative of the
8 Secretary, a State or local mine safety or health
9 officer or official, or other law enforcement offi-
10 cer, in reasonable belief that the information is
11 true and related to an apparent health or safety
12 violation, or unhealthful or unsafe condition,
13 policy, or practice under this Act, or

14 “(B) interferes, or threatens to interfere,
15 with the lawful employment or livelihood of a
16 person, or the spouse, sibling, child, or parent
17 of a person, with the intent to prevent any of
18 them from so providing such information, shall
19 be fined under title 18 or imprisoned for not
20 more than 5 years, or both.”.

21 (b) ADVANCE NOTICE OF INSPECTIONS.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 110(e) (30 U.S.C.
23 820(e)) is amended to read as follows:

24 “(e) Whoever knowingly, with intent to give advance
25 notice of an inspection conducted or to be conducted under

1 this Act, and thereby to impede, interfere with, or frus-
2 trate such inspection, engages in, or directs another per-
3 son to engage in, conduct that a reasonable person would
4 expect to result in such advance notice, shall be fined
5 under title 18, United States Code, or imprisoned for not
6 more than 5 years, or both, except that a miner (other
7 than a director, officer or agent of the operator involved)
8 who commits the offense at the direction of a superior
9 shall be fined under title 18, or imprisoned not more than
10 1 year, or both, unless the miner commits a second or
11 subsequent offense under this subsection (without regard
12 to whether the offense was committed at the direction of
13 a superior) in which case the miner shall be fined under
14 title 18, United States Code, or imprisoned for not more
15 than 5 years, or both.”.

16 (2) POSTING OF ADVANCE NOTICE PEN-
17 ALTIES.—Section 109 (30 U.S.C. 819) is amended
18 by adding at the end the following:

19 “(e) POSTING OF ADVANCE NOTICE PENALTIES.—
20 Each operator of a coal or other mine shall post, on the
21 bulletin board described in subsection (a) and in a con-
22 spicuous place near each staffed entrance onto the mine
23 property, a notice stating, in a form and manner to be
24 prescribed by the Secretary—

1 “(1) that it is unlawful pursuant to section
2 110(e) for any person, with the intent to impede,
3 interfere with, or frustrate an inspection conducted
4 or to be conducted under this Act, to engage in, or
5 direct another person to engage in, any conduct that
6 a reasonable person would expect to result in ad-
7 vance notice of such inspection; and

8 “(2) the maximum penalties for a violation
9 under such subsection.”.

10 **SEC. 304. COMMISSION REVIEW OF PENALTY ASSESS-**
11 **MENTS.**

12 Section 110(i) (30 U.S.C. 820(i)) is amended by
13 striking “In assessing civil monetary penalties, the Com-
14 mission shall consider” and inserting the following: “In
15 any review of a citation and proposed penalty assessment
16 contested by an operator, the Commission shall assess not
17 less than the penalty derived by using the same method-
18 ology (including any point system) prescribed in regula-
19 tions under this Act, so as to ensure consistency in oper-
20 ator penalty assessments, except that the Commission may
21 assess a penalty for less than the amount that would result
22 from the utilization of such methodology if the Commis-
23 sion finds that there are extraordinary circumstances. If
24 there is no such methodology prescribed for a citation or

1 there are such extraordinary circumstances, the Commis-
2 sion shall assess the penalty by considering”.

3 **SEC. 305. DELINQUENT PAYMENTS AND PREJUDGMENT IN-**
4 **TEREST.**

5 (a) PRE-FINAL ORDER INTEREST.—Section 110(j)
6 (30 U.S.C. 820(j)) is amended by striking the second and
7 third sentences and inserting the following: “Pre-final
8 order interest on such penalties shall begin to accrue on
9 the date the operator contests a citation issued under this
10 Act, including any mandatory health or safety standard
11 or regulation promulgated under this Act, and shall end
12 upon the issuance of the final order. Such pre-final order
13 interest shall be calculated at the current underpayment
14 rate determined by the Secretary of the Treasury pursu-
15 ant to section 6621 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986,
16 and shall be compounded daily. Post-final order interest
17 shall begin to accrue 30 days after the date a final order
18 of the Commission or the court is issued, and shall be
19 charged at the rate of 8 percent per annum.”.

20 (b) ENSURING PAYMENT OF PENALTIES.—

21 (1) AMENDMENTS.—Section 110 (30 U.S.C.
22 820) is further amended—

23 (A) by redesignating subsection (l) as sub-
24 section (m); and

1 (B) by inserting after subsection (k) the
2 following:

3 “(l) ENSURING PAYMENT OF PENALTIES.—

4 “(1) DELINQUENT PAYMENT LETTER.—If the
5 operator of a coal or other mine fails to pay any civil
6 penalty assessment that has become a final order of
7 the Commission or a court within 45 days after such
8 assessment became a final order, the Secretary shall
9 send the operator a letter advising the operator of
10 the consequences under this subsection of such fail-
11 ure to pay. The letter shall also advise the operator
12 of the opportunity to enter into or modify a payment
13 plan with the Secretary based upon a demonstrated
14 inability to pay, the procedure for entering into such
15 plan, and the consequences of not entering into or
16 not complying with such plan.

17 “(2) WITHDRAWAL ORDERS FOLLOWING FAIL-
18 URE TO PAY.—If an operator that receives a letter
19 under paragraph (1) has not paid the assessment by
20 the date that is 180 days after such assessment be-
21 came a final order and has not entered into a pay-
22 ment plan with the Secretary, the Secretary shall
23 issue an order requiring such operator to cause all
24 persons, except those referred to in section 104(e),
25 to be withdrawn from, and to be prohibited from en-

1 tering, the mine that is covered by the final order
2 described in paragraph (1), until the operator pays
3 such assessment in full (including interest and ad-
4 ministrative costs) or enters into a payment plan
5 with the Secretary. If such operator enters into a
6 payment plan with the Secretary and at any time
7 fails to comply with the terms specified in such pay-
8 ment plan, the Secretary shall issue an order requir-
9 ing such operator to cause all persons, except those
10 referred to in section 104(c), to be withdrawn from
11 the mine that is covered by such final order, and to
12 be prohibited from entering such mine, until the op-
13 erator rectifies the noncompliance with the payment
14 plan in the manner specified in such payment
15 plan.”.

16 (2) APPLICABILITY AND EFFECTIVE DATE.—
17 The amendments made by paragraph (1) shall apply
18 to all unpaid civil penalty assessments under the
19 Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 (30
20 U.S.C. 801 et seq.), except that, for any unpaid civil
21 penalty assessment that became a final order of the
22 Commission or a court before the date of enactment
23 of this Act, the time periods under section 110(n) of
24 the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 (as
25 amended) (30 U.S.C. 820(n)) shall be calculated as

1 beginning on the date of enactment of this Act in-
2 stead of on the date of the final order.

3 **TITLE IV—MINERS’ RIGHTS AND**
4 **PROTECTIONS**

5 **SEC. 401. PROTECTION FROM RETALIATION.**

6 Section 105(c) (30 U.S.C. 815(c)) is amended to read
7 as follows:

8 “(c) PROTECTION FROM RETALIATION.—

9 “(1) RETALIATION PROHIBITED.—

10 “(A) RETALIATION FOR COMPLAINT OR
11 TESTIMONY.—No person shall discharge or in
12 any manner discriminate against or cause to be
13 discharged or cause discrimination against or
14 otherwise interfere with the exercise of the stat-
15 utory rights of any miner or other employee of
16 an operator, representative of miners, or appli-
17 cant for employment (including the spouse, sib-
18 ling, child, or parent of such miner or employee,
19 if such individual is employed or is applying for
20 employment at a mine under the control of the
21 operator), because—

22 “(i) such miner or other employee,
23 representative, or applicant for employ-
24 ment—

1 “(I) has filed or made a com-
2 plaint, or is about to file or make a
3 complaint, including a complaint noti-
4 fying the operator or the operator’s
5 agent, or the representative of the
6 miners at the coal or other mine of an
7 alleged danger or safety or health vio-
8 lation in a coal or other mine;

9 “(II) instituted or caused to be
10 instituted, or is about to institute or
11 cause to be instituted, any proceeding
12 under or related to this Act or has
13 testified or is about to testify in any
14 such proceeding or because of the ex-
15 ercise by such miner or other em-
16 ployee, representative, or applicant for
17 employment on behalf of him or her-
18 self or others of any right afforded by
19 this Act, or has reported any injury or
20 illness to an operator or agent;

21 “(III) has testified or is about to
22 testify before Congress or any Federal
23 or State proceeding related to safety
24 or health in a coal or other mine; or

1 “(IV) refused to violate any pro-
2 vision of this Act, including any man-
3 datory health and safety standard or
4 regulation; or

5 “(ii) such miner is the subject of med-
6 ical evaluations and potential transfer
7 under a standard published pursuant to
8 section 101.

9 “(B) RETALIATION FOR REFUSAL TO PER-
10 FORM DUTIES.—

11 “(i) IN GENERAL.—No person shall
12 discharge or in any manner discriminate
13 against a miner or other employee of an
14 operator for refusing to perform the min-
15 er’s or other employee’s duties if the miner
16 or other employee has a good-faith and
17 reasonable belief that performing such du-
18 ties would pose a safety or health hazard
19 to the miner or other employee or to any
20 other miner or employee.

21 “(ii) STANDARD.—For purposes of
22 clause (i), the circumstances causing the
23 miner’s or other employee’s good-faith be-
24 lief that performing such duties would pose
25 a safety or health hazard shall be of such

1 a nature that a reasonable person, under
2 the circumstances confronting the miner or
3 other employee, would conclude that there
4 is such a hazard. In order to qualify for
5 protection under this paragraph, the miner
6 or other employee, when practicable, shall
7 have communicated or attempted to com-
8 municate the safety or health concern to
9 the operator and have not received from
10 the operator a response reasonably cal-
11 culated to allay such concern.

12 “(2) COMPLAINT.—Any miner or other em-
13 ployee or representative of miners or applicant for
14 employment who believes that he or she has been
15 discharged, disciplined, or otherwise discriminated
16 against by any person in violation of paragraph (1)
17 may file a complaint with the Secretary alleging
18 such discrimination not later than 180 days after
19 the later of—

20 “(A) the last date on which an alleged vio-
21 lation of paragraph (1) occurs; or

22 “(B) the date on which the miner or other
23 employee or representative knows or should rea-
24 sonably have known that such alleged violation
25 occurred.

1 “(3) INVESTIGATION AND HEARING.—

2 “(A) COMMENCEMENT OF INVESTIGATION
3 AND INITIAL DETERMINATION.—Upon receipt
4 of such complaint, the Secretary shall forward
5 a copy of the complaint to the respondent, and
6 shall commence an investigation within 15 days
7 of the Secretary’s receipt of the complaint, and,
8 as soon as practicable after commencing such
9 investigation, make the determination required
10 under subparagraph (B) regarding the rein-
11 statement of the miner or other employee.

12 “(B) REINSTATEMENT.—If the Secretary
13 finds that such complaint was not frivolously
14 brought, the Commission, on an expedited basis
15 upon application of the Secretary, shall order
16 the immediate reinstatement of the miner or
17 other employee until there has been a final
18 Commission order disposing of the underlying
19 complaint of the miner or other employee. If ei-
20 ther the Secretary or the miner or other em-
21 ployee pursues the underlying complaint, such
22 reinstatement shall remain in effect until the
23 Commission has disposed of such complaint on
24 the merits, regardless of whether the Secretary
25 pursues such complaint by filing a complaint

1 under subparagraph (D) or the miner or other
2 employee pursues such complaint by filing an
3 action under paragraph (4). If neither the Sec-
4 retary nor the miner or other employee pursues
5 the underlying complaint within the periods
6 specified in paragraph (4), such reinstatement
7 shall remain in effect until such time as the
8 Commission may, upon motion of the operator
9 and after providing notice and an opportunity
10 to be heard to the parties, vacate such com-
11 plaint for failure to prosecute.

12 “(C) INVESTIGATION.—Such investigation
13 shall include interviewing the complainant
14 and—

15 “(i) providing the respondent an op-
16 portunity to submit to the Secretary a
17 written response to the complaint and to
18 present statements from witnesses or pro-
19 vide evidence; and

20 “(ii) providing the complainant an op-
21 portunity to receive any statements or evi-
22 dence provided to the Secretary and to
23 provide additional information or evidence,
24 or to rebut any statements or evidence.

1 “(D) ACTION BY THE SECRETARY.—If,
2 upon such investigation, the Secretary deter-
3 mines that the provisions of this subsection
4 have been violated, the Secretary shall imme-
5 diately file a complaint with the Commission,
6 with service upon the alleged violator and the
7 miner or other employee, representative of min-
8 ers, or applicant for employment alleging such
9 discrimination or interference and propose an
10 order granting appropriate relief.

11 “(E) ACTION OF THE COMMISSION.—The
12 Commission shall afford an opportunity for a
13 hearing on the record (in accordance with sec-
14 tion 554 of title 5, United States Code, but
15 without regard to subsection (a)(3) of such sec-
16 tion) and thereafter shall issue an order, based
17 upon findings of fact, affirming, modifying, or
18 vacating the Secretary’s proposed order, or di-
19 recting other appropriate relief. Such order
20 shall become final 30 days after its issuance.
21 The complaining miner or other employee, rep-
22 resentative, or applicant for employment may
23 present additional evidence on his or her own
24 behalf during any hearing held pursuant to this
25 paragraph.

1 “(F) RELIEF.—The Commission shall have
2 authority in such proceedings to require a per-
3 son committing a violation of this subsection to
4 take such affirmative action to abate the viola-
5 tion and prescribe a remedy as the Commission
6 considers appropriate, including—

7 “(i) the rehiring or reinstatement of
8 the miner or other employee with back pay
9 and interest and without loss of position or
10 seniority, and restoration of the terms,
11 rights, conditions, and privileges associated
12 with the complainant’s employment;

13 “(ii) any other compensatory and con-
14 sequential damages sufficient to make the
15 complainant whole, and exemplary dam-
16 ages where appropriate; and

17 “(iii) expungement of all warnings,
18 reprimands, or derogatory references that
19 have been placed in paper or electronic
20 records or databases of any type relating
21 to the actions by the complainant that
22 gave rise to the unfavorable personnel ac-
23 tion, and, at the complainant’s direction,
24 transmission of a copy of the decision on
25 the complaint to any person whom the

1 complainant reasonably believes may have
2 received such unfavorable information.

3 “(4) NOTICE TO AND ACTION OF COMPLAIN-
4 ANT.—

5 “(A) NOTICE TO COMPLAINANT.—Not
6 later than 90 days of the receipt of a complaint
7 filed under paragraph (2), the Secretary shall
8 notify, in writing, the miner or other employee,
9 applicant for employment, or representative of
10 miners of his determination whether a violation
11 has occurred.

12 “(B) ACTION OF COMPLAINANT.—If the
13 Secretary, upon investigation, determines that
14 the provisions of this subsection have not been
15 violated, the complainant shall have the right,
16 within 30 days after receiving notice of the Sec-
17 retary’s determination, to file an action in his
18 or her own behalf before the Commission,
19 charging discrimination or interference in viola-
20 tion of paragraph (1).

21 “(C) HEARING AND DECISION.—The Com-
22 mission shall afford an opportunity for a hear-
23 ing on the record (in accordance with section
24 554 of title 5, United States Code, but without
25 regard to subsection (a)(3) of such section),

1 and thereafter shall issue an order, based upon
2 findings of fact, dismissing or sustaining the
3 complainant’s charges and, if the charges are
4 sustained, granting such relief as it deems ap-
5 propriate as described in paragraph (3)(D).
6 Such order shall become final 30 days after its
7 issuance.

8 “(5) BURDEN OF PROOF.—In adjudicating a
9 complaint pursuant to this subsection, the Commis-
10 sion may determine that a violation of paragraph (1)
11 has occurred only if the complainant demonstrates
12 that any conduct described in paragraph (1) with re-
13 spect to the complainant was a contributing factor
14 in the adverse action alleged in the complaint. A de-
15 cision or order that is favorable to the complainant
16 shall not be issued pursuant to this subsection if the
17 respondent demonstrates by clear and convincing
18 evidence that the respondent would have taken the
19 same adverse action in the absence of such conduct.

20 “(6) ATTORNEYS’ FEES.—Whenever an order is
21 issued sustaining the complainant’s charges under
22 this subsection, a sum equal to the aggregate
23 amount of all costs and expenses, including attor-
24 ney’s fees, as determined by the Commission to have
25 been reasonably incurred by the complainant for, or

1 in connection with, the institution and prosecution of
2 such proceedings shall be assessed against the per-
3 son committing such violation. The Commission
4 shall determine whether such costs and expenses
5 were reasonably incurred by the complainant without
6 reference to whether the Secretary also participated
7 in the proceeding.

8 “(7) EXPEDITED PROCEEDINGS; JUDICIAL RE-
9 VIEW.—Proceedings under this subsection shall be
10 expedited by the Secretary and the Commission. Any
11 order issued by the Commission under this sub-
12 section shall be subject to judicial review in accord-
13 ance with section 106. Violations by any person of
14 paragraph (1) shall be subject to the provisions of
15 sections 108 and 110(a)(4).

16 “(8) PROCEDURAL RIGHTS.—The rights and
17 remedies provided for in this subsection may not be
18 waived by any agreement, policy, form, or condition
19 of employment, including by any pre-dispute arbitra-
20 tion agreement or collective bargaining agreement.

21 “(9) SAVINGS.—Nothing in this subsection shall
22 be construed to diminish the rights, privileges, or
23 remedies of any miner or employee who exercises
24 rights under any Federal or State law or common
25 law, or under any collective bargaining agreement.”.

1 **SEC. 402. PROTECTION FROM LOSS OF PAY.**

2 Section 111 (30 U.S.C. 821) is amended to read as
3 follows:

4 **“SEC. 111. ENTITLEMENT OF MINERS.**

5 “(a) PROTECTION FROM LOSS OF PAY.—

6 “(1) WITHDRAWAL ORDERS.—If a coal or other
7 mine or area of such mine is closed by an order
8 issued under section 103, 104, 107, 108, or 110, all
9 miners working during the shift when such order
10 was issued who are idled by such order shall be enti-
11 tled, regardless of the result of any review of such
12 order, to full compensation by the operator at their
13 regular rates of pay for the period they are idled,
14 but for not more than the balance of such shift. If
15 such order is not terminated prior to the next work-
16 ing shift, all miners on that shift who are idled by
17 such order shall be entitled to full compensation by
18 the operator at their regular rates of pay for the pe-
19 riod they are idled, but for not more than four hours
20 of such shift. If a coal or other mine or area of such
21 mine is closed by an order issued under section 104,
22 107 (in connection with a citation), 108, or 110, all
23 miners who are idled by such order shall be entitled,
24 regardless of the result of any review of such order,
25 to full compensation by the operator at their regular
26 rates of pay and in accordance with their regular

1 schedules of pay for the entire period for which they
2 are idled, not to exceed 60 days.

3 “(2) CLOSURE IN ADVANCE OF ORDER.—If the
4 Secretary finds that such mine or such area of a
5 mine was closed by the operator in anticipation of
6 the issuance of such an order, all miners who are
7 idled by such closure shall be entitled to full com-
8 pensation by the operator at their regular rates of
9 pay and in accordance with their regular schedules
10 of pay, from the time of such closure until such time
11 as the Secretary authorizes reopening of such mine
12 or such area of the mine, not to exceed 60 days, ex-
13 cept where an operator promptly withdraws miners
14 upon discovery of a hazard, and notifies the Sec-
15 retary where required, and within the prescribed
16 time period.

17 “(3) REFUSAL TO COMPLY.—Whenever an op-
18 erator violates or fails or refuses to comply with any
19 order issued under section 103, 104, 107, 108, or
20 110, all miners employed at the affected mine who
21 would have been withdrawn from, or prevented from
22 entering, such mine or area thereof as a result of
23 such order shall be entitled to full compensation by
24 the operator at their regular rates of pay, in addi-
25 tion to pay received for work performed after such

1 order was issued, for the period beginning when
2 such order was issued and ending when such order
3 is complied with, vacated, or terminated.

4 “(b) ENFORCEMENT.—

5 “(1) COMMISSION ORDERS.—The Commission
6 shall have authority to order compensation due
7 under this section upon the filing of a complaint by
8 a miner or his representative and after opportunity
9 for hearing on the record subject to section 554 of
10 title 5, United States Code. Whenever the Commis-
11 sion issues an order sustaining the complaint under
12 this subsection in whole or in part, the Commission
13 shall award the complainant reasonable attorneys’
14 fees and costs.

15 “(2) FAILURE TO PAY COMPENSATION DUE.—

16 Consistent with the authority of the Secretary to
17 order miners withdrawn from a mine under this Act,
18 the Secretary shall order a mine that has been sub-
19 ject to a withdrawal order under section 103, 104,
20 107, 108, or 110, and has reopened, to be closed
21 again if compensation in accordance with the provi-
22 sions of this section is not paid by the end of the
23 next regularly scheduled payroll period following the
24 lifting of a withdrawal order.

1 “(c) EXPEDITED REVIEW.—If an order is issued
2 which results in payments to miners under subsection (a),
3 the operators shall have the right to an expedited review
4 before the Commission using timelines and procedures es-
5 tablished pursuant to section 316(b)(2)(G)(ii).”.

6 **SEC. 403. UNDERGROUND COAL MINER EMPLOYMENT**
7 **STANDARD FOR MINES PLACED IN PATTERN**
8 **STATUS.**

9 The Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 is
10 further amended by adding at the end of title I the fol-
11 lowing:

12 **“SEC. 117. UNDERGROUND COAL MINER EMPLOYMENT**
13 **STANDARD FOR MINES PLACED IN PATTERN**
14 **STATUS.**

15 “(a) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of ensuring min-
16 ers’ health and safety and miners’ right to raise concerns
17 thereof, when an underground coal mine is placed in pat-
18 tern status pursuant to section 104(e), and for 3 years
19 after such placement, the operator of such mine may not
20 discharge or constructively discharge a miner who is paid
21 on an hourly basis and employed at such underground coal
22 mine without reasonable job-related grounds based on a
23 failure to satisfactorily perform job duties, including com-
24 pliance with this Act and with mandatory health and safe-
25 ty standards or other regulations issued under this Act,

1 or other legitimate business reason, where the miner has
2 completed the employer's probationary period, not to ex-
3 ceed 6 months.

4 “(b) CAUSE OF ACTION.—A miner aggrieved by a
5 violation of subsection (a) may file a complaint in Federal
6 district court in the district where the mine is located
7 within 1 year of such violation.

8 “(c) REMEDIES.—In an action under subsection (b),
9 for any prevailing miner the court shall take affirmative
10 action to further the purposes of the Act, which may in-
11 clude reinstatement with backpay and compensatory dam-
12 ages. Reasonable attorneys' fees and costs shall be award-
13 ed to any prevailing miner under this section.

14 “(d) PRE-DISPUTE WAIVER PROHIBITED.—A min-
15 er's right to a cause of action under this section may not
16 be waived with respect to disputes that have not arisen
17 as of the time of the waiver.

18 “(e) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall
19 be construed to limit the availability of rights and rem-
20 edies of miners under any other State or Federal law or
21 a collective bargaining agreement.”.

1 **TITLE** **V—MODERNIZING**
2 **HEALTH AND SAFETY STAND-**
3 **ARDS**

4 **SEC. 501. PRE-SHIFT REVIEW OF MINE CONDITIONS.**

5 Section 303(d) (30 U.S.C. 863(d)) is amended by
6 adding at the end the following:

7 “(3)(A) Not later than 30 days after the issuance of
8 the interim final rules promulgated under subparagraph
9 (B), each operator of an underground coal mine shall im-
10 plement a communication program at the underground
11 coal mine to ensure that each miner is orally briefed on
12 and made aware of, prior to traveling to or arriving at
13 the miner’s work area and commencing the miner’s as-
14 signed tasks—

15 “(i) any conditions that are hazardous, or that
16 violate a mandatory health or safety standard or a
17 plan approved under this Act, where the miner is ex-
18 pected to work or travel; and

19 “(ii) the general conditions of that miner’s as-
20 signed working section or other area where the
21 miner is expected to work or travel.

22 “(B) Not later than 180 days after the date of enact-
23 ment of the Robert C. Byrd Mine Safety Protection Act
24 of 2011, the Secretary shall promulgate interim final rules
25 implementing the requirements of subparagraph (A). The

1 Secretary shall issue a final rule not later than 2 years
2 after such date.”.

3 **SEC. 502. ROCK DUST STANDARDS.**

4 (a) STANDARDS.—Section 304(d) (30 U.S.C. 864(d))
5 is amended—

6 (1) by striking “Where rock” and inserting the
7 following: “ROCK DUST.—

8 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Where rock”;

9 (2) by striking “65 per centum” and all that
10 follows and inserting “80 percent. Where methane is
11 present in any ventilating current, the percentage of
12 incombustible content of such combined dusts shall
13 be increased 0.4 percent for each 0.1 percent of
14 methane.”; and

15 (3) by adding at the end the following:

16 “(2) METHODS OF MEASUREMENT.—

17 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Each operator of an
18 underground coal mine shall take accurate and
19 representative samples which shall measure the
20 total incombustible content of combined coal
21 dust, rock dust, and other dust in such mine to
22 ensure that the coal dust is kept below explosive
23 levels through the appropriate application of
24 rock dust.

1 “(B) DIRECT READING MONITORS.—By
2 the later of June 15, 2011, or the date that is
3 30 days after the Secretary of Health and
4 Human Services has certified in writing that di-
5 rect reading monitors are commercially avail-
6 able to measure total incombustible content in
7 samples of combined coal dust, rock dust, and
8 other dust and the Department of Labor has
9 approved such monitors for use in underground
10 coal mines, the Secretary shall require opera-
11 tors to take such dust samples using direct
12 reading monitors.

13 “(C) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall,
14 not later than 180 days after the date of enact-
15 ment of the Robert C. Byrd Mine Safety Pro-
16 tection Act of 2011, promulgate an interim
17 final rule that prescribes methods for operator
18 sampling of total incombustible content in sam-
19 ples of combined coal dust, rock dust, and other
20 dust using direct reading monitors and includes
21 requirements for locations, methods, and inter-
22 vals for mandatory operator sampling.

23 “(D) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than
24 1 year after the date of enactment of the Rob-
25 ert C. Byrd Mine Safety Protection Act of

1 2011, the Secretary of Health and Human
2 Services shall, based upon the latest research,
3 recommend to the Secretary of Labor any revi-
4 sions to the mandatory operator sampling loca-
5 tions, methods, and intervals included in the in-
6 terim final rule described in subparagraph (B)
7 that may be warranted in light of such re-
8 search.

9 “(3) LIMITATION.—Until a final rule is issued
10 by the Secretary under section 502(b)(2) of the Rob-
11 ert C. Byrd Mine Safety Protection Act of 2011, any
12 measurement taken by a direct reading monitor de-
13 scribed in paragraph (2) shall not be admissible to
14 establish a violation in an enforcement action under
15 this Act.”.

16 (b) REPORT AND RULEMAKING AUTHORITY.—

17 (1) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the
18 date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of
19 Health and Human Services, in consultation with
20 the Secretary of Labor, shall prepare and submit, to
21 the Committee on Education and the Workforce of
22 the House of Representatives and the Committee on
23 Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Sen-
24 ate, a report—

1 (A) regarding whether any direct reading
2 monitor described in section 304(d)(2)(B) of
3 the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of
4 1977 (30 U.S.C. 864(d)(2)(B)) is sufficiently
5 reliable and accurate for the enforcement of the
6 mandatory health or safety standards by the
7 Secretary of Labor under such Act, and wheth-
8 er additional improvement to such direct read-
9 ing monitor, or additional verification regarding
10 reliability and accuracy, would be needed for
11 enforcement purposes; and

12 (B) identifying any limitations or impedi-
13 ments for such use in underground coal mines.

14 (2) *AUTHORITY*.—If the Secretary determines
15 that such direct reading monitor is sufficiently reli-
16 able and accurate for the enforcement of mandatory
17 health and safety standards under the Federal
18 Mines Safety and Health Act of 1977 following such
19 report or any update thereto, the Secretary shall
20 promulgate a final rule authorizing the use of such
21 direct reading monitor for purposes of compliance
22 and enforcement, in addition to other methods for
23 determining total incombustible content. Such rule
24 shall specify mandatory operator sampling locations,
25 methods, and intervals.

1 **SEC. 503. ATMOSPHERIC MONITORING SYSTEMS.**

2 Section 317 (30 U.S.C. 877) is amended by adding
3 at the end the following:

4 “(u) ATMOSPHERIC MONITORING SYSTEMS.—

5 “(1) NIOSH RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later
6 than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Rob-
7 ert C. Byrd Mine Safety Protection Act of 2011, the
8 Director of the National Institute for Occupational
9 Safety and Health, acting through the Office of
10 Mine Safety and Health Research, in consultation,
11 including through technical working groups, with op-
12 erators, vendors, State mine safety agencies, the
13 Secretary, and labor representatives of miners, shall
14 issue recommendations to the Secretary regarding—

15 “(A) how to ensure that atmospheric moni-
16 toring systems are utilized in the underground
17 coal mining industry to maximize the health
18 and safety of underground coal miners;

19 “(B) the implementation of redundant sys-
20 tems, such as the bundle tubing system, that
21 can continuously monitor the mine atmosphere
22 following incidents such as fires, explosions, en-
23 trapments, and inundations; and

24 “(C) other technologies available to con-
25 duct continuous atmospheric monitoring.

1 “(2) ATMOSPHERIC MONITORING SYSTEM REG-
2 ULATIONS.—Not later than 1 year following the re-
3 ceipt of the recommendations described in paragraph
4 (1), the Secretary shall promulgate regulations re-
5 quiring that each operator of an underground coal
6 mine install atmospheric monitoring systems, con-
7 sistent with such recommendations, that—

8 “(A) protect miners where the miners nor-
9 mally work and travel;

10 “(B) provide real-time information regard-
11 ing methane and carbon monoxide levels, and
12 airflow direction, as appropriate, with sensing,
13 annunciating, and recording capabilities; and

14 “(C) can, to the maximum extent prac-
15 ticable, withstand explosions and fires.”.

16 **SEC. 504. TECHNOLOGY RELATED TO RESPIRABLE DUST.**

17 Section 202(d) (30 U.S.C. 842(d)) is amended—

18 (1) by striking “of Health, Education, and Wel-
19 fare”; and

20 (2) by striking the second sentence and insert-
21 ing the following: “Not later than 2 years after the
22 date of enactment of the Robert C. Byrd Mine Safe-
23 ty Protection Act of 2011, the Secretary shall pro-
24 mulgate final regulations that require operators, be-
25 ginning on the date such regulations are issued, to

1 provide coal miners with the maximum feasible pro-
2 tection from respirable dust, including coal and silica
3 dust, that is achievable through environmental con-
4 trols, and that meet the applicable standards.”.

5 **SEC. 505. REFRESHER TRAINING ON MINERS’ RIGHTS AND**
6 **RESPONSIBILITIES.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 115(a)(3) (30 U.S.C.
8 825(a)(3)) is amended to read as follows:

9 “(3) all miners shall receive not less than 9
10 hours of refresher training not less frequently than
11 once every 12 months, and such training shall in-
12 clude one hour of training on the statutory rights
13 and responsibilities of miners and their representa-
14 tives under this Act and other applicable Federal
15 and State law, pursuant to a program of instruction
16 developed by the Secretary and delivered by an em-
17 ployee of the Administration or by a trainer ap-
18 proved by the Administration that is a party inde-
19 pendent from the operator;”.

20 (b) NATIONAL HAZARD REPORTING HOTLINE.—Sec-
21 tion 115 (30 U.S.C. 825) is further amended—

22 (1) by redesignating subsections (c) through (e)
23 as subsections (d) through (f), respectively; and

24 (2) by inserting after subsection (b) the fol-
25 lowing:

1 “(c) Any health and safety training program of in-
2 struction provided under this section shall include dis-
3 tribution to miners of information regarding miners’
4 rights under the Act, as well as a toll-free hotline tele-
5 phone number, which the Secretary shall maintain to re-
6 ceive complaints from miners and the public regarding
7 hazardous conditions, discrimination, safety or health vio-
8 lations, or other mine safety or health concerns. Informa-
9 tion regarding the hotline shall be provided in a portable,
10 convenient format, such as a durable wallet card, to enable
11 miners to keep the information on their person.”.

12 (c) **TIMING OF INITIAL STATUTORY RIGHTS TRAIN-**
13 **ING.**—Notwithstanding section 115 of the Federal Mine
14 Safety and Health Act (as amended by subsection (a)) (30
15 U.S.C. 825) or the health and safety training program ap-
16 proved under such section, an operator shall ensure that
17 all miners already employed by the operator on the date
18 of enactment of this Act shall receive the one hour of stat-
19 utory rights and responsibilities training described in sec-
20 tion 115(a)(3) of such Act not later than 180 days after
21 such date.

22 **SEC. 506. AUTHORITY TO MANDATE ADDITIONAL TRAINING.**

23 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 115 (30 U.S.C. 825) is
24 further amended by redesignating subsections (e) and (f)

1 (as redesignated) as subsections (f) and (g) and inserting
2 after subsection (d) (as redesignated) the following:

3 “(e) AUTHORITY TO MANDATE ADDITIONAL TRAIN-
4 ING.—

5 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary is authorized
6 to issue an order requiring that an operator of a
7 coal or other mine provide additional training be-
8 yond what is otherwise required by law, and speci-
9 fying the time within which such training shall be
10 provided, if the Secretary finds that—

11 “(A)(i) a serious or fatal accident has oc-
12 curred at such mine; or

13 “(ii) such mine has experienced accident
14 and injury rates, citations for violations of this
15 Act (including mandatory health or safety
16 standards or regulations promulgated under
17 this Act), citations for significant and substan-
18 tial violations, or withdrawal orders issued
19 under this Act at a rate above the average for
20 mines of similar size and type; and

21 “(B) additional training would benefit the
22 health and safety of miners at the mine.

23 “(2) WITHDRAWAL ORDER.—If the operator
24 fails to provide training ordered under paragraph
25 (1) within the specified time, the Secretary shall

1 issue an order requiring such operator to cause all
2 affected persons, except those persons referred to in
3 section 104(c), to be withdrawn, and to be prohib-
4 ited from entering such mine, until such operator
5 has provided such training.”.

6 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 104(g)(2)
7 (30 U.S.C. 814(g)(2)) is amended by striking “under
8 paragraph (1)” both places it appears and inserting
9 “under paragraph (1) or under section 115(e)”.

10 **SEC. 507. BROOKWOOD-SAGO MINE SAFETY GRANTS.**

11 Section 14(e)(2) of the Mine Improvement and New
12 Emergency Response Act of 2006 (30 U.S.C. 965(e)(2))
13 is amended by inserting before the period “, and under-
14 ground mine rescue training activities which simulate
15 mine accident conditions”.

16 **SEC. 508. CERTIFICATION OF PERSONNEL.**

17 (a) IN GENERAL.—Title I is further amended by add-
18 ing at the end the following:

19 **“SEC. 118. CERTIFICATION OF PERSONNEL.**

20 “(a) CERTIFICATION REQUIRED.—Any person who is
21 authorized or designated by the operator of a coal or other
22 mine to perform any duties or provide any training that
23 this Act, including a mandatory health or safety standard
24 or regulation promulgated pursuant to this Act, requires
25 to be performed or provided by a certified, registered,

1 qualified, or otherwise approved person, shall be permitted
2 to perform such duties or provide such training only if
3 such person has a current certification, registration, quali-
4 fication, or approval to perform such duties or provide
5 such training consistent with the requirements of this sec-
6 tion.

7 “(b) ESTABLISHMENT OF CERTIFICATION REQUIRE-
8 MENTS AND PROCEDURES.—

9 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after
10 the date of enactment of the Robert C. Byrd Mine
11 Safety Protection Act of 2011, the Secretary shall
12 issue mandatory standards to establish—

13 “(A) requirements for such certification,
14 registration, qualification, or other approval, in-
15 cluding the experience, examinations, and ref-
16 erences that may be required as appropriate;

17 “(B) time limits for such certifications and
18 procedures for obtaining and renewing such cer-
19 tification, registration, qualification, or other
20 approval; and

21 “(C) procedures and criteria for revoking
22 such certification, registration, qualification, or
23 other approval, including procedures that en-
24 sure that the Secretary (or a State agency, as
25 applicable) responds to requests for revocation

1 and that the names of individuals whose certifi-
2 cation or other approval has been revoked are
3 provided to and maintained by the Secretary,
4 and are made available to appropriate State
5 agencies through an electronic database.

6 “(2) COORDINATION WITH STATES.—In devel-
7 oping such standards, the Secretary shall consult
8 with States that have miner certification programs
9 to ensure effective coordination with existing State
10 standards and requirements for certification. The
11 standards required under paragraph (1) shall pro-
12 vide that the certification, registration, qualification,
13 or other approval of the State in which the coal or
14 other mine is located satisfies the requirement of
15 subsection (a) if the State’s program of certification,
16 registration, qualification, or other approval is no
17 less stringent than the standards established by the
18 Secretary under paragraph (1).

19 “(c) OPERATOR FEES FOR CERTIFICATION.—

20 “(1) ASSESSMENT AND COLLECTION.—Begin-
21 ning 180 days after the date of enactment of the
22 Robert C. Byrd Mine Safety Protection Act of 2011,
23 the Secretary shall assess and collect fees, in accord-
24 ance with this subsection, from each operator for
25 each person certified under this section. Fees shall

1 be assessed and collected in amounts determined by
2 the Secretary as necessary to fund the certification
3 programs established under this section.

4 “(2) USE.—Amounts collected as provided in
5 paragraph (1) shall only be available to the Sec-
6 retary, as provided in paragraph (3), for making ex-
7 penditures to carry out the certification programs
8 established under this subsection.

9 “(3) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—In
10 addition to funds authorized to be appropriated
11 under section 114, there is authorized to be appro-
12 priated to the Secretary for each fiscal year in which
13 fees are collected under paragraph (1) an amount
14 equal to the total amount of fees collected under
15 paragraph (1) during that fiscal year. Such amounts
16 are authorized to remain available until expended. If
17 on the first day of a fiscal year a regular appropria-
18 tion to the Administration has not been enacted, the
19 Administration shall continue to collect fees (as off-
20 setting collections) under this subsection at the rate
21 in effect during the preceding fiscal year, until 5
22 days after the date such regular appropriation is en-
23 acted.

24 “(4) COLLECTING AND CREDITING OF FEES.—
25 Fees authorized and collected under this subsection

1 shall be deposited and credited as offsetting collec-
2 tions to the account providing appropriations to the
3 Mine Safety and Health Administration and shall
4 not be collected for any fiscal year except to the ex-
5 tent and in the amount provided in advance in ap-
6 propriation Acts.

7 “(d) CITATION; WITHDRAWAL ORDER.—Any oper-
8 ator who permits a person to perform any of the health
9 or safety related functions described in subsection (a)
10 without a current certification which meets the require-
11 ments of this section shall be considered to have com-
12 mitted an unwarrantable failure under section 104(d)(1),
13 and the Secretary shall issue an order requiring that the
14 miner be withdrawn or reassigned to duties that do not
15 require such certification.”

16 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 318 (30
17 U.S.C. 878) is amended—

18 (1) by striking subsections (a) and (b);

19 (2) in subsection (c), by redesignating para-
20 graphs (1) through (3) as subparagraphs (A)
21 through (C), respectively;

22 (3) in subsection (g), by redesignating para-
23 graphs (1) through (4) as subparagraphs (A)
24 through (D), respectively; and

1 (4) by redesignating subsections (c) through (j)
2 as paragraphs (1) through (8), respectively.

3 **TITLE VI—ADDITIONAL MINE**
4 **SAFETY PROVISIONS**

5 **SEC. 601. DEFINITIONS.**

6 (a) DEFINITION OF OPERATOR.—Section 3(d) is
7 amended to read as follows:

8 “(d) ‘operator’ means—

9 “(1) any owner, lessee, or other person
10 that—

11 “(A) operates or supervises a coal or
12 other mine; or

13 “(B) controls such mine by making or
14 having the authority to make management
15 or operational decisions that affect, directly
16 or indirectly, the health or safety at such
17 mine; or

18 “(2) any independent contractor per-
19 forming services or construction at such mine;”.

20 (b) DEFINITION OF AGENT.—Section 3(e) (30 U.S.C.
21 802(e)) is amended by striking “the miners” and inserting
22 “any miner”.

23 (c) DEFINITION OF MINER.—Section 3(g) (30 U.S.C.
24 802(g)) is amended by inserting after “or other mine” the
25 following: “, and includes any individual who is not cur-

1 rently working in a coal or other mine but would be cur-
2 rently working in such mine, but for an accident in such
3 mine”.

4 (d) DEFINITION OF SIGNIFICANT AND SUBSTANTIAL
5 VIOLATIONS.—Section 3 (30 U.S.C. 802) is further
6 amended—

7 (1) in subsection (m), by striking “and” after
8 the semicolon;

9 (2) in subsection (n), by striking the period at
10 the end and inserting a semicolon;

11 (3) in subsection (o), by striking the period at
12 the end and inserting “; and”; and

13 (4) by adding at the end the following:

14 “(p) ‘significant and substantial violation’
15 means a violation of this Act, including any manda-
16 tory health or safety standard or regulation promul-
17 gated under this Act, that is of such nature as could
18 significantly and substantially contribute to the
19 cause and effect of a coal or other mine safety or
20 health hazard as described in section 104(d).”.

21 **SEC. 602. ASSISTANCE TO STATES.**

22 Section 503 (30 U.S.C. 953(a)) is amended—

23 (1) in subsection (a)—

24 (A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1),

25 by striking “, in coordination with the Sec-

1 retary of Health, Education, and Welfare and
2 the Secretary of the Interior,”;

3 (B) in paragraph (2), by striking “and”
4 after the semicolon;

5 (C) in paragraph (3), by striking the pe-
6 riod and inserting “; and”; and

7 (D) by adding at the end the following:

8 “(4) to assist such State in developing and im-
9 plementing any certification program for coal or
10 other mines required for compliance with section
11 118.”; and

12 (2) in subsection (h), by striking “\$3,000,000
13 for fiscal year 1970, and \$10,000,000 annually in
14 each succeeding fiscal year” and inserting
15 “\$20,000,000 for each fiscal year”.

16 **SEC. 603. BLACK LUNG MEDICAL REPORTS.**

17 Title IV of the Black Lung Benefits Act (30 U.S.C.
18 901 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the fol-
19 lowing:

20 **“SEC. 435. MEDICAL REPORTS.**

21 “In any claim for benefits for a miner under this title,
22 an operator that requires a miner to submit to a medical
23 examination regarding the miner’s respiratory or pul-
24 monary condition shall, not later than 14 days after the
25 miner has been examined, deliver to the claimant a com-

1 plete copy of the examining physician’s report. The exam-
2 ining physician’s report shall be in writing and shall set
3 out in detail the examiner’s findings, including any diag-
4 noses and conclusions and the results of any diagnostic
5 imaging techniques and tests that were performed on the
6 miner.”.

7 **SEC. 604. AUTHORIZATION OF COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS**

8 **BY NIOSH OFFICE OF MINE SAFETY AND**
9 **HEALTH.**

10 Section 22(h)(3) of the Occupational Safety and
11 Health Act of 1970 (29 U.S.C. 671(h)(3)) is amended—

12 (1) in subparagraph (B), by striking “and” at
13 the end;

14 (2) by redesignating subparagraph (C) as sub-
15 paragraph (D); and

16 (3) by inserting after subparagraph (B) the fol-
17 lowing:

18 “(C) enter into cooperative agreements or
19 contracts with international institutions and
20 private entities to improve mine safety and
21 health through the development and evaluation
22 of new interventions; and”.

23 **SEC. 605. RULES OF APPLICATION TO CERTAIN MINES.**

24 (a) **INAPPLICABILITY OF AMENDMENTS TO CERTAIN**
25 **MINES.—**

1 (1) SPECIAL RULE.—Subject to paragraph (2),
2 the amendments made by this Act shall not apply
3 to—

4 (A) surface mines, except for surface facili-
5 ties or impoundments physically connected to—

6 (i) underground coal or underground
7 metal mines; or

8 (ii) other underground mines which
9 are gassy mines; or

10 (B) underground mines which are not coal,
11 metal, or gassy mines.

12 (2) EXCEPTIONS.—Notwithstanding paragraph
13 (1), the amendments made by sections 101, 301(c),
14 303(a)(4), 304, 305(a), 401, 601, 602, and 603
15 shall apply to the mines described in subparagraphs
16 (A) and (B) of paragraph (1).

17 (3) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this section,
18 the term “gassy mine” means a mine, tunnel, or
19 other underground workings in which a flammable
20 mixture has been ignited, or has been found with a
21 permissible flame safety lamp, or has been deter-
22 mined by air analysis to contain 0.25 percent or
23 more (by volume) of methane in any open workings
24 when tested at a point not less than 12 inches from
25 the roof, face of rib.

1 (b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION RELATING TO APPLICA-
2 BILITY OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS TO SURFACE MINES.—
3 Title I is further amended by adding at the end the fol-
4 lowing:

5 **“SEC. 119. APPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS TO**
6 **CERTAIN MINES.**

7 “(a) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Subject to sub-
8 section (c), with respect to the mines described in sub-
9 section (b), this Act as in effect on the date before the
10 date of enactment of the Robert C. Byrd Mine Safety Pro-
11 tection Act of 2011, shall continue to apply to such mines
12 as then in effect.

13 “(b) APPLICABLE MINES.—

14 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The mines referred to in
15 subsection (a) are—

16 “(A) surface mines, except for surface fa-
17 cilities or impoundments physically connected
18 to—

19 “(i) underground coal or underground
20 metal mines; or

21 “(ii) other underground mines which
22 are gassy mines; and

23 “(B) underground mines which are not
24 coal, metal, or gassy mines.

1 “(2) DEFINITION.—As used in paragraph (1),
2 the term ‘gassy mine’ means a mine, tunnel, or
3 other underground workings in which a flammable
4 mixture has been ignited, or has been found with a
5 permissible flame safety lamp, or has been deter-
6 mined by air analysis to contain 0.25 percent or
7 more (by volume) of methane in any open workings
8 when tested at a point not less than 12 inches from
9 the roof, face of rib.

10 “(c) EXCEPTIONS.—Notwithstanding subsection (a),
11 the amendments made by sections 101, 301(c), 303(a)(4),
12 304, 305(a), 401, 601, 602, and 603 of the Robert C.
13 Byrd Mine Safety Protection Act of 2011 shall apply to
14 the mines described in subsection (b).

15 “(d) SAVINGS PROVISION.—Nothing in this section
16 shall impact the authority of the Secretary to promulgate
17 or modify regulations pursuant to the authority under any
18 such provisions as in effect on the date before the date
19 of enactment of the Robert C. Byrd Mine Safety Protec-
20 tion Act of 2011, or shall be construed to alter or modify
21 precedent with regards to the Commission or courts.”.

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