

July __, 2022

The Honorable Pat Toomey, United States Senator

455 Dirksen Senate Office Building

Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: Jobs and Clean Water

Dear Senator Toomey:

I write to ask for your help on an economic and job growth effort before you leave the Senate.

In your travels through Pennsylvania, I am sure you have seen streams and rivers with orange water. The water is orange because it is polluted with acid mine drainage (AMD) that flows from coal mines abandoned before 1977. Many miles of streams are so polluted by AMD that they are dead – nothing can live in the water. There is no responsible party to address this pollution.

The PA DEP has built a number of AMD treatment systems but has never had the resources to restore all 5,700 plus miles of AMD-polluted streams.

I am a volunteer with _____ [name of watershed group]. We have raised funds to build _____ AMD passive treatment systems (PTS) to address abandoned AMD discharges. We have improved or restored _____ miles of _____ Creek so the water could be fishable and swimmable. We know clean water can create economic opportunities and jobs.

We and other Good Samaritans have raised tens of millions of federal, state, and philanthropic dollars and built more than 280 AMD PTS in Pennsylvania. We have made significant progress restoring our streams. We raised this money to build these AMD PTS to restore fishing and water recreation. We also worked with small businesses to build these systems. What does not exist are funds to operate, maintain, and rehabilitate (OM&R) this clean water infrastructure. It is a constant struggle to get volunteers to check on and maintain the AMD treatment systems.

You and your colleagues in the Senate and the House have the opportunity to join Senators Casey, Braun, Capito, and Manchin to co-sponsor and pass the Safeguarding Treatment for the Restoration of Ecosystems from Abandoned Mines Act (STREAM Act, S. 3957). The STREAM Act amends the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act to give states flexibility to set aside and invest funds for future OM&R in order to protect the investments made to build AMD treatment clean water infrastructure.

Your co-sponsorship and support of the STREAM Act will not cost anything. The funds have already been appropriated. I understand it is your policy to not vote to amend a bill you did not support. Please consider making an exception to your policy. **We need your help.** Your support would also help the small businesses with whom we work.

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission has determined that if Pennsylvania's AMD polluted streams were restored, angling would generate \$24–\$30 million in local revenue each year. This does not include revenue from other recreation, such as kayaking, swimming, and hiking. It also does not include revenue that would be generated by new jobs to operate, maintain, and rehabilitate AMD PTS. Many of these jobs will be long-term. We already see the benefits of clean streams; we would like to have the benefits of new jobs.

Passage of the STREAM Act will:

- create jobs and preserve our clean water infrastructure.
- preserve economic benefits of clean water and reverse the adverse economic impacts of decades of polluted water.
- generate more local, state and federal revenue over the years than will be used to perform OM&R.

Please join Senators Casey, Braun, Capito, and Manchin in co-sponsoring the STREAM Act. Don't let Pennsylvania be outdone by West Virginia. We have many more miles of creeks and rivers polluted by AMD. I ask you to get your Senate colleagues to join you and co-sponsor and support the STREAM Act – it will benefit Pennsylvania and America.

Thank you.

Sincerely,