<div align="center">**February 24, 2021**</div>

Mr. Al Stewart, Esq.
Acting Secretary of Labor
200 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, DC 20210

RE: DOL Guidance Requested for Mine Worker Safety Measures

Dear Acting Secretary Stewart,

We write today urge the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) to issue immediate guidance to protect mine workers from exposure to the Coronavirus that causes COVID-19.

Our brave and patriotic miners risk their lives every day to power our nation, and during the COVID-19 pandemic that risk is even greater. As they continue to work in close quarters and tough conditions, miners remain at high risk for COVID-19 infection. While miners have continued to work to supply our nation's energy needs through the pandemic, under the previous Administration, the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) had refused to issue an enforceable standard to protect workers from COVID-19 and had not taken emergency action to make our mines safer. As a result, we are requesting your immediate assistance to implement safety measures to ensure their health and safety.

Unlike other professions where social distancing recommendations are practicable, coal mining generally requires the continuous clustering of people working in close proximity of one another. This clustering occurs in the locker rooms, mantrips, mine cars, elevators, extraction sites, and other transportation means. Coal miners will breathe the same air, utilize the same tools, and instrumentalities to move the coal out of the mine and into the stream of commerce.

Once the shifts conclude, the clustering will continue back in the locker rooms where the miners will utilize the same shower facilities and exchange orders with the next shift before returning home to their families in a process that will repeat itself numerous times, thus exponentially increasing the probability of exposure to COVID-19.

As a result, to ensure miner health and safety, we are requesting that the Department of Labor issue the following general COVID safety measures:

- Require individuals to maintain a six-feet social distance at all times
- Require individuals to wear a face mask that covers their mouth and nose at all times
- Require a COVID-19 Safety Coordinator be present on site at all times

In addition, we are specifically requesting guidance for safety measures concerning transport vehicles. As mentioned previously, the transportation of mine workers in elevators and mine cars results in clusters of workers in close proximity often in enclosed spaces. This clearly creates the prime conditions for the dangerous and rapid spread of COVID-19. Therefore, we believe guidance on these specific situations is essential to mine worker safety.

Lastly, we request that MSHA record workplace exposures to COVID-19. This information would be helpful to operators and miners in order to evaluate the safety of a mine site and to avoid potential future exposure.

The Department of Labor is vital in determining and implementing policies and requirements that protect our vital coal mine workers. We want to thank you for your assistance on this important matter. We ask that you address the issue immediately to prevent any further risk to our essential workers. Thank you very much for your continued and swift assistance in the safety of our workers. Should you have any further questions, please contact Stephen Coffey (Stephen.Coffey@mail.house.gov) in Representative Cartwright's office or Phil Hancock (Phil_Hancock@manchin.senate.gov) in Senator Manchin's office.

Sincerely,

Matt Cartwright

Member of Congress

Joe Manchin III

United States Senator

/s/_____

Marcy Kaptur

Member of Congress

Sherrod Brown

United States Senator

/s/_____

Peter Welch

Member of Congress

Tim Kaine

United States Senator

/s/_____

Mark Takano

Member of Congress

/s/_____

Robert P. Casey, Jr.

United States Senator

/s/_____

Jan Schakowsky

Member of Congress

Shelley Moore Capito

United States Senator

/s/_____

Terri A. Sewell

Member of Congress

Mike Doyle

Member of Congress

/s/_____

Conor Lamb

Member of Congress