



National Association of Conservation Districts

September 20, 2006

The Honorable Rick Santorum
United States Senator
511 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Santorum:

The National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) represents the nation's 3,000 conservation districts and 17,000 men and women who serve on their governing boards. Conservation districts are local units of government established under state law to carry out natural resource management programs at the local level.

Across the country, local conservation districts work to mitigate the adverse environmental impacts of abandoned mines. Critical to this work is the continued funding provided through the extension of the taxes in Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act until September 2007.

Senator Santorum, we appreciate your leadership on providing a long-term fix for abandoned mine reclamation. The reauthorization of the tax has been an important policy achievement, however your legislation to address the more substantial issues associated with ensuring continued funding of reclamation projects allows the work of conservation districts and others in the local communities to make progress in addressing environmental and safety concerns of these affected areas.

Vital to this effort is balancing the needs of those states with high numbers of abandoned mines and those with more active mines. As a national association, we appreciate your efforts to continue discussions with those in other areas of the country to achieve this balance.

NACD believes that your legislation, S. 2616, the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act Amendments, is important in addressing these long-term reclamation issues. We look forward to working with you on passage of this legislation during the 109th Congress.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Bill Wilson'.

Bill Wilson
President