

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

R. BRUCE JOSTEN
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

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TO THE MEMBERS OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation representing the interests of more than three million businesses of all sizes, sectors, and regions, as well as state and local chambers and industry associations, and dedicated to promoting, protecting, and defending America's free enterprise system, urges you to pass H.R. 1644, the "Supporting Transparent Regulatory and Environmental Actions in Mining Act" (STREAM Act), which would remedy significant flaws by the Office of Surface Mining and Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE) during the rulemaking process for the proposed "Stream Protection Rule" (SPR).

H.R. 1644 would prevent OSMRE from implementing the SPR until an independent evaluation is conducted to determine the effectiveness of the current regulatory program. Better understanding the current program would inform whether any modifications or programmatic improvements are necessary, let alone the significant changes proposed in the SPR. This is important because the proposed SPR would overhaul a program that OSMRE itself has repeatedly evaluated and concluded is successful at the state level and protective of the environment. This bill would therefore ensure that any changes to the current regulatory program are necessary, reasonable, and protective of the environment.

In addition to requiring an independent evaluation of the necessity for the SPR, H.R. 1644 would require OSMRE to make publically available scientific information relied upon by the agency in developing proposed rules, emergency rules, policy, guidance, and any related environmental or economic analysis. Such disclosure would create much needed transparency in the rulemaking process, and allow stakeholders to consider and comment on the appropriateness of the agencies' reliance on certain information.

Finally, H.R. 1644 would clarify the scope of regulatory authority provided to OSMRE by the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act, and limit the agency's ability to create rules and standards that overlap or conflict with other regulatory programs.

The Chamber urges you to support H.R. 1644, the "Supporting Transparent Regulatory and Environmental Actions in Mining Act" (STREAM Act), and may consider votes on, or in relation to, this bill in our annual *How They Voted* scorecard.

Sincerely,



R. Bruce Josten