

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

March 29, 2017

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
Washington, DC 20501

Dear President Trump:

As you prepare your full Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Request, we are writing to urge you to include \$10.0 million to support the black lung health clinics that serve our nation's coal miners. These clinics provide miners with health screenings, medical care and assistance in securing black lung benefits.

There are 28 black lung clinics located in 15 coal mining states which, with very small grants provided by the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy within the Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA), serve as a lifeline for disabled miners who have spent a lifetime toiling in coal mines. This program was originally authorized under the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977, and is expected to serve 13,800 miners in Fiscal Year 2017.

Due to the rise in the number of miners diagnosed with black lung disease, as documented by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, we are asking you to consider providing \$10 million for the black lung program, which is a \$3.3 million increase over the \$6.7 million funding level historically appropriated for HRSA as part of its rural health programs. We note that while funding to these black lung clinics has been frozen at virtually the same level for the past 5 years, the clinics have faced a substantial increase in demands from coal miners for screening, diagnosis, and pulmonary rehabilitation. Some clinics are so underfunded that they are operating with obsolete and inefficient diagnostic equipment, which is needlessly increasing miners' radiation dose when they receive a chest X-ray.

While we are aware that you are carefully reviewing budget priorities, we respectfully ask that coal miners – many of who reside in rural communities – receive the medical services and support that they need and deserve.


Please contact Kristin Seum with the office of Rep. Morgan Griffith at Kristin.Seum@mail.house.gov or (202) 225-3861, or Richard Miller with the Committee on Education and the Workforce Democratic Staff at Richard.Miller@mail.house.gov or (202) 225-3725 for further information.

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Sincerely,



H. MORGAN GRIFFITH
Member of Congress



ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT
Member of Congress




DAVID B. MCKINLEY
Member of Congress



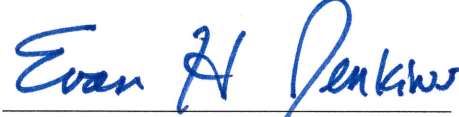
MATT CARTWRIGHT
Member of Congress



BILL JOHNSON
Member of Congress



MICHAEL F. DOYLE
Member of Congress



EVAN H. JENKINS
Member of Congress



TIM RYAN
Member of Congress

Cc: The Honorable Mick Mulvaney
Director
Office of Management and Budget
Washington, DC 20503