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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, Illinois has been a leader in energy production within the United States, in large part due to Illinois' vast coal resources; and

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WHEREAS, Illinois has the largest recoverable bituminous coal reserves in the United States, a reserve base larger than all but 6 countries in the world, and the ability to produce all of America's electricity needs for 50 years; and

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WHEREAS, The Illinois coal industry is currently responsible for over \$2,500,000,000 in annual economic activity within the State, including employing approximately 5,000 miners with an average salary of \$85,000 a year, higher than both the United States and Illinois median household incomes; and

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WHEREAS, The Illinois coal industry has faced increased environmental regulations in the last 2 decades that resulted in coal production going from 62 million tons of mined coal in 1990 to a low of 31 million tons in 2003 and a loss of 6,500 direct jobs during this time period; and

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WHEREAS, The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement within the United States Department of the Interior

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1 recently proposed additional environmental regulation of the
2 Illinois coal industry through the Draft Stream Protection Rule
3 published in the federal register on July 27, 2015; and

4 WHEREAS, The proposed Draft Stream Protection Rule would
5 affect surface mines, underground mines, and ancillary
6 facilities located in every coal producing state; and

7 WHEREAS, The proposed Stream Protection Rule would amend,
8 modify, or revise over 450 provisions of the existing
9 regulatory program, affecting literally every substantive and
10 procedural aspect of the mine permitting process under the
11 Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977; the
12 proposed rule would also add entirely new definitions,
13 substantive and procedural requirements, and prohibitions
14 affecting surface mines, underground mines, and ancillary
15 facilities; in total, the proposed rule exceeds 2,000 pages of
16 changes, additions, explanations, regulatory impact analyses
17 and environmental assessments, not including countless studies
18 that are cited but not provided; and

19 WHEREAS, The coal industry, the Illinois Department of
20 Natural Resources, and other stakeholders need sufficient time
21 to determine how the rule would affect the State's primary and
22 exclusive regulatory authority and additional technical
23 resources required under the Surface Mining Control and

1 Reclamation Act of 1977; and

2 WHEREAS, All stakeholders must be given the opportunity to
3 determine the affect the rule would have on existing mines and
4 their respective employees as well as on State programing,
5 resources, and current permitting delays; currently, the State
6 of Illinois has a backlog of approximately 2 years on coal mine
7 permits; the backlog has negatively impacted the operation of
8 existing Illinois coal mines and the potential for coal mining
9 expansion which has caused increased unemployment in the State
10 of Illinois; and

11 WHEREAS, The Draft Stream Protection Rule required more
12 than 6 years to develop and included a lack of consultation
13 with stakeholders during that time period and yet the
14 Department of Interior will only allow 60 days for public
15 comment; and

16 WHEREAS, The Department of the Interior must provide the
17 Illinois coal industry, the Illinois Department of Natural
18 Resources, and other stakeholders sufficient time to respond to
19 the Stream Protection Rule which would have a sweeping and
20 monumental impact on the Illinois coal industry; therefore, be
21 it

22 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE

1 NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
2 that we urge the United States Department of the Interior to
3 provide a comment period of no less than 180 days for public
4 participation in and comment on the proposed Draft Stream
5 Protection Rule; and be it further

6 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
7 delivered to Governor Bruce Rauner, the Illinois Congressional
8 delegation, the Director of the Office of Surface Mining
9 Reclamation and Enforcement of the United States Department of
10 the Interior, and all the members of the General Assembly.