

November 9, 2015

POWER UP! THE PROPOSAL OF POWER+ PLAN TO BRING JOBS BACK TO COAL REGIONS IN KENTUCKY

[Natural Resource \(/full-blog?category=Natural+Resource\)](#), [Impact! \(/full-blog?category=Impact%21\)](#)

By: **Whitney Grider**

President Barack Obama's proposed 2016 fiscal budget comes with some exciting news for the coal miners of Kentucky. In the budget is a proposed plan that includes a \$1 billion fund to be distributed over a period of roughly five years to "redevelop abandoned coal mines" in about ten states, including Kentucky.^[i] This new proposal is called the "Power+ Plan."^[ii] "Power" stands for Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization.^[iii] The Power+ Plan has three main objectives. The first of which is the creation of new jobs and other employment services offered for workers and communities that were impacted by previous layoffs relating to the coalmines.^[iv] Second, there will be investments in retirement security for close to 100,000 mineworkers and their families.^[v] Finally, there will be new tax incentives for the "development and deployment of carbon capture, utilization and sequestration technologies."^[vi]

The Power+ Plan has been proposed as part of a movement as the United States moves toward a major energy transformation.^[vii] "These trends are producing cleaner air and healthier communities, and spurring new jobs and industries. At the same time, this movement is impacting workers and communities who have relied on the coal industry as a source of jobs and economic prosperity. This is particularly true in Appalachia, where competition with other coal basins provides additional pressure."^[viii]

Along with a cleaner and healthier environment, job creation is a major incentive for the coal regions of Kentucky. Harlan County Judge-Executive, Dan Mosley, says:

The local employment situation is still dire...People are struggling...The plan would help create immediate jobs reclaiming abandoned mines and would empower communities to develop long-term job-creating projects on reclaimed mines.... That's gonna[sic] create a lot of opportunities....With our unemployment rate through the roof, it was a no-brainer for us to pass the resolution.^[ix]

The budget will allow for \$12 million from Rural Economic Development (RED) grants and \$85 million in loans for the creation of jobs in rural areas for the coal industry.^[x]





(<http://www.kentucky.com/2013/06/16/2679110/in-eastern-kentucky-coal-mines.html>)

Although the monetary support has a certain appeal for Kentuckians, there are some drawbacks. One of those drawbacks is that even with the large proposed budget, not all abandoned mine sites in Kentucky can be fixed.^[xi] The Abandoned Mine Lands reported that there is “\$461 million worth of unfunded AML projects in the state as of April [2015].”^[xii] Looking at the numbers, money allocation is not there to be spent only to help Kentucky’s abandoned mines.

While there are many benefits from a proposed plan such as this, one has to remember, this is only a proposed plan that will hopefully be approved soon.^[xiii]

[i] Matthew Rand, *President Obama proposes \$1 billion dollar investment to help coal communities*, Mountain News, WYMT (Feb. 3, 2015, 2:00 PM), <http://www.wkyt.com/wymt/home/headlines/President-Obama-proposes-1-billion-dollar-investment-to-help-coal-communities-290614081.html>.

[ii] *Id.*

[iii] *Investing in Coal Communities, Workers, and Technology: The POWER+ Plan*, President’s Budget: Fiscal Year 2016, https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/budget/fy2016/assets/fact_sheets/investing-in-coal-communities-workers-and-technology-the-power-plan.pdf (last visited Nov. 4, 2015).

[iv] *Getting to Know The Power+ Plan*, What’s Next, West Virginia, <http://whatsnextwv.org/getting-know-power-plan> (last visited Nov. 4, 2015).

[v] *Id.*

[vi] *Id.*

[vii] *Major Program Justification: Area Development –Special Initiative --\$25M*, Appalachian Regional Commission, <http://www.arc.gov/images/newsroom/publications/fy2016budget/POWER+PlanSummary.pdf> (last visited Nov. 4, 2015).

[viii] *Id.*

[ix] Bill Estep, *Proposal to spend \$1 billion in struggling coal regions faces uncertain future*, Herald Leader (Oct. 16, 2015), http://www.kentucky.com/2015/10/16/4090792_proposal-to-spend-1-billion-in.html?rh=1.

[x] *Major Program Justification: Area Development –Special Initiative --\$25M*, *supra* note vii.

[xi] Estep, *supra* note ix.

[xii] *Id.*

[xiii] *Getting to Know The Power+ Plan*, *supra* note iv.

Source: http://www.kentucky.com/2015/10/16/4090792_proposal-to-spen...

♥ 0 Likes < Share

COMMENTS (0)

Newest First Subscribe via e-mail

Preview POST COMMENT...

Newer Post

["Handmade" or "Made by Hand:" Distilling the Legal Difference \(/full-blog/simmsblog\)](#)

Older Post

[Branching Out: What Can Kentucky Lawmakers Do To Help Landowners Utilize Current Timber Theft Laws? \(/full-blog/fickerblog\)](#)

[SEARCHABLE ARCHIVE \(/PUBLICATION-ARCHIVE-1\)](#)

631 SOUTH LIMESTONE, LEXINGTON, KY

40508 (859) 257-4747 [BLOG.KJEANRL@GMAIL.COM](mailto:blog.kjeanrl@gmail.com) ([MAILTO:BLOG.KJEANRL@GMAIL.COM](mailto:blog.kjeanrl@gmail.com))