

The RECLAIM Act: A Christian Education Fact Sheet

What is the RECLAIM Act?

The RECLAIM Act is a bipartisan bill that will help to restore the lands and economies of communities across the country that have been harmed by our energy sector's transition away from coal. The bill will use previously collected money from the Abandoned Mine Land (AML) fund to clean up deserted coal mines. Leaders of the reclamation process will create jobs through the clean-up work and in the new businesses created on the restored lands.

Fast Facts: RECLAIM Act by the Numbers

- There is currently \$2.4 billion collected in the AML fund.
- The bill allots \$1 billion of AML money to the efforts of RECLAIM, so the RECLAIM Act won't cost taxpayers a single penny.
- More than \$10 billion worth of cleanup work exists in the United States for pre-1977 abandoned mines
- In Kentucky alone, there is \$462 million worth of cleanup to do, and RECLAIM will provide an estimated \$114 million over the next 5 years for this work.
- In West Virginia, a staggering \$1.5 billion of cleanup work still remains, and RECLAIM will provide an estimated \$200 million in this time frame.
- A total of 25 states will receive funds through the RECLAIM Act, as well as three tribes.



Photo credit: Inside Philanthropy article by Alyssa Ochs, 12.14.16

As Christians, what is our role?

Appalachia is the region most significantly aided through the RECLAIM Act. The Appalachian region has long been rooted in a strong sense of spirituality, with many active churches. Christians have a special responsibility to advocate alongside our brothers and sisters in Christ for the benefit of all our neighbors of every belief system.

In the Bible, God commands us to care for creation as our first human responsibility. "The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it" (Genesis, 2:15). As God's gardeners, it is our responsibility to see that the earth is protected and restored. The RECLAIM Act is a great opportunity for restoration in communities that need ecological rehabilitation. By supporting it, you are doing your part to promote sustainable living and care for God's creation.

God also commands us to care for our fellow human beings, as we are all God's children. If we follow the Gospel message to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark, 12:31), we need to ensure that everyone can find dignified, reliable work. The RECLAIM Act would create desirable jobs for those looking for a way to support themselves and their families in places where coal mining is no longer the primary industry. It is our responsibility to see that every person has the tools available to live up to their God-given potential.

"I know that there is nothing better for people than to be happy and to do good while they live. That each of them may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all their toil - this is the gift of God" (Ecclesiastes, 3: 12-13).