

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 2741

AN ACT

To establish within the Environmental Protection Agency the Office of Mountains, Deserts, and Plains, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Legacy Mine Cleanup
3 Act of 2025”.

4 **SEC. 2. OFFICE OF MOUNTAINS, DESERTS, AND PLAINS.**

5 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

6 (1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Adminis-
7 trator” means the Administrator of the Environ-
8 mental Protection Agency.

9 (2) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CON-
10 GRESS.—The term “appropriate committees of Con-
11 gress” means—

12 (A) the Committee on Appropriations of
13 the Senate;

14 (B) the Committee on Energy and Natural
15 Resources of the Senate;

16 (C) the Committee on Environment and
17 Public Works of the Senate;

18 (D) the Committee on Health, Education,
19 Labor, and Pensions of the Senate;

20 (E) the Committee on Indian Affairs of the
21 Senate;

22 (F) the Committee on Appropriations of
23 the House of Representatives;

24 (G) the Committee on Energy and Com-
25 merce of the House of Representatives;

1 (H) the Committee on Transportation and
 2 Infrastructure of the House of Representatives;

3 (I) the Committee on Natural Resources of
 4 the House of Representatives; and

5 (J) the Committee on Oversight and Ac-
 6 countability of the House of Representatives.

7 (3) CLEANUP ACTION.—The term “cleanup ac-
 8 tion” means 1 or more actions taken to address con-
 9 taminated media at a covered mine site pursuant to
 10 1 or more existing authorities of the Administrator,
 11 including—

12 (A) the Comprehensive Environmental Re-
 13 sponse, Compensation, and Liability Act of
 14 1980 (42 U.S.C. 9601 et seq.);

15 (B) the Good Samaritan Remediation of
 16 Abandoned Hardrock Mines Act of 2024 (30
 17 U.S.C. 1245 note; Public Law 118–155);

18 (C) the Solid Waste Disposal Act (42
 19 U.S.C. 6901 et seq.);

20 (D) the Federal Water Pollution Control
 21 Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.); and

22 (E) any other existing authority of the Ad-
 23 ministrator.

24 (4) COVERED MINE SITE.—The term “covered
 25 mine site” means Federal, State, Tribal, local, and

1 private land that has been affected by past hardrock
2 mining activities and water resources that traverse
3 or are contiguous to such land.

4 (5) INDIAN COUNTRY.—The term “Indian coun-
5 try” has the meaning given the term in section 1151
6 of title 18, United States Code.

7 (6) NAVAJO NATION ABANDONED URANIUM
8 MINE SITE.—The term “Navajo Nation abandoned
9 uranium mine site” means an abandoned uranium
10 covered mine site on land of the Navajo Nation.

11 (7) OFFICE.—The term “Office” means the Of-
12 fice of Mountains, Deserts, and Plains established by
13 subsection (b)(1).

14 (8) REGIONAL OFFICE.—The term “Regional
15 Office” means a Regional Office of the Environ-
16 mental Protection Agency.

17 (b) ESTABLISHMENT.—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—There is established within
19 the office of the Environmental Protection Agency
20 that administers solid waste programs the Office of
21 Mountains, Deserts, and Plains.

22 (2) DIRECTOR.—The Office shall be headed by
23 a Director, to be selected by the Administrator (or
24 a designee).

1 (c) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the Office shall
2 be—

3 (1) to coordinate between the headquarters of
4 the Environmental Protection Agency, Regional Of-
5 fices, and stakeholders on cleanup actions of the En-
6 vironmental Protection Agency at a covered mine
7 site, including a covered mine site in Indian country,
8 in accordance with Federal law;

9 (2) to establish and disseminate best practices
10 for covered mine site cleanup actions, including iden-
11 tifying—

12 (A) innovative technologies and reuse ap-
13 proaches that support and make progress to-
14 ward those cleanup actions; and

15 (B) waste storage and disposal solutions;

16 (3) to coordinate among the headquarters of
17 the Environmental Protection Agency, Regional Of-
18 fices, Federal land management agencies, States, In-
19 dian Tribes, and voluntary nongovernmental organi-
20 zations, watershed groups, nonliable entities and
21 mining companies, and other entities on voluntary
22 cleanup actions at covered mine sites, where applica-
23 ble, including timely issuance of administrative guid-
24 ance for nonliable parties;

(4) to coordinate within the Environmental Protection Agency and with other Federal agencies to encourage contracting opportunities for small businesses to participate in cleanup actions at covered mine sites, consistent with applicable Federal procurement authorities;

(5) to coordinate with the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and other Federal agencies, as the Administrator determines to be appropriate, to ensure interagency coordination of covered mine site cleanup actions, with priority given to coordinating cleanup actions at covered mine sites for which there is no potentially responsible party; and

(6) to coordinate other actions as the Administrator determines to be appropriate, pursuant to existing authorities of the Administrator—

(A) to support efforts to investigate, characterize, or clean up a discharge, release, or threat of release of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant into the environment at or from a covered mine site; or

1 (B) to establish best practices to protect
2 and improve human health and the environment
3 and implement appropriate reuse options, in-
4 cluding through the use of innovative tech-
5 nologies to recover valuable resources from cov-
6 ered mine site features or areas, as applicable.

7 (d) DUTIES.—The Administrator shall carry out
8 through the Office, at a minimum, the following duties:

9 (1) PRIORITY MINE LIST.—

10 (A) IN GENERAL.—Annually, the Adminis-
11 trator shall identify covered mine sites that are
12 prioritized for cleanup actions, which may in-
13 clude covered mine sites that are or are not in-
14 cluded on the National Priorities List developed
15 by the President in accordance with section
16 105(a)(8)(B) of the Comprehensive Environ-
17 mental Response, Compensation, and Liability
18 Act of 1980 (42 U.S.C. 9605(a)(8)(B)).

19 (B) CREATION OF LIST; REPORTS.—The
20 Administrator shall annually—

21 (i) create a list of covered mine sites
22 identified under subparagraph (A); and

23 (ii) submit to the appropriate commit-
24 tees of Congress a report describing—

1 (I) the methodology used to iden-
2 tify those covered mine sites under
3 that subparagraph; and

4 (II) the status of cleanup actions
5 carried out at covered mine sites on
6 the list.

7 (C) COORDINATION.—The Administrator
8 shall—

9 (i) regularly coordinate with Regional
10 Offices, Federal agencies, States, Indian
11 Tribes, Alaska Native Corporations, and
12 stakeholders to update the list of covered
13 mine sites identified under subparagraph
14 (A); and

15 (ii) regularly coordinate with Regional
16 Offices on cleanup actions and share best
17 practices with respect to each covered mine
18 site identified under subparagraph (A).

19 (2) PROCESS IMPROVEMENT.—

20 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator
21 shall, pursuant to existing authorities of the
22 Administrator—

23 (i) identify best practices for devel-
24 oping, reviewing, and approving site as-

1 sessments, remedial investigations, and
2 feasibility studies for covered mine sites;

3 (ii) coordinate research relating to
4 technologies and cleanup approaches that
5 are the most successful in limiting the
6 acute and chronic risks posted to human
7 health and the environment by covered
8 mine sites; and

9 (iii) support—

10 (I) government-to-government
11 consultations with Indian Tribes initi-
12 ated by the Administrator or another
13 Federal agency with respect to a cov-
14 ered mine site located within Indian
15 country; and

16 (II) efforts to provide regular up-
17 dates to the Tribal governments in-
18 volved in cleanup actions for a covered
19 mine site located on Tribal land under
20 the jurisdiction of the Indian Tribe.

21 (B) TRIBAL CONSULTATION.—In sup-
22 porting consultations with Indian Tribes under
23 subparagraph (A)(iii)(I), the Administrator, in
24 addition to existing applicable law, shall—

1 (i) as appropriate, invite potentially
2 responsible parties, including Federal
3 agencies, to participate in government-to-
4 government consultations with Indian
5 Tribes;

6 (ii) as appropriate, consult with Alas-
7 ka Native Corporations in accordance with
8 section 161 of division H of the Consoli-
9 dated Appropriations Act, 2004 (25 U.S.C.
10 5301 note; Public Law 108–199); and

11 (iii) as appropriate, ensure consulta-
12 tions with Tribal allottees occur pursuant
13 to section 2 of the Act of February 5,
14 1948 (62 Stat. 18, chapter 45; 25 U.S.C.
15 324).

16 (3) INTERAGENCY PLANS FOR URANIUM CON-
17 TAMINATION ON THE NAVAJO NATION; REPORTS.—

18 (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than Sep-
19 tember 30, 2028, and not less frequently than
20 once every 10 years thereafter, the Adminis-
21 trator, in cooperation with other relevant Fed-
22 eral agencies, including, at a minimum, the De-
23 partment of Energy, the Nuclear Regulatory
24 Commission, the Department of the Interior,
25 the Indian Health Service, and the Agency for

1 Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, and in
2 consultation with affected Tribal governments,
3 shall develop a 10-year interagency plan for the
4 coordination of the Federal Government with
5 States and Tribal governments to carry out
6 cleanup actions at Navajo Nation abandoned
7 uranium mine sites, including—

8 (i) goals for the assessment of, and
9 cleanup actions at, Navajo Nation aban-
10 doned uranium mine sites;

11 (ii) target dates by which goals de-
12 scribed in clause (i) are anticipated to be
13 achieved, subject to appropriations and
14 funding from potentially responsible par-
15 ties;

16 (iii) the projected appropriations nec-
17 essary to achieve goals described in clause
18 (i) by the target dates described in clause
19 (ii); and

20 (iv) the activities to be carried out by
21 each Federal agency under the plan.

22 (B) REPORTS.—Not later than 90 days
23 after the date on which a plan is developed
24 under subparagraph (A), the Administrator
25 shall submit to the appropriate committees of

1 Congress a report describing the applicable
2 plan.

3 (4) ADMINISTRATIVE AND TECHNICAL ASSIST-
4 ANCE.—The Administrator shall, pursuant to exist-
5 ing authorities of the Administrator, provide to
6 States, units of local government, Indian Tribes, and
7 other entities technical assistance with respect to
8 cleanup actions on covered mine sites.

9 (e) SAVINGS PROVISIONS.—Nothing in this section—
10 (1) provides the Administrator with new regu-
11 latory authority not already established in law; or
12 (2) shall be interpreted as establishing a default
13 standard or authority to be used for cleanup actions
14 at covered mine sites, including the definition of
15 “cleanup action” in subsection (a).

Passed the Senate November 19, 2025.

Attest:

Secretary.

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