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CARDIN ANNOUNCES HEARING TO REVIEW MOUNTAINTOP MINING PRACTICES

Cardin, Alexander call on EPA to provide more details on mining permits

Washington, DC – U.S. Senator **Benjamin L. Cardin (D-MD)**, Chairman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Water and Wildlife Subcommittee, announced that intends to hold a hearing to address “mountaintop mining” practices. Senator Cardin’s announcement comes on the same day that the Obama Administration revealed its plans to establish tougher environmental reviews for coal companies that mine the Appalachians by blasting off mountaintops and discarding the rubble in stream valleys, also known as “mountaintop mining.”

“Mountaintop mining is one of the most destructive practices that already has destroyed some of America’s most beautiful and ecologically significant regions,” said Senator Cardin. **“Today’s decision by the Obama Administration to limit the practice through a stronger review of mountaintop mining permit applications is an important step in the right direction. However, it does not halt this incredibly destructive form of mining. We must put an end to this mining method that has buried more than a thousand miles of streams.”**

Senator Cardin is the sponsor of S. 696, *The Appalachian Restoration Act*, a two-page bill that would outlaw the mining practice. “This legislation will put a stop to the smothering of our nation’s streams and water systems and will restore the *Clean Water Act* to its original intent,” **Senator Cardin added.**

Senator Cardin and Senator Lamar Alexander (R-TN), co-sponsor of the mountaintop mining ban legislation, have called upon Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa Jackson to provide additional information about the mining permits issued by three federal agencies, including EPA, the Army Corps of Engineers and the Office of Surface Mining. These are the permits that the Obama Administration said today that it will be reviewing with greater scrutiny.

Also today, Senators Cardin and Alexander sent a letter to all Senators urging their support for *The Appalachian Restoration Act*, saying “More than 1 million acres of Appalachia have already been affected by this process. An estimated 1,200 miles of headwater streams have been buried under tons of mining wastes. More than 500 mountains have been impacted. Homes have been ruined and drinking water supplies contaminated.”

The Cardin-Alexander *Appalachian Restoration Act* was introduced on March 25, 2009.

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