



State of West Virginia
Office of the Attorney General

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Attorney General

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September 30, 2025

The Honorable Christopher A. Wright
Secretary
Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Secretary Wright:

I write to applaud the Department of Energy's announcement yesterday of a \$625 million investment to reinvigorate and expand America's coal industry. This bold initiative represents a key commitment to energy security and economic revitalization. It appropriately returns the focus to the 14,000 West Virginia coal miners who have worked to power our nation for generations.

For over a century, West Virginia's coal has fueled American industry, kept the lights on across the nation, and supported families in rural Appalachia and beyond. Your announcement recognizes what we have long known (but has too often been forgotten recently): coal remains an essential component of America's energy portfolio and economic strength. Your investments in rural capacity and energy are especially welcome; these areas *need* coal.

And this investment comes at just the right time. For years, federal investments and subsidies have been disproportionately directed to so-called "green energy initiatives" and alternative energy sources. But those sources do not provide the consistent, baseload power necessary to guarantee continued American success. Coal plants can consistently operate with capacity factors of 60-70%, while solar and wind average just 25-35%. So as America's grid faces a continued reliability crunch from the demands of AI and more, dependable, coal-fired energy will become only more essential. After all, energy demand is expected to grow by 50% by 2050.

West Virginia stands ready to partner with your Department in implementing these programs. As America's second-largest coal-producing state, we have abundant coal reserves, an experienced workforce, a substantial existing infrastructure, and an unwavering commitment to responsible energy production. Likewise, my Office has the legal expertise to ensure that the coal industry is not ensnared in regulatory red tape or anti-energy judicial overreach. We are eager to work with DOE to ensure these federal investments achieve maximum impact.

The Honorable Christopher A. Wright

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Four months ago, I wrote to President Trump to thank him for his executive orders supporting America's original "homegrown" energy source, coal. President Trump recognized from the beginning that America will fail if coal continues to be pushed aside. It's outstanding to see President Trump's plans now come to fruition.

Thank you for your leadership and for recognizing the vital role that coal and coal communities play in our nation's prosperity and security.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John B. McCuskey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

John B. McCuskey
West Virginia Attorney General