

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2017

Remarks on Signing Legislation Regarding Congressional Disapproval of the Department of the Interior's Stream Protection Rule

February 16, 2017

The President. Okay. We had an exciting news conference before. And some people loved it. I think nobody hated it, but it was—I think it was very productive. And thank you all for being there; that was very nice. And thank you, all of the wonderful politicians, but—right, Mitch, especially the miners that are with us, right? So I just want to thank you. Seriously. We appreciate it. We appreciate it very much.

And this is our second bill signing this week as we continue to work for the American people. This is H.J. Resolution 38, and that will eliminate another terrible job-killing rule, saving many thousands of American jobs, especially in the mines, which I've been promising you. The mines are a big deal. I've had support from some of you folks right from the very beginning, and I won't forget it. I went to West Virginia, and I—we had 17, 18,000 people that couldn't get into that big arena, right? You were a few of them. But that was some day and some night.

I want to thank Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, House Speaker Paul Ryan, House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy, House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Rob Bishop—thank you, Rob—and Representative Bill Johnson, who worked very hard on this bill. And they really did; they worked very hard. This was a tough one.

I also want to thank the great Members of Congress who have joined us today. We have a lot of them. In eliminating this rule, I am continuing to keep my promise to the American people to get rid of wasteful regulations that do nothing—absolutely nothing—but slow down the economy, hamstringing companies, push jobs to other countries—which is happening all over, although I must tell you, we've stopped it. You've seen all the factories, all the plants that are moving back. They're going back to a lot of places. So you know that, right, fellas? They're moving back fast: Ford, General Motors, Fiat—so many. Very happy.

Compliance costs for this rule would be over \$50 million a year for the coal industry alone, and it's unnecessary. I want to also thank the incredible coal miners who are with us today. I think we can maybe thank them the most, right, for the political leaders. You folks have put up with a lot. And you know, in other countries, they love their coal. Over here, we haven't treated it with the respect it deserves. Even for defense, having that coal is a very important thing for us. So I want to thank you all.

This rule we're eliminating, it's a major threat to your jobs, and we're going to get rid of that threat immediately. We're going to fight for you like I promised I would in the campaign. And you were very good to me, and I'm going to be even better to you, I promise you that.

And we're going to fight for, also, low energy prices for all Americans. There's a spirit of optimism rising across the country. It's going to continue to grow as we sign more and more bills. We're going to make our Nation more than competitive—not just competitive, we're going to be more than competitive. And we're going to win at many, many industries. We're already starting back with the automobile industry. We had the airline industry in the other day. They have rules and regulations that, by the time they get through it, it's nothing left, and they have to get rid of a lot of jobs. We had a great meeting, actually.

We had the unions in. We had the workers in. We had a lot of people in, and they were all very excited about what's happening. And I haven't looked yet at the stock market, but it's been

going up at record clips. We have a tremendous streak going on. And that's only because of the optimism. They feel the optimism. And that optimism is creating a lot of jobs.

So it's an honor to have everybody with us, and, in particular, the miners. We appreciate everything you've done, fellas. Thank you very much.

Would anybody like to say a few words? How about one of the miners saying a few words? I hear these guys all the time. I hear Rand all the time. *[Laughter]* Come on. Who'd like to—come on, Mike.

Marion County Coal Co. General Superintendent Mike Nelson. President Trump, we thank you very much for everything that you've done for us. Everything that you're doing for our industry is very much needed. I've been mining in this industry for 40 years, and this is a very exciting time for our industry. Thank you very much.

The President. Thank you very much.

Senator Joseph Manchin III. Tell him where you're from, Mike.

Mr. Nelson. I'm from Morgantown, West Virginia, but I work at the Marion County Coal Company.

The President. How did I do in that area?

Mr. Nelson. Oh, you did great there. *[Laughter]*

The President. Good. Good. Say something.

Senator Shelley Moore Capito. Well, President Trump—

The President. Come on. You're a—you represent.

Sen. Capito. Yes, representing West Virginia—as the Senator, and Senator Manchin and I, and we have our congressional delegation here: Congressman Jenkins, Congressman McKinley, and Congressman Mooney. This is a lifeline to us, and these miners, they mine in West Virginia. It's a source of pride for us as a State that we've been able to power this country and that we've had the opportunity to provide the energy to this country. And thank you for being a partner with us and being a leader, President Trump, in this. We believe in this, and we believe in your commitment to making sure American miners get back to work. Thank you.

The President. Thank you.

Senator Rand Paul. This is a big day for Kentucky. We want to thank President Trump for getting rid of this job-killing regulation. It was scheduled to cost us thousands of more jobs. Nobody seemed to care about Kentucky, but I can promise you, Eastern Kentucky voted about 75 percent for Donald J. Trump.

Sen. Manchin. Let me just say something very quickly. There's not a miner here that's not an environmentalist. So when people say that we don't want to do the right thing—there's a balance between the environment and the economy—these miners would be the first ones to tell you: They're out in the woods, they're hunting, they're fishing, they're doing everything possible. All they want is the respect that, basically, they've given us the country we have because of the hard work of them and their fathers and grandfathers and all of their family has done.

So I'm so proud. These are all West Virginians too. Makes it even prouder for all of us. So thank you. God bless you.

Senate Majority Leader A. Mitchell McConnell. Well, Mr. President, you know that the last 8 years brought a depression—a depression—to Eastern Kentucky, and our folks are so excited to have a pro-coal President. And we thank you so much for being on our side.

The President. Anybody else? Come on.

Sen. Capito. How about Bill Johnson?

The President. Sure. Absolutely. You deserve it.

Sen. McConnell. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. You deserve it. Come on up.

Representative William L. Johnson. Well, Mr. President, this is an example of what you talked about so much during your campaign. This is what is going to make America great again. This is the legislative branch and you working together to keep the promise that you made to put coal miners back to work and to save the coal industry. If we had not overturned this rule, we were looking at nearly 70,000 jobs across the country and about 80 percent of our coal reserves being unavailable. So thank you for your willingness to work with us to get this done. It's very, very important to the coal miners of this country and to our electricity grid. Thank you, Mr. President.

Murray Energy Corp. General Manager Kevin Hughes. As a 45-year miner, I'm very proud to be in this historic building, and I am very proud to be here with my President of the United States, who keeps his word. And we thank you very much, sir.

The President. That's a great honor.

So I want to thank everybody. And tell your friends back in West Virginia and Kentucky and all the other places where we worked—Wyoming—

Participant. North Dakota.

Representative James D. Jordan. Ohio.

The President. North Dakota. Ohio.

Representative Douglas L. Lamborn. Colorado.

The President. You're right about that. They have been fantastic. Everybody's been—actually, everybody's been great, and we appreciate it very much. Special people, special workers. We're bringing it back, and we're bringing it back fast. We didn't have to wait a long period of time. It's been very few days since I've been here, and I think this is long ahead of schedule, right? Wouldn't you say even—

Sen. Manchin. Absolutely.

The President. Even you might say—[laughter]—this is about 4 years faster than they thought would have happened. So it's my honor. And, fellas, go back to work, all right? I think we'll take them into the Oval Office, right? Let's take them into the Oval Office. Let's have a little tour, okay? They've probably been there many times before. [Laughter] Come on. Come with me. Good.

Thank you, everybody. Thank you, very much.

White House Director of Legislative Affairs Marc Short. Sign the bill. Sign the bill here.

The President. Oh. [Laughter] I thought I could have gotten away with it.

Participant. No, that's the important part.

The President. This is—I could have gotten away with it.

Participant. No, this is what we came for.

The President. You'd better believe it.

[*At this point, the President signed the joint resolution.*]

The President. So how about we give the pen—this is a great pen—how about we give that to the miners? [*Applause*] You guys take it.

[*The President held the bill up for a photograph with sponsors and other participants.*]

Come on, Heidi. Even though she is sort of a Democrat. [*Laughter*] Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:43 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. H.J. Res. 38, approved February 16, was assigned Public Law No. 115–5. In his remarks, he referred to Sen. Mary Kathryn "Heidi" Heitkamp.

Categories: Bill Signings and Vetoes : Department of the Interior Stream Protection Rule, congressional disapproval, signing remarks.

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Names: Bishop, Robert W.; Capito, Shelley Moore; Heitkamp, Mary Kathryn "Heidi"; Hughes, Kevin; Johnson, William L.; Jordan, James D.; Lamborn, Douglas L.; Manchin, Joseph, III; McCarthy, Kevin; McConnell, A. Mitchell; Nelson, Mike; Paul, Rand; Ryan, Paul D.; Short, Marc.

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