



CREATION JUSTICE MINISTRIES

Justice for God's planet and God's people.

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Creation Justice Ministries Applauds Study of Mining's Health Impacts

Creation Justice Ministries applauds the August 3, 2016 announcement by the Department of Interior Office of Surface Mining and Reclamation that they will answer the State of Virginia's request for independent examination of existing research concerning the connection between living near surface coal mine sites in Central Appalachia and human health risks. The National Academy of Sciences will receive \$1 million over the course of two years to conduct the study.

For far too long, government decision-makers and mining companies have failed to sufficiently assess risks and count human health costs associated with surface coal mining. Religious communities are often on the front lines coping with health challenges – be it through chaplaincy and pastoral care, health care ministry, or organizing faith communities to call on decision-makers to improve environmental health. It is time to care for our bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit.

Creation Justice Ministries calls on the Department of Interior to take further steps to ensure proper study and health care for *all* communities living near coal mines across the United States, including in the West. Creation Justice Ministries also supports commonsense rules and regulations such as the Stream Protection Rule to protect the health and safety of communities near coal mines.

“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you were bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body.”

1 Corinthians 6:19-20