

Dear Mr. Chair and members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

I am Zachary Cassidy, Carbon Pipeline Organizer and lobbyist for Dakota Resource Council. I am writing to express our support for SB 2117, which would create an abandoned mine reclamation fund. The fund will be used to reclaim and restore land impacted by coal mining. Abandoned mines can create environmental and public health risks long after the mine is active. This includes contamination of water sources, collapsed structures that can cause injury or death, soil erosion, and toxic metals used in the mining process can impact public health. This fund will be an important step in making sure that our ecosystems and the people who depend on them are protected from dangers related to abandoned mines. As such DRC is supportive of any measure that will help to limit or eliminate these risks and recommends pass on this bill. Thank you to the committee for its time.