



KENTUCKIANS FOR THE COMMONWEALTH

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Action for Justice

October 14, 2011

Congressman Hal Rogers
2406 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Rogers,

On behalf of more than 7,000 members of Kentuckians For The Commonwealth – many of whom are also your constituents – we have gathered at your office today to express our hopes for the future and our grave concerns about the harmful policies you are promoting in Washington. We have a simple message: Kentucky Deserves Better.

Specifically, the residents of Kentucky's 5th District deserves a Congressman who stands up for the things that Kentuckians value and need most, including good jobs, clean water, healthy communities, access to education, honest government, and tax policies that ask everyone to pay their fair share. We, therefore, respectfully ask you to stop pushing legislation, budget plans and budget riders that endanger the well-being of our families and communities here at home.

Many of the people who have gathered today in protest outside your Somerset office are proud to call eastern Kentucky home. We are the daughters and sons of hard-working, resourceful Appalachian families from whom we learned faith, courage, conviction, and a deep sense of connection to this place on earth. We respect the sacrifice and honor the labor of our coal miners. And we believe that right now, today, eastern and south-central Kentucky have a real opportunity to create good new jobs for our coal workers and communities. But to build a better future, we must finally stop the poisoning of our water and destruction of our land caused by radical mining methods. We must invest in our people, especially the young who seek the education and opportunities to make their contributions in the communities we call home.

As chairman of the House Appropriations Committee and Representative of Kentucky's 5th District, you have a powerful role to play in helping eastern Kentucky begin the transition to a healthier, more prosperous economy. We call upon you to use that leadership position to:

- **Support bills in Congress to create thousands of new jobs here in Kentucky by investing in the repair of our roads and bridges, the development of clean energy solutions, and the improvement of our schools, colleges and job training programs.**
- **Support policies in Congress aimed at making our tax code more fair while also raising needed revenue.** Stop opposing reasonable tax reform proposals that hurt the vast majority

of people of your district while benefiting the nation's wealthiest individuals and corporations.

- **Support funding for essential public programs that improve the quality of life and expand opportunities for all Kentuckians – including many low-income or disabled families, students, and individuals in your district.** Stop pushing massive and unnecessary cuts to programs like Pell Grants, food assistance for Women Infants and Children, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, affordable housing programs, Medicaid, and more.
- **Support the efforts of the US Environmental Protection Agency to fully and fairly enforce the laws designed to protect our health. Stop pushing extreme budget riders, budget provisions, and other bills that target the EPA's work** to minimize the destruction of our headwater streams from mining; protect our drinking water from unregulated and toxic coal ash waste; and reduce toxic air pollution from coal burning power plants.
- **Break your silence and speak honestly and publicly about the fact that surface mining causes widespread and permanent harm to our health and environment.** As you well know, coal production is declining rapidly in Central Appalachia due in large part to the steep drop in demand for coal and diminishing coal reserves in the region. Kentuckians deserve a Congressman in the 5th district who shares our outrage that birth defects, lower life expectancy and serious diseases all increase with proximity to strip mining. We deserve a Congressman who is committed to full and fair enforcement of water quality and mining laws and who brings people together around sustainable, long-term solutions for this region.
- **Lastly, we ask you to confirm a meeting within two months in your district so that you and we may discuss these and other vital concerns.** Over the years KFTC members who are also your constituents have traveled repeatedly to Washington to try to communicate directly with you as their representative in Washington. Despite dozens of requests, you have never made yourself available. It is time – it is past time – for you to listen to our hopes and concerns.

Kentucky Deserves Better, Congressman Rogers. We urge you to stand with the people of your district, not with powerful corporate interests, during this important and difficult time in our nation's history.

Sincerely,

Doug Doerrfeld (Rowan County)

Ada Smith (Letcher County)

Stanley Sturgill (Harlan County)

Cody Montgomery (Letcher County)