

Appalachian Communities: Trump Kills Study on Health Impacts of Mountaintop Removal Coal Mines

Stopping the study "without warning or adequate reason is beyond heartless"

By [Andrea Germanos](#)

Region: [USA](#)

Global Research, August 23, 2017

Theme: [Environment](#), [Law and Justice](#), [Oil and Energy](#), [Police State & Civil Rights](#)

[Common Dreams](#) 21 August 2017

Featured image: "Stopping this study is a ploy to stop science in its tracks and keep the public in the dark about health risks as a favor to the mining industry, pure and simple," said Rep. Raul M. Grijalva (D-Ariz.), the ranking member of the House Committee on Natural Resources. (Photo: [Rainforest Action Network/flickr/cc](#))

Outrage has followed the Trump administration's decision late last week to put the brakes on a study into the health impacts of mountaintop removal coal mining in Central Appalachia.

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine [said](#) Monday it received a letter from the Interior Department's Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement ordering it to put a halt on its two-year [project](#) "largely as a result of the Department's changing budget situation."

"The OSM," as journalist **Ken Ward Jr.** [writes](#) at the West Virginia Gazette-Mail, "had committed more than \$1 million to the study, which was launched last year after a request from officials from the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection and the state Bureau for Public Health" in light of scientific research linking "mountaintop removal to increased risks of birth defects, cancer, and premature death among residents living near large-scale surface coal mines in Appalachia."

Bill Price, senior Appalachia organizing representative for Sierra Club's Beyond Coal campaign, called it

"infuriating that Trump would halt this study on the health effects of mountaintop removal coal mining, research that people in Appalachia have been demanding for years. Trump has once again shown the people of Appalachia that we mean nothing to him. From his proposed budget cuts to the Appalachian Regional Commission, to pushing to take away healthcare from thousands of Appalachian people, to now stripping doctors and scientists of the ability to warn us about the health effects of mountaintop coal removal, Trump's showing that he's only been pretending to care about our communities."

"What did we ever do to him?" Price continued. "Everyone knows there are major health risks living near mountaintop removal coal mining sites, but communities living with daily health threats were counting on finally getting

the full story from the professionals at the National Academies of Science. To take that away without warning or adequate reason is beyond heartless. It appears that the only people Trump cares about in Appalachia are coal executives, not the people who've lived and worked here for generations. People here trusted him, but he is proving he didn't deserve that trust."

Also denouncing the development is **Rep. Raul M. Grijalva** (D-Ariz.), the ranking member of the House Committee on Natural Resources, who [said](#) the move was another sign of the administration's war on science and interest in doing the industry's bidding.

"Every time some reckless industry hurts working people, this administration is there to provide political cover," Grijalva said Monday.

"Mountaintop removal mining has been shown to cause lung cancer, heart disease, and other medical problems. Clearly this administration and the Republican Party are trying to stop the National Academy of Sciences from uncovering exactly how harmful this practice is. Stopping this study is a ploy to stop science in its tracks and keep the public in the dark about health risks as a favor to the mining industry, pure and simple," Grijalva said.

As **Michael Gerrard**, director of Columbia University's Sabin Center for Climate Change Law, [summarized](#) dryly on Twitter:

"Trump's great way of helping his West Virginia voters: Halt scientific study of how mountaintop removal coal mining makes them sick."

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 License

The original source of this article is [Common Dreams](#)
Copyright © [Andrea Germanos](#), [Common Dreams](#), 2017

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Andrea Germanos](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca
www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca