

Public Law 106-463
106th Congress

An Act

Nov. 7, 2000
[S. 2300]

To amend the Mineral Leasing Act to increase the maximum acreage of Federal leases for coal that may be held by an entity in any 1 State.

Coal Market
Competition Act
of 2000.
30 USC 181 note.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Coal Market Competition Act of 2000".

30 USC 184 note.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) Federal land contains commercial deposits of coal, the Nation's largest deposits of coal being located on Federal land in Utah, Colorado, Montana, and the Powder River Basin of Wyoming;

(2) coal is mined on Federal land through Federal coal leases under the Act of February 25, 1920 (commonly known as the "Mineral Leasing Act") (30 U.S.C. 181 et seq.);

(3) the sub-bituminous coal from these mines is low in sulfur, making it the cleanest burning coal for energy production;

(4) the Mineral Leasing Act sets for each leasable mineral a limitation on the amount of acreage of Federal leases any 1 producer may hold in any 1 State or nationally;

(5)(A) the present acreage limitation for Federal coal leases has been in place since 1976;

(B) currently the coal lease acreage limit of 46,080 acres per State is less than the per-State Federal lease acreage limit for potash (96,000 acres) and oil and gas (246,080 acres);

(6) coal producers in Wyoming and Utah are operating mines on Federal leaseholds that contain total acreage close to the coal lease acreage ceiling;

(7) the same reasons that Congress cited in enacting increases for State lease acreage caps applicable in the case of other minerals—the advent of modern mine technology, changes in industry economics, greater global competition, and the need to conserve Federal resources—apply to coal;

(8) existing coal mines require additional lease acreage to avoid premature closure, but those mines cannot relinquish mined-out areas to lease new acreage because those areas are subject to 10-year reclamation plans, and the reclaimed acreage is counted against the State and national acreage limits;

(9) to enable them to make long-term business decisions affecting the type and amount of additional infrastructure

investments, coal producers need certainty that sufficient acreage of leasable coal will be available for mining in the future; and

(10) to maintain the vitality of the domestic coal industry and ensure the continued flow of valuable revenues to the Federal and State governments and of energy to the American public from coal production on Federal land, the Mineral Leasing Act should be amended to increase the acreage limitation for Federal coal leases.

SEC. 3. COAL MINING ON FEDERAL LAND.

Section 27(a) of the Act of February 25, 1920 (30 U.S.C. 184(a)), is amended—

(1) by striking “(a)” and all that follows through “No person” and inserting “(a) COAL LEASES.—No person”;

(2) by striking “forty-six thousand and eighty acres” and inserting “75,000 acres”; and

(3) by striking “one hundred thousand acres” each place it appears and inserting “150,000 acres”.

Approved November 7, 2000.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—S. 2300:

SENATE REPORTS: No. 106-378 (Comm. on Energy and Natural Resources).
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 146 (2000):

Oct. 5, considered and passed Senate.

Oct. 23, considered and passed House.