



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

STEVEN L. BESHEAR
GOVERNOR

700 CAPITOL AVENUE
SUITE 100
FRANKFORT, KY 40601
(502) 564-2611
FAX: (502) 564-2517

September 11, 2009

Ms. Lisa P. Jackson
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Ariel Rios Building
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N. W.
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Jackson:

This letter concerns the list of 49 mine permit applications that the Environmental Protection Agency identified today as needing further review. While I appreciate the complexities involved in mine permitting reviews, I have great concern about the long delays for many of these applications. Certainly, environmental rules and regulations must always be observed. However, many of these applications have faced significant delays that date back several years, including ones that were initiated in 2004 – five years ago. The issue is not whether the decision on any particular permit application is positive or negative. My concern is the unacceptable delay in making any decision at all, thereby preventing businesses from effective planning and management.

Stewardship of our environment and economic development are not – and should not be – mutually exclusive. They are inextricably linked. To that end, the relationship between business and government must be mutually supportive when jobs and employment of our citizens are at stake. We expect business to follow all guidelines, but government must make decisions with respect to the guidelines in a timely manner. The long delay of these permits not only affects these individual businesses, but the associated jobs and the families that rely on those jobs to put food on their tables. In these difficult economic times, this issue is even more acute. Recognizing that, Kentucky is in the process of hiring additional staff to process applications in a more timely fashion, as well as address related safety needs. I believe I owe that to my constituents in my state.

As you continue your work, I strongly urge you to be as expeditious as possible to meet both the environmental and economic needs related to mine permitting. My staff all across state government and I stand ready to help you meet these goals. Please contact my office if you have any questions or if we need to discuss this matter further. This issue is important not only to this state but to the nation as we strive to meet our growing energy needs. Your office and my office must remain in close contact.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven L. Beshear".

Steven L. Beshear