

Governor Tomblin Signs Mine Safety Bill

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Reforms Include Explosion-Stopping Rock Dust, Mandatory Drug Testing and 5-Year Prison Term for Advance Warning of Mine Inspections



Gov. Tomblin signs H.B. 4351, joined by the Speaker of the House of Delegates Rick Thompson, Dalton Thompson, Del. Mike Caputo, and State Police Chaplain Jim Mitchell

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CHARLESTON, W.Va. – Last week, Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin signed comprehensive mine safety reforms into law in West Virginia. Today, he publicly addressed this monumental piece of legislation.

“I’m proud of our state’s mine industry, I’m proud of our coal miners, and I’m proud we have passed this legislation,” Gov. Tomblin said. “Coal mining in West Virginia will be safer as a result our foresight and hard work. Again, I’d like to commend both the members and leadership of the House of Delegates and the Senate for working to ensure the safety of our coal miners.”

House Bill 4351 includes many safety improvements aimed toward preventing coal mine disaster injuries and fatalities:

strengthens rock dusting requirements and provides new methane standards;

codifies an anonymous mine safety tip line;

requires pre-employment and random drug testing;

and, increases fines and penalties for those who give advance notice of an inspector’s presence at a mine or who willfully violate any safety standard that causes a fatality, among other safety improvements aimed toward preventing coal mine disaster injuries and fatalities.

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