

## S 3470

Miners Protection Act of 2016

**Congress:** 114 (2015–2017, Ended)

**Chamber:** Senate

**Policy Area:** Labor and Employment

**Introduced:** Nov 16, 2016

**Current Status:** Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 669.

**Latest Action:** Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 669. (Nov 16, 2016)

**Official Text:** <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/3470>

### Sponsor

**Name:** Sen. Hatch, Orrin G. [R-UT]

**Party:** Republican • **State:** UT • **Chamber:** Senate

### Cosponsors

*No cosponsors are listed for this bill.*

### Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Finance Committee	Senate	Reported Original Measure	Nov 17, 2016

### Subjects & Policy Tags

**Policy Area:**

Labor and Employment

### Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
114 S 1714	Related bill	<b>Jul 7, 2015:</b> Read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance.

## Miners Protection Act of 2016

This bill amends the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (SMCRA) to transfer certain funds to the Multiemployer Health Benefit Plan and the 1974 United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) Pension Plan to provide health and pension benefits to retired coal miners and their families.

The bill expands the group whose retiree health benefits are taken into account in determining the amount that the Department of the Treasury must transfer from the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund and the General Fund of the Treasury to the Multiemployer Health Benefit Plan.

(Under current law, transfers are calculated by taking into account beneficiaries that actually enrolled in the plan as of December 31, 2006, and who are eligible to receive benefits under the plan on the first day of the calendar year for which the transfer is made.)

The expanded group includes: (1) beneficiaries actually enrolled in the plan as of the date of enactment of this bill and who are eligible for benefits on the first day of the calendar year for which the transfer is made, and (2) beneficiaries whose health benefits would be denied or reduced as a result of a bankruptcy proceeding commenced in 2012 or 2015.

A voluntary employees' beneficiary association (VEBA) established as a result of a bankruptcy proceeding described above must transfer to the plan any amounts received as a result of the bankruptcy proceeding, reduced by the amount of the VEBA's administrative costs. Transfers by Treasury are reduced by the amount of the VEBA transfers.

Treasury must also transfer additional funds to the 1974 UMWA Pension Plan to pay pension benefits required under that plan if the amounts available for transfer under SMCRA's \$490 million annual limit exceed the amounts required to be transferred for other purposes (including to the UMWA Health Plans).

The bill also: (1) prohibits the pension plan from making certain changes to benefits during any year in which a transfer is received, and (2) establishes additional reporting requirements for the plan.

The bill repeals requirements for current and former signatories to labor agreements with the UMWA to pay unassigned beneficiaries premiums or backstop premiums if transfers under SMCRA are less than the amount required to be transferred.

As an offset, the bill amends the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 to extend the authority of Treasury to collect certain customs user fees.

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## Actions Timeline

- **Nov 16, 2016:** Introduced in Senate
- **Nov 16, 2016:** Committee on Finance. Original measure reported to Senate by Senator Hatch. With written report No. 114-374.
- **Nov 16, 2016:** Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 669.