

Chairman Simpson's Opening Statement
Office of Surface Mining, Reclamation and Enforcement
FY 2012 Budget Request
March 10, 2011

The Committee will come to order.

Good morning and welcome Director Pizarchik. Thank you for being here today to discuss your 2012 budget request for the Office of Surface Mining.

In conjunction with the States, the Office of Surface Mining oversees and regulates existing coal mining practices, and seeks to reclaim abandoned mine lands which are the legacy of 150-years of coal mining. These are two different, but complementary roles for OSM and the States.

For fiscal year 2012, the Office of Surface Mining is proposing a tighter discretionary budget of \$145.9 million, a \$17 million reduction below the 2010 enacted level.

It was one year ago, to the day, that we were discussing your 2011 request. I see that a few 2011 proposals have carried forward into 2012, such as the reductions to state regulatory grants while encouraging state fee increases.

And I see you have offered some new proposals including increased Federal oversight inspections, and reductions to the abandoned mine reclamation program.

The budget also proposes new approaches to the mandatory spending that comprises the bulk of your budget. While those proposals may not fall into the jurisdiction of this Committee – and rather to our authorizers – we are certainly interested in the impacts as they would substantively change how programs are managed.

We will explore many of these areas further during our questions.

I'd like to yield now to our Ranking Member from Virginia. Mr. Moran, would you like to offer any opening remarks.

[Moran Opening Statement]

Director Pizarchik, thank you again for being here today. Please share with us your vision for OSM in 2012.