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Coal industry reacts to Governor Wolf’s correction classifying coal mining as a “life-sustaining business”

HARRISBURG, Pa. (March 20, 2020) – Pennsylvania Coal Alliance Executive Director Rachel Gleason today issued the following statement regarding Governor Tom Wolf’s decision to clarify his statement on business closures and recognize coal mining as a life-sustaining business:

“Representing the 18,000 coal-related jobs within Pennsylvania, the PA Coal Alliance applauds the Governor’s decision to keep coal mining operations open during this critical time. Coal remains an essential part of Pennsylvania’s electricity generation and steel making processes and is unmatched by any other fuel source in affordability, flexibility, reliability, resiliency and security.

In 2019, more than 36 million tons of PA-mined coal was used for power generation, extending to 15 states. Nearly one-third (more than 12 million tons) of that coal was used to produce electricity for consumers and manufacturers within Pennsylvania.

Coal also serves as an invaluable component in the steel making process. Nearly three million tons of PA-produced metallurgical coal was used by U.S. Steel in 2019 alone.

Governor Wolf’s decision today is consistent with mining’s classification under the U.S. Defense Production Act (DPA) and with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) as critical energy, critical infrastructure and critical manufacturing. Under both DPA and DHS mining, is an “enabling function,” crucial to the economic prosperity and continuity of the United States, and vital to national economic security and national public health or safety.

During these difficult times, Pennsylvania’s coal industry will continue to do their part to support manufacturing and keep the lights on for all off Pennsylvania’s electricity consumers. The PA Coal Alliance and its members are taking the necessary steps to ensure the safety and well-being of their employees. We encourage all Pennsylvanians to do the same by taking the actions needed to keep their family members and neighbors safe.”

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ABOUT THE PENNSYLVANIA COAL ALLIANCE: Based in Harrisburg, PCA represents the interest of over 200 companies that directly and indirectly employ nearly 18,000 hardworking men and women in the Commonwealth, which in 2019 was the third largest coal-producing state in the nation.