



# Safe Kids and Healthy Communities

*An Agenda for America's Families*



## Conservation



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### Ensure Environmental Cleanup

Surface Mining Control Reclamation Act (Sponsor: Santorum, S. 2616)

The Abandoned Mine Land Fund (AML) was created in 1977 to address environmental hazards created by historic coal mining such as open pits, coal refuse spoil piles, old mine openings and polluted streams. However, under the current mine reclamation structure, the states with the greatest needs receive insufficient funding. S.2616 modifies the current formula so that states that have the most serious reclamation problems will receive a higher percentage of funding. This legislation provides a comprehensive reform of the AML program that will help solve significant problems that threaten the health and safety of our communities, endanger wildlife habitats, and pollute rivers and streams.

### Support Conservation Programs

Farm and Ranchland Protection Act (Sponsor: Santorum, S. 3720)

The Farm and Ranchland Protection program was created to help farmers and ranchers keep their land by providing matching funds to state/local governments and private organizations



with existing land protection programs. These entities then purchase conservation easements from active farmers and ranchers. This legislation allows these organizations to protect more farmland with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and also removes the unnecessary, costly and time-consuming regulations.



## **Encourage Charitable Donations for Conservation**

### **The CARE Act (Sponsor: Santorum, S. 1780, § 105)**

The CARE Act includes provisions that protect our open space by providing additional incentives for land-rich, but cash poor families to make charitable donations of real property for qualified conservation purposes.

## **Preserve Private Property**

### **Protection of Homes, Small Businesses, and Private Property Act (Sponsor: Cornyn; Co-Sponsors: Allen, Talent, Santorum, S. 1313)**

The Protection of Homes, Small Businesses, and Private Property Act declares that the power of eminent domain should be exercised only for public use, as guaranteed by the Fifth Amendment, and that this power to seize homes, small businesses and other private property should be reserved only for true public use, not simply to further economic development.

## **Protect Forests and Open Spaces**

### **Suburban & Community Forestry Open Space Program Act of 2005 (Sponsor: Collins, S.941)**

This bill allows state and local governments, as well as nonprofit organizations, to compete for funds to purchase land or conservation easements to keep forestlands threatened by development in their traditional use. Projects funded under this initiative must be targeted at lands that are in parts of the country threatened by suburban sprawl. This also provides a grant program within the U.S. Forest Service to support locally-driven projects that preserve working forests.