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## Abandoned Mine Reclamation Safety Act seeks to prevent pollution, increase worker safety

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Rep. Raúl Grijalva (D-AZ) has introduced a bill that would direct the Department of the Interior (DOI) to create environmentally responsible regulations for reopening abandoned mines. The bill, the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Safety Act (H.R. 4323), aims to ensure worker safety and reduce uncontrolled wastewater releases.

This bill comes after a major spill at the Gold King Mine in Colorado, in which 3 million gallons of wastewater was accidentally released into the Animas River this August; Rep. Grijalva has heavily criticized EPA efforts to clean up the spill. The proposed bill hopes to implement recommendations from a Bureau of Reclamation report that evaluated the Colorado spill.

Reps. Doug Lamborn (R-CO) and Jody Hice (R-GA) have introduced two other bills, H.R. 3843 and H.R. 3844, respectively, to emphasize a three-pronged approach to addressing abandoned mine cleanup. The three bills now head to the House Committee on Natural Resources' Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources for consideration. In the Senate, Tom Udall (D-NM) has also introduced a bill to address cleanup efforts for abandoned mining sites.

Sources: E&E News, Congress.gov

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