

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**For more information:**

Robert Burton  
C.A.S.E. Coordinator, UAB Campus  
914.588.6799  
jrburton489@gmail.com

Aaron Traywick  
C.A.S.E. Coordinator, University of Montevallo Campus  
334.318.6151  
casealabama@gmail.com

## **STUDENTS, CITIZENS PRESENT OVER 1,500 LETTER REQUESTS FOR CONTINUATION OF CORDOVA STRIP MINE HEARING PROCESS**

**Alabama Surface Mining Commission Headquarters: Jasper, AL**— Student representatives from the Coalition of Alabama Students for the Environment (C.A.S.E.) convened this Monday alongside local residents and environmental organizations concerned over public health issues associated with proposed Reed Minerals Mine No. 5. Participants were on-hand to deliver over 1,500 letters of opposition to the strip mine to Alabama Surface Mining Commission (ASMC) Director Dr. Randall Johnson. Tuesday was the final day for citizens to submit public comments on the prospective mine.

Last month, citizen representation and concerns at an informal hearing at Bevill State Community College regarding the inaccessibility of the permit during the public comment period led to an extension of the hearing process, with additional time allowed for the public to submit comments. In that month, student representatives of C.A.S.E. conducted multiple public awareness demonstrations with the support of several organizations in the Birmingham and Cordova areas, including Alabama Rivers Alliance, Black Warrior Riverkeeper, and Cordova Citizens Opposed to Strip Mining. Though the over 1,500 letters submitted to Dr. Johnson have various concerns over the strip mine, all specifically request an extension in the public hearing process to allow for more time to study the effects of the strip mine.

At Tuesday's event, roughly fifty student and citizen representatives were on hand to personally greet and thank Dr. Randall Johnson for considering concerns within the hearing process. If constructed, the strip mine holds the potential to contaminate the drinking water supply for the largest metropolitan area in the state of Alabama, the Metro-Birmingham area. This is the second proposed strip coal mine upstream of the drinking water supply in recent years, following on the heels of the Shepherd Bend Mine proposal, which is 3 miles downstream at their closest points. Negative effects to public health and quality of life, as well as increased water treatment costs offloaded to consumers, will also cause serious problems for residents within the Cordova and Doovertown communities, where the strip mine is to be constructed.

Student environmental groups from the University of Alabama, UAB, University of Montevallo, Samford University, Jacksonville State, Birmingham-Southern College, and Bevill State Community College have organized under the broader C.A.S.E. organization to conduct, support, and advocate on issues identified as crucial to public health and environmental and economical stability of the state of Alabama. C.A.S.E. will continue to advocate for the adequate protection and conservation of natural resources that support and sustain Alabama communities.