

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4805

August 3, 2021

Dr. Jennifer Wilcox
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fossil Energy
Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Management
Forrestal Building
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Dr. Wilcox,

I write in regards to Touchstone Research Laboratory's application for funding through the Advanced Coal Processing program at the National Energy Technology Laboratory. Funding would allow Touchstone to implement the Hydrophobic-Hydrophilic Separation (HHS) process, in collaboration with Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech), and I am in support of their application.

West Virginia miners answered the call throughout their careers, and their hard work provided the electricity that has powered our American economy and allowed our nation to be a global leader in energy production. However, as our economy has shifted away from coal production as an energy source, it is critical that we find a way to use our state's abundant natural resources in a productive way.

Touchstone has been a leading innovator of new technologies in West Virginia's Northern Panhandle for over twenty years, and is seeking funding under the Developing Pathways to Coal-Derived Graphite area of interest (AOI-2). Their research will focus on cleaning low-, medium-, and high-ranked coals and waste-coal, with the goal of making waste-coal suitable for feedstock in High-Value synthetic graphite processes. Should their research prove successful, Touchstone will exceed existing processes for making SOA petroleum coke-based synthetic graphite, and will reduce waste from coal cleaning facilities, thereby supporting our environment.

West Virginians are very aware of the important role coal has played in our economy, and I am proud to see Touchstone's efforts to ensure that coal remains a critical export of our state, even as we diversify our economy. Their innovative efforts are vital to keeping West Virginia Wild and Wonderful, and I hope you will give their application your full consideration.

Sincerely,



Shelley Moore Capito
United States Senator