

STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

At Charleston

A PROCLAMATION

By the Governor

WHEREAS, on November 8, 2025, a mining crew hit a significant amount of water almost a mile into the Rolling Thunder Mine, located in Nicholas County, West Virginia, resulting in a flood of the underground mine; and

WHEREAS, all the other miners working on the site were able to escape, Foreman Steve Lipscomb, age 42—who was last seen attempting to ensure his crew made it out safely—remained unaccounted for; and

WHEREAS, company mine rescue crews—in coordination with local, state, and federal agencies including the West Virginia Office of Miners' Health, Safety, and Training (OMHST), Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), Emergency Management Division (EMD), and Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)—worked tirelessly searching for Steve Lipscomb and reducing water levels in the flooded mine; and

WHEREAS, these search and rescue crews maintained around-the-clock coordination in the search operations; and crews were ultimately able to pump water at a rate of approximately 6,000 gallons per minute; and

WHEREAS, at approximately 6:00 a.m. on Thursday, November 13, 2025, water inside the Rolling Thunder Mine receded sufficiently for rescue crews to safely enter; and later that morning, a two-man team located the body of the missing mine foreman, Steve Lipscomb; and

WHEREAS, the community of Nicholas County and all West Virginians are heartbroken to hear of Steve Lipscomb's death; in addition to being a coal miner, Steve Lipscomb was a United States Marine; and

WHEREAS, West Virginia knows the pain of this kind of loss too well as Steve Lipscomb is the fifth West Virginian miner who died this year; and

WHEREAS, Mark Hatfield, age 55, died in January; Billy Stalker, age 46, died in February; Eric Batram, age 41, died in August; and Joey Mitchell, Jr., age 25, died in early November—all from mine accidents in either Raleigh County or Tucker County; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of the State of West Virginia mourn the tragic loss of Steve Lipscomb—as well as Mark Hatfield, Billy Stalker, Eric Batram, and Joey Mitchell, who died earlier this year—and wish to extend their sympathy to these miners' loved ones, their many friends, co-workers, and all those who knew and loved them; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, PATRICK MORRISEY, by virtue of the authority vested in me as the Governor of the State of West Virginia, do hereby **ORDER** that, in commemoration of the life and tragic death of Steve Lipscomb, Mark Hatfield, Billy Stalker, Eric Batram, and Joey Mitchell, the United States flag and West Virginia State flag displayed at the Capitol Complex in Charleston, West Virginia, and at all State facilities throughout the State, shall be lowered to half-staff beginning at noon on November 14, 2025, and to remain there until sunset on the day of Steve Lipscomb's internment.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the great seal of the State of West Virginia to be affixed.

DONE at the Capitol in the City of
Charleston, State of West Virginia, this
Fourteenth Day of November, in the Year of



By the Governor

our Lord, Two Thousand Twenty-Five, and
in the One Hundred Sixty-Third Year of the
State.

PATRICK MORRIS
GOVERNOR

Kris Warner
SECRETARY OF STATE