

LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF IDAHO  
Sixty-first Legislature Second Regular Session - 2012

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE BILL NO. 451

BY STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

AN ACT

RELATING TO STATE SYMBOLS; AMENDING CHAPTER 45, TITLE 67, IDAHO CODE, BY THE  
ADDITION OF A NEW SECTION 67-4513, IDAHO CODE, TO PROVIDE FINDINGS AND A  
DECLARATION REGARDING NATURAL RESOURCE INDUSTRIES IN IDAHO AND TO PRO-  
VIDE FOR THE DESIGNATION OF A STATE POEM.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Idaho:

SECTION 1. That Chapter 45, Title 67, Idaho Code, be, and the same is  
hereby amended by the addition thereto of a NEW SECTION, to be known and des-  
ignated as Section 67-4513, Idaho Code, and to read as follows:

67-4513. STATE POEM DESIGNATED. (1) The legislature finds and de-  
clares not only that mining has been a vital part of the history and estab-  
lishment of Idaho since the creation of the Idaho territory , but also that  
mining, along with other natural resource and agricultural industries, has  
served and continues to serve as a pillar of commerce in this state. In  
commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the sunshine mine disaster in  
Shoshone county, the legislature designates the following poem as a memorial  
to the victims of the sunshine mine disaster and as a tribute to all miners of  
this state.

(2) The poem "We Were Miners Then," which was authored by former Idaho  
governor Philip E. Batt in 1972 in response to the sunshine mine disaster, is  
designated and declared to be the state poem of the state of Idaho, provided  
that credit is given to former governor Batt for authoring the poem as fol-  
lows:

"Our tongues have not tasted the bitter dust  
The roar of the drills has never reached our ears.  
Unfelt to us is the darkness of the shafts.

Yet we are Idahoans  
And we were miners then.

We are farmers  
We run the water from melted snows  
Onto parched desert soil.  
The planted seeds take root and grow  
The harvest fills our granaries  
The pits are strange to us  
But we are Idahoans  
And we were miners then.

We are loggers  
We are your neighbors  
We share the high country with you

1           But we sing our song  
2           To the buzzing of the chainsaw  
3           And do our dance on the spinning logs.  
4           There's no room in the mine  
5           For our trees to fall  
6           But we are Idahoans  
7           And we were miners then.

8           We are cattlemen, innkeepers, merchants,  
9           Men of the law and men of the cloth  
10          Ours are a thousand trades  
11          But only you go into the bowels of the  
12          Earth to do your daily chores.

13          Yet we are all Idahoans  
14          And we were miners then.

15          Yes, we were miners;  
16          We waited in spirit at the mouth of the pit  
17          Ached in unison at the news of the dead  
18          Joined the jubilation at the rescue of the living  
19          Marvelled at the poise of the tiny community.  
20          And we became strong  
21          The flux of the widows' tears welded  
22          Your strength into our bodies.

23          And we were all Idahoans  
24          And we were all miners  
25          And we were all proud."