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In 1972, the catastrophic failure of three tailings dams at the Buffalo Creek Mine in West Virginia released over 400 acre-feet of water and waste, destroyed 500 homes, and displaced over 4000 people, with over 125 lives lost. That event was one of the catalysts for the National Dam Safety Act of 1972, which led to state dam safety programs across the nation. Many states regulate tailings dams in addition to conventional water storage dams and several unique aspects of tailings dams create challenges for dam safety regulators. Although mine tailings dams represent less than 2% of the total number of dams in America, they include some of the largest dams in the nation. The value of mining to local, national and global economies, the technical advancements in tailings dam design and construction, and the operational and long-term performance and monitoring requirements, all demand a continuous discussion to ensure the safety of these dams. From the frozen tundra of Alaska to the sunbaked sands of Florida, this session will highlight state regulatory policies, perspectives, and priorities on tailings dam regulation, and include a panel discussion and open microphone to encourage audience participation. States that will be featured include Florida, Michigan, Nevada, Idaho and Alaska. This session will help facilitate the necessary and on-going dialogue between the many stakeholders needed to accomplish the common objective of safe tailings dams in the United States.