

October 8, 2012

To: The Honorable Shelley C. Chapman

My name is Robert Wayne Stafford. I will be 57 years old on December 4th. I worked with what is now Patriot Coal from September, 1979 through June 2011 when I retired. A deciding factor when I retired was that Patriot Coal had entered into another five year contract with the United Mine Workers which included health care and pension benefits for its union active and retired employees. My health is consistent with that of a coal miner with 30+ years experience. I have been diagnosed with diabetes, high blood pressure, and at times high cholesterol.

It is not ethic, moral, or just for Patriot Coal to promise benefits to their employees and retirees and then decide to shed them to become more profitable. How can we as a society expect our citizens to respect and honor those in authority, those individuals that we trust to do something that is so dishonest? It is just another example of a problem within our society, "I got mine by any means possible without any regards to how it affects you." It is a struggle for citizens' to continue to be ethic, moral, and just when the temptation of greed seemingly be rewarded in our judicial system to the corrupt?

I was an hourly United Mine Workers employee with Patriot Coal or its predecessors for approximately 28 years and spent the last three years in a salaried management position. I have always been proud to say that I worked for Patriot Coal. I trusted the management team and their goals. I instructed training classes to Patriot's employees at their mining operations in West Virginia promoting not only working safely but what a good, safe, and successful company that we worked for. Patriot Coal even promoted this philosophy on billboards throughout West Virginia with the Patriot's Company logo on the billboards with the slogan "Be Proud of Where You Work!"

In closing the issue is clear, Patriot Coal does not want to oblige by its contractual duties and this is an injustice not only to its employees and retirees, but also to the judicial system itself. I am not a lawyer and do not pretend to be one, but I do have standards that I try to live by that come from being a Christian and by reading The Bible. I would like to include the following to support my view:

***Proverbs 22:16 (ESV) ...** "Whoever oppresses the poor to increase his own wealth, or gives to the rich, will only come to poverty."

***Colossians 4:1 (ESV)...** "Masters, treat your slaves justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven."

***Jeremiah 22:13 (ESC)...** “Woe to him who builds his house by unrighteousness, and his upper rooms by injustice, who makes his neighbor serve him for nothing and does not give him his wages.

***James 5:1-6...** “Now, you rich people, weep and cry aloud. There are terrible troubles that will soon be coming to you. Your riches have lost their value. Your beautiful clothes are as if moths had eaten them. Your gold and your silver have become dirty and stained. The dirt and stains will be evidence against you in the judgement. They are like poison that will eat up your bodies as with fire. That is because you have heaped up a lot of riches in these last days. Listen! You have not paid the wages of those who worked in your fields. The money you kept from them cries out to God against you. The Lord of all power has heard the cries of the workers. You have lived on earth in luxury. And you have had all that you wanted. You lived to please yourselves. You have made yourself fat like animals ready for men to kill. You have accused. And you have caused the death of those who were innocent.”

***Ephesians 6:9 ...** “Those of you who are masters must also be fair to your slaves. You must not frighten them by saying that you will hurt them. Remember that you and your slaves have the same master in heaven. God is fair and you are all his slaves. He does not think that masters in this world are more important than their slaves.”

Sincerely;

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert Wayne Stafford". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Robert Wayne Stafford