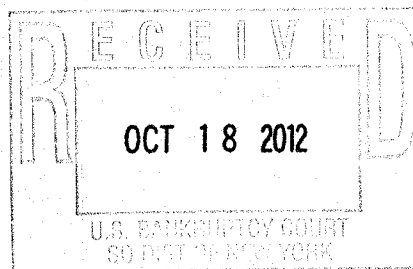


October 16, 2012

Honorable Judge Shelly Chapman
US Bankruptcy Court
Southern District of New York
1 Bowling Green
Courtroom 621
New York, NY 10004-1408



Honorable Judge Chapman:

I am writing to encourage your decision to move the Patriot Coal bankruptcy proceedings back to Southern West Virginia. The coal companies involved in the bankruptcy operate in WV, not New York and the employees, retirees and involved parties are residents or former residents of WV.

My husband has been fully disabled since 1998 and is on a multitude of medicines that provide him relief from several medical conditions that are directly related to his coal mining career. He last worked for Long Branch Energy and received full disability benefits from his company, Social Security and the UMWA after suffering a mining injury that has resulted in approximately 10 surgeries. As his spouse of 38 years, I received medical benefits under his plan, as well. I am diagnosed with Rheumatoid Arthritis, disc degeneration in my spine and several other minor issues that are directly related to the above. I was taking medications on a monthly basis to help alleviate the pain or problems that I was presented with. When we approached our pharmacy of 21 years during August, we were told that we had absolutely no coverage and our monthly cost would be approximately \$3000.00. Needless to say, neither of us have all the medications that we need. We have been removing funds from our savings account and paying for medications that are the most needed. It is very sad to decide what pain or illness that should be treated for a particular month.

I am also requesting that you hold Patriot Coal and any of their subsidiaries accountable for all retirees, their spouses or beneficiaries' medical insurance and any other benefits that have been removed and not honored. It is sad that an individual works in the mines and is provided with the much needed benefits only to have some corporate person in another state decide to remove the benefits without fully understanding the repercussions. It is also a crime to humanity when a company or corporation can remove promises and agreements that have been in place since John L. Lewis fought for the unions and established legal guidelines for mining companies and employees to abide by.

Once again, I am asking that you hold Patriot Coal, subsidiaries, corporations and legal teams accountable for all who are affected by these ruthless "reorganization" plans.

Sincerely,

James A. Smith
Sharon M. Smith

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