

Donald W. Collingsworth
4140 State Route 15
Freeburg, Illinois 62243

To: The Honorable Kathy A. Surratt-States
Re: Case No.12-51502

It is my hope that you will take a few moments to read this and put a face to the case you will be presiding over in regards to the Patriot Coal Corporation and their effort to shed itself of the obligations to U.M.W.A. retirees and their families.

I am a 69 year old male, who was employed by Peabody Coal Company for thirty years. I began with this company in February of 1970 at Peabody Eagle #1 in Shawneetown, Illinois. I then moved to Peabody Eagle #2 in 1971 until September, when I began employment at Peabody River King Mine where I remained until its' closing in March of 1990. From there I resumed my employment at Peabody Marissa Mine in September of 1990 until November of 1999. As you can see, I remained loyal to Peabody and the coal industry.

I am curious if you know or understand what a coal miner does or the conditions one works in, and would like to give you a brief description of what I, and many other miners, endured during our employment. To begin with, our jobs demanded that we work in 2 week shift rotations. These shifts were 7a.m.-3p.m., 3p.m.-midnight, and midnight-7a.m. This rotation was difficult to maintain, but was part of a job that aided in providing for our families. I work in mines that had, at its lowest, a 42 inch seam, and the highest 6 ½ feet. The conditions were tight and the hours we spent working were difficult considering the bending, stooping, and hunching over on our hands and knees that we did. The conditions were also dangerous, and we worked hoping that we would fulfill our shifts and return home safely to our families. The conditions I am speaking of are; working in water, methane gas, the possibility of black lung and other respiratory diseases, and rock falls. Speaking of the rock falls, they were the scariest for many reasons. The main ones, being struck by them or even worse, entrapment. I watched several of my fellow co-workers be injured, maimed, and even killed by them. These conditions not only affects us physically, but emotionally, never knowing if we would become casualties of the mine each time we entered.

One may ask, "why a person would do this type of job?" The answers may vary, but I did personally because it was a job that provided for myself and my family and along with these dangers came benefits. I was promised by our Union, the U.M.W.A. that I would be provided with a pension and health benefits after I retired. I feel that I kept my end of the promise and feel that they should be held accountable for their end. I now live on a limited income and count on my pension and benefits to survive. I have had several heart attacks and also battle with diabetes. I need these benefits to see my doctors and get my medicines. I gave 30 years to Peabody and believe that demanding they fulfill their obligation is a given. After my 30 years of

work and loyalty to the coal industry and the union, I believe that the \$930.00 a month I receive in pension and my health benefits I earned. I do not believe that demanding they fulfill their obligation is unreasonable. I beg of you to please consider the work and the labor I, and my fellow miners gave, when making your decision. We did not abandon them, nor do I feel like they should be allowed to abandon us now. Our employment was not easy, and they should not be given the easy way out either. I appreciate your time, and again ask of you to remember us as individuals, we are someone's grandfather, husband, father, and son. Please do not let the years we gave be in vain.

Sincerely,


Donald W.. Collingsworth-Retired Coal Miner

Don Collingsworth
4140 State Rt 15
Freeburg, Illinois 62243

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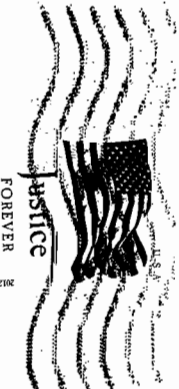
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WELLS FARGO BANK, N.A. / CO.
EASTERN DISTRICT
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI - MR

The Honorable Kathy A. Surratt-States
Re: Case No. 12-51502
Thomas F. Eagleton U.S. Courthouse
111 South 10th Street 4th Floor
St. Louis, Mo. 63102

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