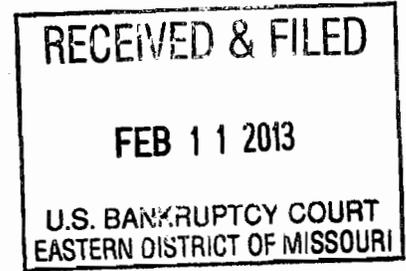


Gregory L. Hickey
358 Hickory Road
Steelville, MO 65565



February 4, 2013

The Honorable Kathy A. Surratt-States
Re. Case No. 12-51502
Thomas Eagleton U.S. Courthouse
111 South 10th st., 4th floor
St. Louis, MO 63102

Dear Judge Surratt-States:

I am writing in regards to the Patriot Coal bankruptcy hearing. I worked for Peabody Coal for 29 years (never Patriot Coal) and retired out when the mine I was working at closed permanently. During those 29 years my fellow miners and I worked long hours that involved hard labor and less than ideal working conditions. I worked 7 days a week for several years because that is what my job called for. I went in early and stayed late just to get the job done. We endured injuries, strikes and lay-offs. The wage we all made was not top dollar, but the medical coverage we had was wonderful. For all of us who were raising families, it made an immeasurable impact on the care we could offer our loved ones and the care that we could expect for ourselves. During contract negotiations we took a hit to other benefits just to continue that medical coverage and to insure that it would be there when we retired. I retired 2 years ago and my UMWA pension and medical coverage played a big part in my decision to retire. After all, I had worked hard all of those years, and I had earned what was in my contract. Evidently after making millions for Peabody, they didn't feel the same way. We were all sold (down the river) to a company that few of us ever worked for and that was destined to fail. But what it did do was relieve Peabody of the promise it made to all of us for so many years. A Peabody spokesman says this is all between Patriot and the court system and Peabody is not involved. I was at the Rally in St. Louis on 1-29-13, and I can tell you without hesitation that my fellow miners, including myself, do not agree. I watched as elderly miners in wheelchairs, on oxygen and many other medical issues made sure they were there to be counted. We have a brotherhood of people that gave all they had to a company who just saw profits, not people. Now Patriot Coal

is trying to end benefits to thousands of the elderly, the disabled and widows at a time when they need it the most. As Patriot Coal tries to reorganize, I only hope that they will be made to include us in that reorganization. Buying private health insurance is not an option for many of our ranks and being cheated out of our pension would not only be criminal, but devastating to our members. I know you can only rule within the law, but I am hoping there is room in that ruling for fairness and accountability. We aren't asking for anything we haven't already earned many times over.

Sincerely,

Gregory L. Hickey
Gregory L. Hickey

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CLERK U.S. BANKRUPTCY COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI-MR

Mr. & Mrs. Greg Mackey
358 Mackey Rd.
Stanfield, MO 65565

The Honorable Kathy A. Surratt-States
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