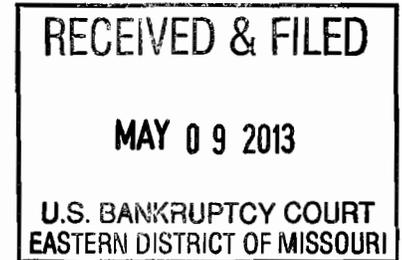


Russell E. Hoge, Jr.

*Judge Kathy Surratt-States
Thomas F. Eagleton Courthouse
111 South 10th Street
4th Floor
St. Louis Mo. 63102*



Dear Honorable Kathy Surratt-States:

Like many others I have been following the case of Patriot Coal Co. Bankruptcy from the beginning. I worked for Peabody Coal Co. and retired with Close to 30 years underground. I retired from Peabody Coal Co. I can say that I have never seen or stepped foot on Patriot Coal Co. property and of course never worked for them. I believe that the men that retired from Peabody Coal should go back to being the responsibility of Peabody Coal and they should not lose there benefits. Peabody should not be allowed to rid itself of its responsibilities by moving them under Patriot. They are the responsible party for there retirees not Patriot. Peabody is a multi-billion dollar company and I have read the biggest coal producer in the United States and has the financial capabilities of providing its retirees with the benefits they were promised. If Patriot isn't able to meet its financial responsibilities that's a matter for the Courts. But I do not believe that Peabody should be allowed to put its retirees under this bankruptcy. They need to be responsible. I like a lot of others depend on my benefits and have a lot of medical issues including a lung transplant, three heart procedures including by-pass surgery, diabetes and kidney problems. My wife also has medical problems. There is a lot of medications I won't be able to afford and doctor visits and test. The insurance is my life and I just don't see how Peabody can shed its responsibilities to me and my wife and other retirees. I hope if you grant Patriot's request for bankruptcy you will not allow Peabody to shed its promises to its retirees. Thank You:

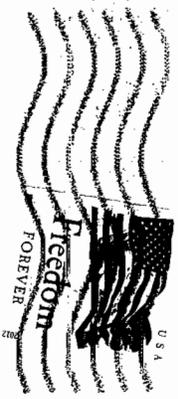
Russell E. Hoge, Jr.

Russell Hoje
P.O. Box 265
South A, WVA,
25921

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Judge KATHY Surratt - STATES
THOMAS F. ENGLETON Courthouse
111 South 10th Street
4th Floor
ST. LOUIS, Missouri
63102

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