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Chief Judge Kathy Surratt-States
Thomas F. Eagleton US Courthouse
111 S. 10th Street, 4th Floor
St. Louis, MO 63102
(314) 244-4541

Dear Chief Judge Kathy Surratt-States :

I am a long-time member and retiree of the UMWA currently under the control of Patriot coal, and I am writing to express my concern about the recent decision to allow Patriot to not honor the commitments they made to the UMWA concerning retirement benefits and insurance benefits. I understand the decision was made to alleviate expenses incurred by Patriot Coal.

However, I do not believe that the benefits should be removed from retired miners and their dependents. Patriot Coal was well aware of the financial responsibilities when acquiring Arch Coal and Peabody Coal. The retirees affected have contributed countless hours and stress to be able to achieve the privileges of retirement. The UMWA members have done their jobs. Arch and Peabody received the benefits from the back breaking and dangerous work that these miners performed. Patriot Coal purchased these companies with the knowledge that American workers had given their health and lives to make these companies desirable. To now turn their backs on these workers is an abomination.

Many of these workers will be forced to choose between eating and buying medicine. They will be forced to choose between the retirement benefits they worked for and looking to their children for support. These proud workers should not be subjected to such decisions.

Sincerely,


Ervin Hensley

