

Good morning. My name Shannon Anderson, and I work for the Powder River Basin Resource Council, a Wyoming nonprofit citizen organization founded in 1973. I was born and raised in Wyoming, and I care deeply about our state. That's why I work with our members to address the impact of coal leasing, mining, and burning on the people and places of Wyoming. By law, the charge that the Department of Interior has with regard the federal coal program requires you to ensure that the program is carried out in the way that promotes the public interest and creates a fair return for the American public. We appreciate the department's review of the program and look forward to reform proposals that will ensure that the program meets these legal obligations into the future for the benefit of current and future generations, the Wyomingites, and citizens across the country. Unfortunately, significant public revenue has been lost because of chronic under-valuation of coal-lease bonus bids and resulting subsequent losses from underpaid royalties. Recent government reports have shown that raising bid amounts a mere penny could bring up to \$7 million of additional revenue. In short, every penny counts. Revenue losses also occur from loopholes in the coal royalty valuation, loopholes that the department is currently working to close. The department must also look critically at the leasing process and consider reforms that will create better planning and review systems to take into account the coal program's role in our nation's energy mix and the impact of leasing on our environment and our communities. Today, lease tracts, as applied for by the coal companies, are designed to benefit that company, not the public. The department must get back into the driver's seat to decide when, where, and how much of the public coal to sell. The new ways of leasing in the Powder River Basin and other coal regions of the country will create substantial public benefit and will better match the coal program with the government's other priority for environmental and social responsibility. Here in Wyoming, all these applications and some lease modifications have been delayed at the request of the companies because of weak coal market conditions caused by low natural gas prices and, perhaps somewhat ironically, warm winter temperatures. These delays were in place before the department's pause on new leasing. Market conditions provide sufficient breathing room for the department to take a step back and reevaluate the

federal coal program. The leasing pause won't impact laws or coal production. In fact, market conditions show the necessity in doing this review. Our nation and the world's sources and supplies of energy have changed dramatically since the program was last evaluated three decades ago, and we are long overdue for both taking a hard look at this program and acting to overhaul it to benefit the public. Thanks for listening to our concerns and information today. We look forward to participating in the rest of your public review process.