

My name is Roxann Backer. I'm the executive director for United Way in Campbell County in Gillette. I want to start out by saying that I'm discouraged by the fact that we, that I myself and so many others have to be here again today. We did this last summer. We came out by the hundreds, and it's just a little discouraging that we have to do that again. Although we're happy to fight for the coal industry at any day at any time, it just seems like maybe this is a process that needs to be addressed as well. United Way of Campbell County mobilizes the power of our community by uniting resources, raising awareness and empowering individuals. We envision a community where all individuals and families achieve their potential through education, financial stability, and healthy lives. Our organization strategically invests resources in organizations and programs that provide efficient and effective services and opportunities to our friends, neighbors, and coworkers who may need a hand-up and not a handout. We also invest in organizations and programs that teach children life skills such as decision-making, money management, business ethics, leadership, and that builds that good character. This past year nearly every dollar invested by our organization into Campbell County was donated by businesses and their employees directly related to the coal industry. Because of those investments, over 21,000 people in Campbell County were able to access assistance from organizations or programs to help them through difficult times. That number will dramatically increase this year. The bottom line is that this proposed increase, this proposed change, and the other regulations coming down from our federal government will dramatically impact our community and your community as well, whether you live in Wyoming, Montana, Colorado, Virginia, Washington, D.C. This is what I think so many people don't understand. The benefits that residents in our state receive from the coal industry is incomparable to any other state. So to hear so many people this morning who are so staunchly opposed to coal mining is very disheartening. And if you think keeping coal in the ground won't affect other communities across the country, you are sadly mistaken. The ripple effect from this will pose challenges that this nation is not prepared to handle. This is a war I would not wage. Thank you.