



My name is Dustin Martinson. I own a physical therapy clinic in Gillette, WY. We have indirect and direct relationships with the coal industry. I have researched the effects of the changes in the coal industry as well as the economy of Wyoming on healthcare. There are great people here to discuss the direct impacts of the war on coal, I want to take you down a path of an astounding indirect effect.

There is a little discussed issue in healthcare called cost shifting. This is where one group essentially pays for another. In the past, industries such as coal and oil have provided great, highly reimbursed health insurance that helped pick up the cost for charity care ( a group of people who have no way of paying for healthcare ) and for low reimbursing groups such as Medicaid and Medicare.

Due to the war on coal and the companies having to change their health insurance to higher deductible, lower reimbursing plans, healthcare in Wyoming is at an incredible risk. At a hospital in Wyoming, the bad debt has increased by 43% in less than two years. This is directly due to the war on coal. There are over 670 rural hospitals in America that are at risk for closure, none in Wyoming, yet! If this war on coal continues there will continue to be an effect and the chance for a Wyoming hospital to close greatly increases.

Historically healthcare in Wyoming has been exceptional. We are void of the HMOs, low reimbursements and very impactful restrictions that other states carry. If this war on coal continues, there will be an incredible impact on healthcare in Wyoming. Community hospitals will struggle with decreased revenue from mil levies and increased cost due to bad debt. I believe that this may reach a level where hospitals close or at least have to significantly restructure.

This does not have to happen in Wyoming. There have been enough changes in healthcare due to Obamacare. We do not need to put the lives of people in Wyoming at risk with the war on coal. It is bad enough that people are losing their jobs, stop the war or we will be discussing people losing their lives due to the collapse of healthcare in Wyoming.

In two minutes I cannot discuss the full weight of what I am discussing. But to those that are pushing for the war on coal, understand that I believe that all stakeholders in this discussion can win. It does not have to be one winner and one loser. I believe if you spent a day with one of the great environmental engineers in charge of reclamation, you would understand that the coal mines have a vision of not only maintaining the environment but improving it. If you would spend a day, with an open mind listening to the impacts of coal and coal fired power plants, you would learn that there is truth in clean coal. If you would be able to fast forward 10 years, you would realize that the unintentional consequences of the war on coal are enormous and reflect a future that none of us want.

My city, my county and my state does not want to be a political football. We want to work hard, raise our families and live life to the fullest. Please stop this war on coal and allow Wyoming to be Wyoming.

Thank you.