

Thank you all for staying. Everybody up here hasn't gone, thank you guys for staying too. My name is Jenny Nell. I'm director of the Salvation Army in Gillette. I'm here to speak on behalf of my organization and other human service nonprofits in Campbell County. Every day I see firsthand the problems coal families are facing with the recent layoffs and energy industry slowdown. Over the last ten years the coal miners and coal companies have been very generous to the Salvation Army and have donated nearly 30 percent of our annual operating budget. This year is very different. Instead of giving to us, the coal families affected by the layoffs and slowdowns have had to come and ask for help, a very difficult thing when you're used to being independent. Our donations are down 60 percent year to date, and our requests for assistance are up by over 100 percent. Now anybody who knows finances knows I'm in big trouble. Good news, we have good reserves because the coal companies have been so generous to us year over year, allowing us to keep these reserves for an emergency, and this is our emergency. We don't get tornadoes, floods, firestorms. We don't get that in Gillette, but this is what we got. So this is how we are using our reserves as an organization to help these families. The primary purpose of our service unit is to prevent people from becoming homeless as well as keeping their utilities on. This winter we had a record number of requests for both housing and utility assistance, and they're still coming in every day. Typically, our organization provides assistance to nearly 950 families each year. Already in just the first six months of our fiscal year, we've served over 1,000 families, and all of them qualified at or below the national poverty level. That's frightening if you think about it. The whole community has been affected. Businesses and individuals are leaving the county and the state looking for a way to provide for their families. We have empty buildings on Main Street. Restaurants are deserted, and there are hundreds and hundreds of homes for sale wherever you look. The trickle-down effect on nonprofits that support our families and provide much needed therapies and health services as well as food and shelter is leaving the citizens of our community in danger of being unsupported. We can not afford any more taxes or royalties on coal, or we may not survive. Just last week, the Salvation Army unit in Laramie that had been open for 27 years had to close due to

lack of resources. You think about that. A Salvation Army thrift store, you know, they're everywhere; right? And you say it's a stable member of each community, but they had to close. So please finish up those leases so we can get some of these families back to work.