

I'm Penny Russell. I work for Cloud Peak. I'm a wife, a mom, a grandma. I'm one of approximately 15,000 people employed in this community in the coal industry, and I'm also one of the 11,000 facing layoffs. I want to offer you my unique perspective on the proposed changes to the coal mining business. The energy sector as a whole has taken quite a beating over the past years, primarily due to a combination of foreign influence and internal regulations. I was raised in a family heavily involved in the energy business with both my father and grandfather devoting their lives to helping this country rely less on foreign oil, but this isn't what we want to focus on. Instead, I'd rather share with you what I learned working almost 20 years in the retail world before joining Cordero 11 years ago. I'm not going to present a lot of stats and numbers. There's plenty of that information readily available. I simply want to explain what these changes will mean to me, my family, our community, our state. It is so important for everyone to understand that it's not 11,000 people losing a job. It's 11,000 families losing their main source of income, their hopes, their dreams. This will also impact and have the result of loss of homes, family stability, and self-esteem. I've seen first-hand in the retail business how the flux in the energy business forced people to move away from fresh produce and meat to hamburger and canned vegetables until even that was unaffordable. It was bologna and bread and on to food stamps. I watched vendors cut their deliveries from three times a week to two to one. I saw smaller vendors lose their routes. I saw mom-and-pop businesses go under, wiping out the dreams of their owners as their business failed. Families were forced to abandon homes, turning them back to the banks. Smaller banks failed. I saw my own hours go from 40 to 30 to 20, but knew I was lucky I still had a job. My job at Cordero not only helps provide for myself and my husband, it also helps our five grown children and their families. Kids run short. Many of us in this industry help our parents, children, grandchildren, and neighbors. At Cordero, we adopt families at Christmastime. We don't just provide a meal or gift card. We do everything -- food, clothes, shoes, coats, school supplies and toys. We do this as a crew with our own money and on our own time. These changes will ripple throughout this entire community and our state, but the impact won't stop there. I don't want to be forced into a welfare state. However, the likelihood of that appears to be

waning. We just want to live our lives and pay our bills without asking for government assistance. The truly sad part of this is we will lose everything for no valid reason. If you feel we are too ignorant to understand the importance of our environment and renewable energy hope, you're sadly mistaken. We are smart enough to realize that every precaution is being taken to preserve our environment throughout the energy industry as we pool and utilize the only sources that can currently meet the requirements of our society. Thank you.