June 23, 2016

Coal Programmatic EIS Scoping
Bureau of Land Management
20 M Street Southeast, 2134 LM
Washington, D.C. 20003

To Whom it May Concern,

I oppose the ongoing campaign to mislead the American people on coal, and the Obama administration's unceasing efforts to drive up rates with back-door taxes on electricity. The current federal coal leasing program pays extraordinary dividends to the American people. Further, the value of coal to the American people isn't just royalty revenue – the value of high paying jobs and reliable, affordable energy has to be taken into account as well.

Increases in coal prices induced by higher royalty rates will flow through to the electricity market due to reduced production on federal lands. The states that rely on coal for the bulk of electric generation consistently enjoy lower electricity rates. Whatever incremental revenue the Department believes it will obtain from increasing the coal royalty rate will be at the expense of American businesses and families paying higher utility bills.

The federal coal program has generated tens of billions of dollars of value for the American people in recent decades and additional billions of dollars for Colorado state and local governments and school districts, to the benefit of all the state's citizens.

It's simple: I oppose new taxes that will only serve to drive coal further to the edge, will deprive public schools of an important source of revenue from federal leases, and ultimately increase electricity rates for hard working families.

Respectfully,

Jerald Bouwens