

MS. BRUCKNER: Thank you for hearing us and listening today. My name is Kristi Disney Bruckner. And I'm the Executive Director of Sustainable Development Strategies Group. SDSG is a Colorado-based nonprofit organization that works on local, national, and international levels with companies, communities, and governments to address the enormous challenges and opportunities of using natural resource endowments to promote sustainable, social, and economic development. SDSG, together with the Mountain Pact, has recently published a report called Planning for the Economic Future of Colorado's Coal Communities. It's available at www.sdsg.org. My testimony will focus on one aspect of this report -- the need to involve local community stakeholders in long-term planning structures, particularly in planning strategies to manage economic transition at the end of the life of a mine. And all mines do, at some point, come to an end. SDSG is an accredited validator for the extractive industry's transparency initiative and also conducts assessments for governments under the intergovernmental forum on mining minerals, metals, and sustainable developments. These initiatives work toward greater transparency of revenue in the mineral sector, but also work to maximize social and economic benefits that may result from the wealth created by the sector. We've learned many lessons through this and other work. But, some of the key themes include the following. First, social and economic planning must be integrated into the mine permitting process and should include ongoing consultation with local community stakeholders. Social and economic impacts must be addressed on the same level as environmental impacts and should be part of an integrated environmental and social impact assessment and management plan. Second, community stakeholders must be consulted in the development of mine closure plans and activities. Mine closure planning should begin early in the life of the mine and should include plans for post-closure economic transition for mining communities. Third, government revenue for mining is optimized when managed at the local level by multi-stakeholder Boards with expenditures based on long-term objectives and ongoing consultation with local communities. Several examples of these local models may be found in our report, available at sdsg.org. Thank you again for hearing us.