

MR. MORRIS: My name is Doug Mork. And I'm the Executive Director in Interfaith Worker Justice, a national network with 60 local affiliates coast-to-coast, including two here in Colorado. Our organization began 20 years ago, partly as a result of the experiences of clergy and faith leaders standing with workers during the Pittston [phonetic] coal strike. Our mission ever since has been to organize communities of faith to stand with workers in the fight for dignity and justice on the job. We believe that working people have the right to make decent wages, have access to low-cost healthcare, and have every opportunity to raise a family and retire with dignity. Unfortunately, of course, Pittston was not the last time coal companies put profits ahead of the dignity and fair treatment of miners of quality healthcare and good pensions for retirees. Much more recently, workers at companies like Peabody Arch and Alpha have experienced the greed of their corporate executive teams who extracted \$186 million in stock options and bonuses from their companies just a few years prior to filing bankruptcy. The plans continued to be known to, to all of us, I guess, to lay off -- continue to lay off many and slash retiree benefits. It's a familiar story. Time and again, some of our largest coal companies have proved they care very little for their workers. Coal companies not only bear an ethical responsibility to their workers through fair royalties and taxes, they're responsible to entire communities, to those who depend on good infrastructure, quality schools, safe communities, and so much more. Well, I'm sure there are better and worse players in this industry, like any other. This industry as a whole has certainly not proved itself worthy of public trust. With that in mind, IWJ applauds the BLM for holding this hearing this hearing and taking steps to reform the Federal Coal Program. We call on the Bureau of Land Management to take bold action and investigate whether workers, taxpayers, and local communities are getting a fair return from these resources. We call on the BLM to find new ways to hold coal companies accountable to the miners, to their workers, to make sure that promises made are kept. Finally, we call on the BLM and the Federal government as a whole to pay special attention to good, living wage, to jobs in the communities' hardest hit by the inevitable changes in this industry. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.