

PATRICK GREENTER: Hello, my name is Patrick Greenter. I'm the Executive Director of Center for Coalfield Justice. I will be the first person to say "ditto." So many people have come up and spoke on issues that I think are important. Particularly, I want to echo statements made by people for frontline communities. The Center for Coalfield Justice works primarily in southwestern Pennsylvania, Washington. We are an environmental justice organization that work on issues primarily related to underground coal mining and hydraulic fracturing. Washington and Greene Counties are communities where almost no one owns the rights to their coal. Greene County just in the past couple years was the third largest coal-producing county in the country, home to the largest underground coal mine in the country. These are frontline communities directly impacted by coal every single day for people who live there. So not having the rights to their coal means so many people are forced to live with the harms of the coal industry, destroyed streams, displaced communities, reduced tax base, destroyed property values. These are facts of lives for people who have to live in and around coal. Now, we, as American taxpayers, have an opportunity here with the BLM to reform this coal program and to change the view. If we do decide to continue leasing, I think there is a serious examination, particularly given that there is a 20 year backlog of leases to eliminate future coal lease entirely, particularly if we are truthful in our concern about climate change. If we do decide to continue coal leasing, there must be increased royalties. Coal companies should have to pay the full cost of their activities. There is no such thing as affordable, cheap coal. The question is who pays for it? What we have seen all too often is communities living in and around coal are forced to pay for that cleanup or forced to pay for the activities of coal through health costs and other activities like that. What we have seen is those liabilities and external costs of coal are internalized on companies, they cannot compete with renewables, and this process is just slowing the effect the transition in the economy, which is essential for our country's future. Thank you.