

KELSEY BERG: Good morning. My name is Kelsey Berg. I'm the Energy and Natural Resource Advisor to Congressman Jason Chaffetz, representing Utah's Third Congressional District. Thank you Jenna, Linda, and Al for being here, for the opportunity to comment, and, Al, it's a pleasure to meet you in person. We've talked on the phone very much, so it's nice to meet you. So I will read the following statement on behalf of the Congressman who wishes he could be here himself. "Thank you for the opportunity to address all of you this morning as the Department of Interior tries to determine the scope of their comprehensive review of the Federal Coal Program. Unfortunately, I am disappointed that this meeting is not being held closer to those potentially most affected by proposed changes to the program. That is why I expressed my concerns along with the rest of the Utah House delegation in a recent letter to BLM Director Neil Kornze requesting that the meeting be moved to Price, Utah, closer to the real voices the Bureau should be listening to. As you work to identify and evaluate potential reforms to the Federal Coal Program, I encourage the Bureau to look first at its benefits, specifically the revenues that are generated for states and the federal government, the good paying family wage job, and the overall economic benefits to our Utah communities, all of which could be easily lost if wholesale changes are made to the program and the tenets of the "Keep it in the ground" movement are adopted by this administration. As a chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, I certainly understand the need to look at existing programs. Unfortunately, bowing to political pressure and looking for problems where they do not exist is tantamount to a witch hunt. I strongly encourage the Bureau to be fair and impartial to their view of the Federal Coal Program. Thank you for your time, Congressman Jason Chaffetz."