

MR. GILGEN: As we look at the number of yellow T-shirts worn by the advocates of the coal mining industry in attendance at this meeting today and as we realize the amount of money that is generated and is used to influence politics, we realize the power of the fossil fuel industry.

Nonetheless, as the Preamble of our Constitution states, the purpose was to provide for the common defense and promote the general welfare for ourselves and our posterity. And although our forefathers who drafted that Preamble had no idea of the issue of climate change, nonetheless, the science is telling us that climate change is a threat to the general welfare, not just to this nation but to the world. And since our government is charged with the responsibility to defend us from those threats, therefore, we must use the knowledge that science is giving us to protect us from the predicted calamity that will result if we continue in our businesses as usual of spewing billions of tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere of this planet each year. Realize that every ton of coal burned emits three tons of carbon dioxide. The fossil fuel industry and our political leaders that seek the votes of those employed therein contend that the science of climate change is not settled. However, the evidence suggests otherwise, the climate scientists of NOAA and NASA, the EPA, the scientists at the National Academy of Scientists, the scientists that advise the US military and the insurance industry. In fact, every science organization and scientific union in the world has issued policy statements confirming their conviction that the threat of climate change is real, ominous, and is the consequence of burning fossil fuels. All of our universities with atmospheric sciences departments are teaching their students the reality and danger of climate change, but we need not depend on such statements, for we can now observe in this world as we are real life spectators of the consequences of that warming world. It is not just a coincidence that the ice is melting at an abnormal rate. It is not just a coincidence that the oceans are rising and the temperatures of that rise are causing the coral to bleach. It's not a coincidence that our forests are dying as a result of the pine beetle. So we need to do something to protect this planet. And I ask the BLM to take that into consideration. Thank you.