

MS. ROSSI: Hi, my name is Ericka Rossi. I'm here today as a pastor who is concerned for the physical health of people, our earth, and our political system. It is important that we are good stewards of what we have and that we use it for the good of all. My parents had to leave this beautiful state because the air was too unhealthy for my father. I know personally of many other people who suffered the same ill effect and cannot stay in the community they love. Others have shared with me that they have been continually ill for months when the air is bad. My husband was one of those people. He finally got well because he went on a long business trip away from the air here. According to information I have received, toxic coal mined from our public lands and burned in Utah's coal fire plants -- power plants have significantly affected the health of many people. The Hunter and Huntington coal-fired power plants are responsible for 40 percent of all of our state's dangerous haze causing nitrogen oxide pollution from the electricity sector. According to the Clean Air Task Force, pollution from the plants contributes to 11 premature deaths and 233 asthma attacks every year. This does not include people like my parents who simply had to leave the home they loved and their families and friends. God has called us to be good caretakers of all creation. The unintended effects of the coal mining process has created an illness in our earth. We need to act on being better stewards now before we and our children are too sick to stay here and we have polluted our beautiful skies to the point that no one will come and share in these wondrous spaces we used to enjoy so much. Last time I was in Moab, I was so distressed to see a brown haze over the beautiful landscape. What happened to the fresh air we once had? I honor the fact that coal mining has created many jobs and that families of the miners will be affected if the mines close. It would just make good business sense to create clean energy jobs for these same wonderful people. I believe we live in a time when we have the means to clean up our destruction. Please, let's do it together. Let's not waste another minute. Let's do it right now. Thank you for giving me a voice today and everyone who has spoken. I promise to do all I can to be a good steward of this beautiful earth. Thank you.

(Applause.)