

MS. ST. JOAN: Hello, my name is Sharon St. Joan. Thank you to the Department of the Interior for this hearing and for the three-year moratorium on new coal on public lands. There is a workable solution that can work for all of us. There are two ways to move forward to the future. One is to close our eyes. And if we do that, we risk falling off a cliff. The other way is to go forward with our eyes open so that we can be surefooted and clear about where we are going. We need to move to a world beyond coal. Planning for the future means creating good jobs in the clean energy sector. All of us drive cars, we heat and cool our houses, we fly in airplanes, and we elect the leaders responsible for our current energy policies. A clean energy future must include a just transition for workers who have worked hard to provide the energy that has sustained our way of life. How can we afford to invest in clean energy by cutting out subsidies to the fossil fuel industry estimated at \$20 billion a year? We can invest in a just transition on two fronts. First, programs to renew clean, healthy, good-paying jobs, for retraining and assistance for workers and their families. Secondly, we really need to invest in clean energy, especially solar and geothermal. Clean energy is already here and it is working well. This is the energy of the future and these are the jobs of the future. Coal is the energy of the past. We are now seeing the largest coal companies go bankrupt, Alpha, Arch Coal. And just last month, in April, the largest US coal company Peabody filed for bankruptcy. According to a Bloomberg news study, the value of US coal shares declined 83 percent in the four years from 2011 to 2015. That's a decline of 83 percent. A coal future is a mirage shimmering in the distance and soon to vanish. We need to be ready

for the future or the end of fossil fuels will come suddenly and we will not be ready. This would be a big blow to our lives, to the jobs of coal workers, and to our economy. Investing in clean energy, along with the rebuilding of America's crumbling bridges and roads, will lift our economy out of the doldrums. It may even bring about an economic boom.

I live in Kane County. Utah has some of the most beautiful wildlands in the entire world. Kane County is surrounded by national parks. Our economy in Kane County depends on tourism. Jobs depend on attracting tourists to the beauty of our wildlands.

Three million tourists visit Zions National Park every year. No tourists will travel to visit coal mines.

The Alton Coal Mine lies just ten miles south of Bryce. And for 20 years, we have watched the destructive effects, the destruction of the wildlands, the destruction of Kanab Creek. So that coal mine must not be allowed to expand under 3,000 acres of our public lands.

And I have more to say, but I will conclude with that. Thank you.