

MR. SWAPP: My name is Spencer Swapp. I'm a coal miner from Central Utah. I've been mining coal for approximately two and a half years. Since I am relatively new in the industry, I'm shocked at all the accusations that I hear from the environmental groups and our Federal Government that are completely false. If these people would actually take the time to do research and look at things unbiased and go off from facts, not rhetoric that's politically correct, they might actually see that our objective is not to destroy the planet and rip off concerned taxpayers. This public meeting is about concerns that have been raised about the federal coal program. The two concerns are, No. 1, taxpayers do not receive a fair return from the development of these publicly-owned resources; and, No. 2, concerns about reducing greenhouse gas emissions to mitigate climate change. To evaluate this, they want a three-year moratorium on the federal leasing program. In 2001 through 2004, I was a city councilman in a small town of Fairview, Utah. Small towns do not generate a lot of taxes due to low population and minimal businesses. To generate revenue, we would buy power wholesale and sell it to the citizens at retail. When we bought power, the cheapest power was coal. When we were unable to purchase power from coal plants due to maintenance or other issues, we had to use other sources that were not as cheap. Because of this, the citizens of Fairview paid more for their power. I can only imagine how costly it would be if there was no coal. Here's a horrible scenario. Let's say the Federal Government puts their taxes so high that the leases are not cost effective. No profits equals no coal mines. No coal mines means no coal power plants. No coal power plants equals much, much, much higher power bills. This means everyone in this room will pay higher power bills, including the environmentalists. I think this is a more true example of citizens not being able to get a fair

return from the development of these publicly-owned resources.

Now let's look at the environmental impact that coal supposedly has on the environment. The reality is that almost every aspect of climate science is the subject of vigorous debate. Climate change is a nonlinear process, some parts of which are only dimly or not at all understood. No computer model will ever be able to make an accurate prediction of climate 100 years from now, let alone next week.

If we're able to make drastic decisions that affect all, let's have facts, not political propaganda that will hurt the economy and the American way of life.

From what I have personally experienced being a coal miner, the mining industry takes environmental issues very seriously. Mining has been overregulated more than almost any other industry, yet countries like China have no regulations and do basically what they want. It is very difficult to compete with a global market when we are governed so aggressively. Please consider the consequences of these hearings. The impact on energy has taken a beating over the last seven and a half years and America needs to be less dependent on foreign energy, not more dependent.