

PAUL ZUEKERMAN: Good morning. Paul Zuekerman. I represent myself, an avid breather of air. I would also like to thank TJ and James, my new friends in the coal industry, for just having a respectful conversation with me this morning regarding their viewpoints and letting me share mine in a respectful exchange. For whatever reason you might conjecture, my state has decided fossil fuels are still the energy source of the future. This as is well-known by now is refuted by scientists, Wall Street investors, world leaders, a majority of citizens Utah, and even many coal companies that have had to close operations or reduce staff. Utahns know that our air is some of the most polluted nationwide. They know that fossil fuels were created by the sun but are transformed into something quite lethal when ignited. So why would we not choose to capture the sun directly and in its cleanest form? The answer is that change is hard, hard for miners' families trying to make a living in the boom and mostly bust industry, hard for politicians beholden to fossil fuel interests and hard for power generating companies' bottom lines. They perceive moving toward solar means cutting out of the middlemen and slowing economic growth. In spite of this challenge, individual business owners, homeowners and even tax-supported agencies are pioneering the installation of solar panels. They have decided that a roof is a terrible thing to waste, but here in Utah, energy suppliers and state legislatures persist in making it difficult for solar to compete on a level playing field. I realize a conversion to solar can't happen instantly, but if we don't start making strides, that may not happen soon enough. Every new coal lease is like our state earmarking money for building another new highway when they profess to encourage the use of public transit. Our leaders are sending a mixed message about what direction the energy plan is committed to. Federal impact funds designated for support of Utah communities impacted about the boom-and-bust cycle of fossil fuel or more recently siphoned off for a coal port should instead be allocated back to those communities to train workers to be at the forefront of the solar field. We must incentivize utility companies to build and maintain solar farms and a metering grid that moves energy efficiently where it is needed and to improve the cost to consumers, and those utilities should be regulated and situated to make a profit befitting a legal monopoly. In short, we must make greater strides toward moving solar to its logical place as a prominent form of energy in Utah and relegate coal to the rank of alternative source. Coal and oil can serve as a bridge fuel that gets us to greater solar

implementation. Today you can further that progress by granting no additional coal leases on the nation's public lands here in Utah. Thank you.