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1 into a pit of reliance when we should be spending every
2 effort to ascend out of the pit we have already dug into
3 a clean and sustainable future. Thank you.

4 MR. BATTIS: Thank you. We appreciate
5 young adults providing testimony. Thank you.

6 Sir?

7 MR. GAREY: Thank you. My name is
8 Steve Garey. I'm a retired past president of the United
9 Steelworkers Local 12-591 in Mount Vernon, Washington,
10 where I represented refinery workers. I'm currently
11 serving in retirement as an executive board member of the
12 Washington state BlueGreen Alliance. I want to thank you
13 for this opportunity to provide comments in the scoping
14 process.

15 The current coal leasing program is broken and it
16 needs updating. The current program does not reflect
17 modern markets or environmental realities. It is not
18 fair for taxpayers, nor does it account properly for
19 environmental impacts. For these and other reasons I
20 support the decision to pause leasing until a new program
21 is in place.

22 A new program must be transparent, it must be
23 competitive, and it must be designed to serve the public
24 interest in ways that the current program does not. That
25 interest begins with a fair return for taxpayers and

1 communities for public resources.

2 However, beyond a fair price, public interest is
3 also served when we recognize that a transition to a
4 clean energy economy is underway and that workers and
5 coal communities can be disproportionately harmed and are
6 in fact being harmed by impacts during this transition.

7 Public interest is therefore served by leasing
8 programs that account for and mitigate all of these
9 impacts. The new leasing program should provide funding
10 for complete reclamation and remediation of land that
11 employs local workers as well as job training and all
12 other measures necessary for continued employment.

13 The new program must also provide support for
14 economic diversification, for protecting local tax bases
15 to help ensure adequate funding for local governments,
16 education, and other necessary services.

17 There is not enough time to list the impacts related
18 to environmental harm. They must be accounted for as
19 well, and so a fair price for taxpayers must reflect all
20 of these costs associated with the extraction of coal
21 from public lands.

22 Again, I thank the Bureau, the Department for your
23 work to enact a leasing program that truly benefits the
24 public interest. Thank you.

25 MR. ADAMS: Good afternoon. And thank