

**Byers & Anderson Court Reporters/Video/Videoconferencing
Seattle/Tacoma, Washington**

1 the science very carefully, we've got all the means to
2 get off of the fossil fuel habit. It's just time to do
3 it and we have to do it fast because the window of
4 opportunity to prevent disaster is closing rapidly.
5 Thank you.

6 DR. SOMAN: Hi. Thanks for coming to
7 Seattle. I'm Michael Soman. I'm a physician. I'm a
8 member of Washington Physicians for Social
9 Responsibility; there's 800 of us. I also have a
10 graduate degree in public health. And until recently I
11 was the president of Group Health Physicians, so that's a
12 thousand physicians caring for nearly 450,000
13 Washingtonians, so I take public health really seriously.

14 And I would urge you to invoke a creed, and I'm
15 telling you as a physician, as a grandfather, but this is
16 an old creed that's supposed to guide all health care
17 professionals. And that is: First do no harm.

18 I'm delighted that the Department of Interior
19 created this temporary moratorium. I think that was
20 enlightened and wonderful on new coal leases and that's
21 especially true in light of what I know to be true about
22 health impacts of coal which I'll get to in a minute.

23 I want to say, though, that really this commitment
24 needs to extend to be a permanent moratorium, and that's
25 for the good of our people, our communities and our

1 planet. Though its role is declining, this has been
2 discussed today, coal is still very impactful. In 2012
3 it was a quarter of all U.S. greenhouse gas emissions.
4 It's also well known in health care that coal pollutants
5 affect all major body systems, and in fact, contribute to
6 four of the five leading causes of American death, so
7 that would be heart disease, cancer, stroke and chronic
8 respiratory disease, including asthma. So coal's a big
9 bad player.

10 Coal mining itself has led U.S. industries in fatal
11 injuries and debilitating illnesses for quite a while,
12 including permanent lung damage. I've personally cared
13 for people with black lung, which is horrible, partly
14 because it's entirely preventable as well as being
15 devastating.

16 Communities near coal operations can be impacted and
17 have been by the effects of blasting, collapse of
18 abandoned mines, toxic exposures from dust, soil erosion,
19 destruction of forests, flood-related injury and death,
20 and contamination of water supplies by toxic residues
21 that have threatened human health at dozens of sites.

22 From an environmental perspective, you've got acid
23 mine drainage contaminating creeks and rivers and
24 mountaintop mining leading to sediment and waste-filling
25 valleys and degrading water quality.

1 None of this, though, is the Big Kahuna. The most
2 alarming thing is around climate change. So the highly
3 respected British medical journal, The Lancet last year
4 had their whole issue and the cover was that global
5 climate change is the largest public health challenge of
6 the 21st century.

7 Besides having the highest carbon content of all
8 fossil fuels, coal mining also results in the release of
9 methane which has 23 times higher than CO2.

10 Last comment, Dr. Jonas Salk, polio vaccine pioneer,
11 he had a great quote. "Our greatest obligation is to be
12 good ancestors."

13 So I'm speaking for 800 health care professionals
14 and as a grandfather urging you to make this moratorium
15 permanent. Thank you.

16 MS. ALMOSLINO: Good afternoon. My
17 name is Laurie Almoslino. I am a business owner, a
18 mother, a grandmother, and a member of Congregation Beth
19 Shalom and the religious -- the environmental community.

20 At the Paris climate conference in December of 2015,
21 195 countries agreed to a goal of limiting global warming
22 to well below 2 degrees centigrade, preferably 1.5
23 degrees centigrade.

24 I salute Secretary Jewell, the Department of the
25 Interior, and the Bureau of Land Management for starting