

October 6, 2012

To The Honorable Judge Shelley C. Chapman:

I would like to introduce myself, I am a 76 year old coal miner. I have raised three children and I have never beat a man out of a dollar. I have worked 30 years and two months with the United Mine Workers in the coal mines and I have earned my health care. And all miners have worked and earned their healthcare. Peabody and Arch coal of Missouri helped to conspired to start this satellite company of Patriot coal and put all their union members over on to this company called Patriot Coal. This is a shell game that the coal corporations and coal companies have been doing since 1970 to beat their employees out of their earned benefits. In 1985 or 1988, President Ronald Regan and the congress of the United States passed a law that when you were 65 years of age you would go on medicare and medicare pays 80 percent of the medical and the coal companies pay the remaining 20 percent ; this was a payoff for the coal companies supporting Ronald Regan. To clarify this, in 1947 President Harry Truman, in order to get the miners back to work who were on strike, promised if the miners went back to work they would get their benefits back. This has been challenged for years in the court system to chip away at our benefits. The mining industry and the coal miners have had to fight for everything they have and it has been bought with sweat , tears, and blood. Your Honor, the United Mine Workers cannot stand for another hard lick of having benefits chipped away. If this happens the word and the promise of the US government is not worth a hill of beans. And I hope that this decision is rendered by the rule of law and what laws have been passed that are on the books and the United Mine Worker s and coal miners are holding onto President Harry Truman's promise. I hope this opinion is based on the merits of the law and compassion. Besides, I know someone has to want to be the one to sleep at night knowing they have finally done right by workers who have worked for what was promised to them.

Respectfully Yours,

*Zephie Runyon*

Retired United Mine Worker, Zephie Runyon

