

Oct. 9, 2012

Dear Honorable Judge Chapman,

I am a retired miner who worked at Peabody 32 years. At one time it was a good place to work. Then it seemed like profits were uppermost, safety was not as great. But we were loyal - most of us just worked through injuries and didn't even report them. Now that I might need a knee replacement for the knee I injured at work, Peabody doesn't want to live up to its promise - the promise of health care that we took lower wages for and worked long hours making Peabody the #1 energy company in the world, making record profits selling coal overseas, etc. (Per Evansville Courier & Press)

My brother-in-law also worked for a Peabody mine that was shut down to go non-union (when did that become legal). He had his first symptom of an ALS-type disease the month it shut down (and he turned age 54). Through his last heart-breaking four years, he said the one thing he was thankful for and that kept him going, besides his faith in God, was his health care. He didn't abuse it - he never even went to the hospital until 4 days before his death. The disease could've

been caused by the hundreds of thousands of gallons of toxic waste dumped there by Peabody's partner at that mine. Barnes Hospital told my brother-in-law that the type disease he had was 92% caused environmentally and he and many others were exposed to those toxins. Now Peabody wants to take his widow's pension and health care.

I breathed dust every day so bad that a Federal man running a test accused ~~me~~ me of lying and messing his test up on purpose. I knew personally the 3 men who died on the job at Lynnville Mine while I worked there, and the horrible deaths they went through. Now, Peabody says they can't afford their widows (or anyone else's) pension and healthcare on the record 8 billion in profits they made last year.

Please don't let them lower themselves to the standards of ~~no~~ no accountability, no caring, no promises kept, and lying by putting miners into a "fake company" of no profitability while our real employer is still making huge profits. Is it really back to a hundred or 70 years ago when miners had few rights and the coal barons ruled. My injured and sick friends

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and I sure hope not. There's a lot
of us who won't be able to keep our
homes or afford high premiums now at our
ages and health problems. I pray Peabody!
"Patriot" is not allowed to play with peoples'
lives - the very people who made them #1.

I thank you for all your help.

Donald Okes