

October 10, 2012

The Honorable Shelley Chapman,

I am writing you in regards of Dewey Willis, and to share why I feel he needs his medical benefits. First, I am Sarah Hobbs his daughter, and I hope you will take the time to consider your decision, because I know it will affect other family too.

I have watched my dad growing up go to work not only when he felt good, but at times he was so sick that he could barely move, but yet he would get up and go to work. He is a hard worker, and has morals and believes that the job should be done right, and if you are in charge of that job then you must finish it.

Around 1957 my father was knocked off a shovel, and fell 17ft onto a pile of coal, and was bruised on his whole backside, which he begin to start having kidney trouble after this occurred. He went to work very sick for a long time, and seen several doctors that couldn't figure out why he was so sick, and it took them seeing a specialist in Saint Louise to find out he had Kidney Cancer, and it was a long battle but he survived that, and without the medical benefits that were provided he wouldn't of been able to receive the care that was needed to allow him to survive. This was the first sign of cancer, and we have no proof but the machines that he was required to work on for year's can cause cancer. In 2005 he was diagnosed with Leukemia, and that is not a curable cancer, but one that he will have to deal with the rest of his life. He has already had to go through a round of chemotherapy. He has paid the ultimate price. He has given his life for his company Peabody Coal. Not only does he live with cancer, but he was injured on the job when a chain came through a safety hook, and caused the safety ring to break which caused a snatch block to swing down, and hit him in the head, and that caused him to fall back onto an air compressor jamming an C clap into his shoulder, and caused a concussion, and has found out that a damaged nerve in his brain, and a shoulder injury that he still deals with today. I don't feel the company dealt with this correctly due to the fact they didn't even drive him to the Hospital, and had to drive himself to be treated. He has been to several doctors through the years due to this injury. The Company would not allow him to retire so he just had to work until he no longer was able to climb onto the scrapper, and by this time they were starting to shut the mine down, and then they allowed him to retire, and get on disability. This company took a lot from my father through the years, and so I am asking please don't allow them to take his benefits that will be needed to care for him in the future, because ultimately they will be needed.

Also, the benefits allow care for his wife, and my mother. She has been through a lot these past six years. We had breast cancer, stroke, and has survived due to all the care received through the doctors. They would be broke if not for insurance that was provided by the company. I do realize these are benefits are provided by the company, but even though they are struggling as a company I don't feel that they should be allowed to take benefits from the employee's that have given them their lives, and the wives who had to stand by them through the years. Several have already passed on due to health, and cancer.

Coal Mining is hard on your health, but we still need them to get our country out of the mess we are currently in. So please allow us to keep our benefits so we can fight for our lives.

I have enclosed a picture of my father, and this was about four weeks after his head injury.

Also, I am willing to travel if needed to testify in behalf of my father.

Sincerely,

Sarah Hobbs and Dewey Willis