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U.S. BANKRUPTCY COURT,
EASTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

January 14, 2013

The Honorable Kathy A. Surratt - States

My name is Carol Sue Smith and I am writing in regards to the Patriot Coal Corporation bankruptcy and the efforts they are taking to destroy their obligations and promises made to their UMWNA retirees, widows, their dependents as well as their actual employees.

My husband, W. Jimmy Smith, his brother and his father, now deceased, have worked in the coal industry most of their lives. They were dedicated employees and took pride in their work determined to fulfill their obligations so the coal companies could prosper. It was their dream to reach retirement age and to be able to feel secure the rest of their lives.

Now, we are devastated as thousands of other families that our security may be gone. It is so unfair that we have reached retirement age when we need the benefits the most and Patriot is trying to strip them away. Most miners are too old or unable to work at any other job to be able to receive any benefits. Many miners have suffered ill effects from working in the coal fields as well as some have given their lives. Yes, it was their choice, but at the time it was the best choice. My husband along with thousands of other miners were respected for their work. They stood up for each other in times of hardships and your word meant something. What about the respect and consideration that Patriot owes to their retirees and their families?

Bankruptcy occurs when there are no other alternatives. These men have made money for Patriot and now they are trying to shed themselves of their obligations to these men. There has to be another solution that will benefit everyone. This action will impose an undeserving hardship. If many are in our position it will be hard to survive. My husband is disabled and unable to work anywhere. I am at an age that I could not get a job that paid enough to afford our prescriptions let alone pay other bills. I am on three prescribed medications and my husband is on fourteen. He has had a heart attack requiring heart surgery, is a diabetic, has lost most of his hearing and has had a knee replacement and is in need of another knee replacement. I could go on and on regarding our health needs, but it probably doesn't matter. I do know my husband, his father and brother gave the best years of their lives to work as a miner with the expectation of being rewarded with a good retirement. It is very frightening to imagine how we will survive.

Judge, I don't know how close you are to retirement, but if you could for a moment consider being there, looking forward to not having to work, being your own boss or being able to afford to visit your grandchildren then all at once it's gone. You are now getting old and in poor health with know where to turn. This is suppose to be our golden years. Will it come to a choice of having to sell everything we have worked for just to be able to pay for prescriptions? Will we be left to

struggle while Patriot prospers and making promises to other young miners? Where is there justice in letting them destroy our security and peace of mind?

Please, it is with all my dignity that I ask you to reach deep into your heart and mind and help the miners and their families. Please make the right decision to help them keep what is rightfully theirs.

May God Bless You!

Thank you,
Carol Lee Smith
696 Ashley Lane
Summersville, WV 26451

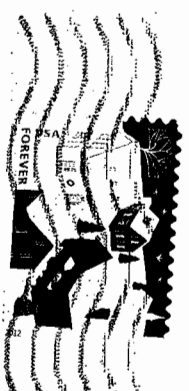
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