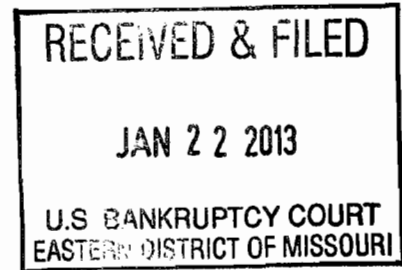


**Gary A. Roark**  
**P. O. Box 716**  
**Coal City, WV 25823**  
**304-683-4603**

January 16, 2013

The Honorable Kathy A. Suratt-States  
Thomas F. Eagleton U. S. Courthouse  
111 South 10<sup>th</sup> Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
St. Louis, MO 63102

Re: Case No. 12-51502



Honorable Judge:

I am a twenty-nine year veteran of the mining industry who was forced to retired because of advanced degenerative disc and degenerative joint disease. I will be directly impacted by any decision you render in the above captioned case.

When I first joined the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), our contracts were negotiated every three years. Later, at the coal companies' urging, that was extended to five years to help bring more stability to the mining industry.

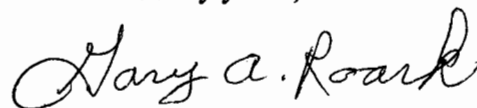
Before each contract was negotiated, each UMWA Local Union would hold a pre-negotiation meeting to get input from all rank and file miners. Inevitably, the younger miners would push for a higher per hour pay scale, while middle aged and older miners would push for less pay increase per hour, but improved health and retirement benefits, especially post retirement health coverage. Over my twenty-nine years, millions of dollars of per hour salary was sacrificed by miners and their families to pay for the assurance of life-long health care.

I never held the view that the coal companies were paying for our health care, but were merely caretakers of the money we forfeited each contract in pay per hour. This was a trust or contract we as individual miners placed in the CEOs and CFOs of Peabody, Arch and, later, Patriot Coal. The current managers of these coal companies took a page directly from the Hedge Fund Brokers who bundled mortgages and then resold them and walked away with millions in their pockets, resulting in many homeless families.

Your Honor, I urge you to not let these coal companies leave us without promised health care that we truly earned and paid for, while Peabody, Arch and Patriot break their promise and line their pockets with our benefit money.

I served honorably with the United States Air Force in Viet Nam, and later I worked ten years in law enforcement, reaching the rank of Detective. I truly believe that a man's or company's word is the most precious thing they own.

Sincerely yours,

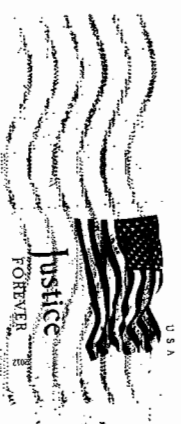


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St. Louis, MO 63102



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