

January 15, 2013

Dear Judge Surratt-States,

I'm not good at writing but I feel it is necessary to tell you my story and how I feel about the possibility of losing the health care benefits for myself and my wife. Benefits which were promised us for the rest of our lives.

I started working in a grocery store when I was in 8th grade. I worked there until I graduated. I then enlisted in the US Navy. Thinking life would get better. Instead it was a time of war in Vietnam and people didn't approve of the war so when we arrived home there were no handshakes or the feeling that anyone cared if you came home or not! I was proud to be a Veteran and doing what I thought was right for our country. Being a Veteran did give me the chance to further my education. I got in 3 years at I.S.U. in Terre Haute, IN before I had to get a full time job to support a family. I tried getting a job at the coal mines at this time but they were not hiring. So I followed in my dad's footsteps and went to work at the Naval Warfare Center in Crane, IN. Well I got 6 years in before I got R. I. F. Promises broken again. Being a Veteran I thought I would be there until retirement age!

Luckily I tried the coal mines again and got a job where I could make good money and had benefits to help support my family. I worked as a heavy equipment operator, truck driver, shooter and all these jobs were and still are dangerous. The pay and the benefits made them all worth while. The main reason for anyone working! I thought boy, things are looking great! Well, that didn't last! In the year of 2000 Peabody closed the mine I was working at. Hawthorn Mine in Carlisle, IN. Lucky for me I had enough time and age to get to keep my health insurance and get a small pension. Oh by the way the coal mine they shut down is now up and running under a new name and is a non-union mine, after them telling us the reason for shutting us down was coal was too deep, had a high sulfur content and the EPA said the coal was not very good coal.

I got another job to help with things as my pension wasn't enough to live on and my wife also got a job to help get us through until I could officially retire. We still had our health insurance! So we felt really lucky!

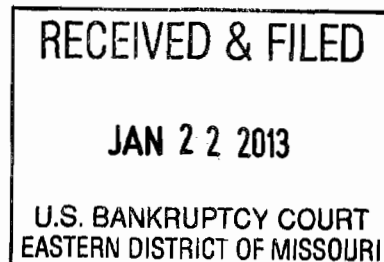
Now they want to take that away from us! We are getting older, living on a fixed income and our health is going downhill so I am asking you to keep in mind, not just me but all the other UMWA workers, retirees and their families who depend on the promises made to them by Peabody Coal Company.

I hope the court realizes how devastating this Patriot Coal Bankruptcy will be on all of UMWA families throughout the Nation's Coal Fields. We must hold them fully responsible for these obligations that were promised to us. Please help us to do that!

Sincerely,



Ron Bugher
UMWA Retiree



Ron & Diana Buehler
PO Box 157
Sandborn, IN 47578

RECEIVED + FILED

2013 JAN 22 AM 10:44

CLERK, US BANKRUPTCY COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI - MR

The Honorable Kathy A. Surratt-States
Re: Case No. 12-51502
Thomas F. Eagleton U.S. Courthouse
111 South 10th Street, 4th Floor
St. Louis, MO 63102

