



Dear Honorable Kathy A. Surratt-States,

I have given great thought to writing to you.....

I thought what good will this do and would you even read my letter? I realize you are a very busy official of the court and you have more important things to do with your time in your daily schedule than read everyone's letters.....but I decided if I didn't write to you, how would you ever know how the outcome of this bankruptcy case would affect us, the families of the everyday worker in the coal mines. I do not want to have any regrets myself if I don't do what I can, and writing to you seems to be my only option at this point.

My deceased husband Kenny worked for Peabody Coal Company for over thirty years, on the sides of the company and the union. Kenny was laid off from Hawthorn Mine in Linton, Indiana when it closed in 2000. Kenny worked in the strip mines in Illinois, Montana, Colorado, and Indiana. He also worked as a consultant for Peabody in Mexico, where he helped set up a stripping machine. Kenny worked hard and gave his all to working for Peabody! He loved that company and was always proud to tell everyone who he worked for.

When Peabody put our healthcare and retirement under Patriot Coal, Kenny said to me "they are going to screw us out of our benefits, just wait and see." Well he was right! Kenny felt this immediately upon being put under Patriot and was very vocal about it to me and many others, but what could he do? What a disappointment this was to him, he never worked one day in his life for Patriot Coal and yet that company would be our demise and Peabody Coal Company could get by doing this to all their loyal employees!

My loving husband, Kenny passed away suddenly April 10, 2010 which left me a widow.....I thought I would have his spouse benefits till the day I died.....but apparently not. Here I am 62 years old; I was a self-employed hairdresser until the day he died.....I was in shock and denial and went through a long grief journey. Through my church and grief classes I have had to find a new normal for my life. Now I am facing this crisis.....no health insurance. My late husband's prediction is becoming a reality! Where can I find a job at my age with health insurance and I have three more years before I can go on Medicare. I am on a fixed income and how can I afford expensive healthcare for myself, especially when they also can take away my meager \$237.45 widows portion of Kenny's union pension check? This situation is going to leave many, many people in financial ruin including myself. And I ask myself, do they care?

Will Peabody and their high salaried executives feel the outcome of this case? I say "No" their paychecks will be deposited every week and they will have health insurance for themselves and their families. Plus the executives will keep receiving their big bonuses. How fair is this?

I hope and pray every day that UMWA retirees, widows and their dependents are able to keep what each of them were promised in their contract after they worked hard for Peabody during their employment years.

I also hope and pray that you are able to listen to all the arguments coming from both sides and you are able to make a fair decision. I realize this is not going to be an easy case; each side has their high profiled lawyers working for their side and each side wants to win. What a shame all the money that is being spent on lawyers, when it should be going to fulfill Peabody's obligation for our healthcare.

God Bless you and Thank You for taking the time to read my letter.

Carla R Lake

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2013 APR -4 AM 10:40

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

The Honorable Kathy A. Swartz - States
Re: Case No. 12-51502
Thomas J. Eggleston 218. Court House
111 South 4th Street, 4th Floor
St. Louis, MO 63102

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