

EXHIBIT 85

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Mine workers union: Patriot's new offer 'a step forward'



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On Friday, **United Mine Workers of America** officials said **Patriot Coal Corp.**'s new proposal that would give the union a 35 percent equity stake in the reorganized coal business is "a step forward by the company."

On Thursday, [Patriot filed the proposal with the bankruptcy court](#) and offered the UMWA a stake in the reorganized coal business that could be monetized to generate "a substantial cash contribution" to the Voluntary Employee Beneficiary Association (VEBA) Trust, which Patriot said is expected to be worth hundreds of millions of dollars. The trust fund would be established to help cover health care costs.

In a statement released Friday, United Mine Workers of America International President [Cecil Roberts](#) said the Section 1114 proposals made by Patriot Coal Thursday with respect to health care for retired miners "appears to be a step forward by the company."

But he also said, "There are still considerable problems with the company's intentions to change the existing contract for active workers under the Section 1113 process. We are nowhere near a fair and just agreement regarding that part of this equation."

Roberts said he believes an agreement can be reached "that provides Patriot with the short-term relief it needs to emerge from bankruptcy, keep people working and become a profitable company again without putting retirees' lives at risk or demanding the deep sacrifices the company says it needs from hourly workers."

Patriot filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection [last July](#). It had assumed most of its legacy liabilities when it was spun off from St. Louis-based Peabody Energy in 2007, and also acquired retiree liabilities when it bought Magnum Coal in 2008. Magnum was comprised of certain former assets of St. Louis-based Arch Coal.

St. Louis-based Patriot (OTC: PCXCQ), led by CEO [Ben Hatfield](#), reported a net loss of \$730.6 million last year on \$1.92 billion in revenue.