

Testimony of Mayor John Fetterman  
Before the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations  
“EPA’s Regulatory Threat to Affordable, Reliable Energy: The Perspective of Coal  
Communities”

My name is John Fetterman and I am the Mayor of Braddock, Pennsylvania. I chose to spend eight hours of driving time, at my own personal expense, to share a few minutes of testimony with you today.

Braddock is a small town on the Monongahela River where both the steel industry and Andrew Carnegie got their start with the founding of the Edgar Thompson steel plant in 1875.

Braddock is hardcore blue collar and the quintessential mill town. So much so, that Hollywood recently filmed a \$40 million dollar movie about life in a mill town starring Christian Bale, Woody Harrelson and Forrest Whitaker that is being released in December.

My community sustained a 90% population loss and is perhaps the poorest community in the commonwealth. There is no one testifying today, or any day, before this body that can outflank Braddock in economic hardship, the importance of good jobs, and the lessons of the free market.

Many of the people speaking today are paid to present you with a false choice; that we as a society must choose between a healthy environment and healthy industry.

As the parents of two children under the age of 5 (and expecting our 3<sup>rd</sup>), my wife and I are grateful the last functioning steel mill in the entire region is in our community. Grateful for the jobs it provides. Grateful for the tax revenue it provides. Grateful for the sense of pride it instills.

However, as parents, we are also grateful for the appropriate environmental controls, safeguards and protections the EPA and other governmental regulations provide.

You see, my family and I live directly across the street from the Edgar Thompson steel mill, which runs 24/7/365. My family and I are the living embodiment of healthy coexistence of regulation and industry. Thankfully, we do not have to choose between jobs and our health and neither do you today.

This specially true because the primary reason the coal industry is facing challenges are due to fundamental free market forces that favor natural gas.

However, do not take this small town mayor’s word for it. A much more informed spokesman on the coal industry is Mr. Nicolas DeJuliis who is the president of Consol Engery, the largest producer of coal in the eastern United States on Monday, sold five large coalmines to a private buyer.

**“Consol, which is based in Pittsburgh, said in a conference call with reporters that the five mines being sold to the privately held [Murray Energy](#) in the transaction, worth \$3.5 billion to \$4.4 billion, were “a very profitable business, a very stable business.”**

Furthermore, according to the New York Times:

**“Consol is planning to increase its natural gas production by 30 percent a year for the next three year... and in the next 10 years will invest \$14 billion in developing the Marcellus Shale field in West Virginia and nearly \$8 billion in the Marcellus Shale field in Pennsylvania, along with \$2.5 billion in Pennsylvania coal mines that it is retaining.”**

Thus, according to Consol, the largest coal producer in the Eastern US, not only are they drastically ramping up investment to the tune of \$22 billion in natural gas, their current book of coal business was “very profitable and very stable”, readily found a buyer, and are retaining billions in coal holding in my home state of Pennsylvania.

This does not sound like an industry under siege. Instead, it sounds like an industry responding to the free market, something traditionally considered a virtue, particularly for our friends across the aisle.

Increasing our domestic energy production and moving towards energy independence is something we as Americans can all be proud of. Government should not be in the business of picking industry winners and losers; that is the job of the free market.

Government should be in the business of protecting its citizens with sensible environmental legislation, including regulating carbon.

Thank you.