

Testimony of Raymond C. Ventrone, Business Manager
International Brotherhood of Boilermakers Local Lodge 154

My name is Raymond Ventrone, Business Manager, International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Local Lodge 154, Pittsburgh, PA.

I represent more than two thousand Boilermakers in Western Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia. My members are learning the hard way that the EPA's goal isn't clean air; it's eliminating coal and our way of life. The Boilermakers have always been on the forefront of making the United States coal- powered power plant fleet the cleanest in the world and I am here to defend our interests.

The Boilermaker trade is vital to the Construction Industry. We are constantly expanding our manpower and recruitment resources to meet the needs of the industry we serve. We have built our reputation by dispatching trained, skilled and productive craftsmen to every job site, regardless of its size.

A Boilermaker is a tradesperson who possess a full range of knowledge and skills required to work in the Construction Industry. The duties of a Boilermaker include Boilermaking, Welding, Acetylene Burning, Asbestos Abatement, Rigging, Scaffold Erection and Dismantling, Stack Work, Steel Erection, Tube Rolling, Impact Machine Operating, and such other items as regarded as Boilermaker Journeyman work.

The broad scope of the Boilermaker Trade includes construction and maintenance work performed in the field and in industrial and commercial plants, such as:

- Power Plants

- Retro-fit Coal-fired Units
- Steel Mills
- Electric Power Generation (thermal, nuclear, hydro) plants
- Refineries (Oil, Chemical)
- Gas Turbines
- Gas Processing Plants
- Water Treatment Facilities
- Cement Plants
- Fertilizer Plants
- Breweries
- Pulp and Paper Mills
- And many other industrial and commercial facilities

The International Brotherhood of Boilermakers has long been a proponent of sensible legislation and regulatory action. However, The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently proposed rule restricting carbon emission on new power plants appears to be a calculated move to ensure that coal will no longer be a part of that strategy by setting impossible CO₂ limits for new fossil-fueled plants.

Effectively, the EPA's new source regulations will end future coal-fired plant construction, despite enormous progress that has been made in recent years with advanced emission-limiting technologies. Just three years ago, hundreds of construction workers and Boilermakers from Local 154 installed state-of-the-art pollution control equipment on a 1,700 MW coal-fired power plant. More than \$500 million was invested in this plant, proving that coal and clean air were not

mutually exclusive. However, despite having invested a half billion dollars to upgrade the power plant, last week marked its permanent closure because the plant owner cited that the new EPA regulations were too costly to keep the electricity-generating facility operational.

Now, those breakthrough technological upgrades –approved by the Environmental Protection Agency only three years ago — have been deemed insufficient by the very same agency by virtue of new regulations created without a vote in Congress or input from the public. These new regulations forced the shut-down of the Hatfield’s Ferry Power Plant, Masontown, PA and Mitchell Power Plant, New Eagle, PA, putting hundreds of utility workers and Boilermakers out of work.

Typically, Local 154 manpower is dispatched to the Hatfield’s Ferry Power Plant in Masontown, Pennsylvania every Spring and Fall for maintenance outages to work six (6) days per week, for approximate fifteen week duration with a manpower demand of four hundred (400) Boilermakers. Consequently, as a direct result of the shut-down at the Hatfield’s Ferry Power Station, roughly 360,000 Boilermaker Local 154 man-hours will be lost every Spring and Fall.

Critics of coal malign the thousands of boilermakers, mine workers, and hard-working men and women who earn an honest living in our region from coal. They insult us — calling us polluters and murderers. Pittsburgh Press editorials refer to us (“Coal Barons”), and have made outrageous claims about our livelihood, attacking our integrity, and ignoring the tremendous environmental gains made by coal. In the last three decades, coal usage has tripled but pollutants like sulfur dioxide have fallen by 56 percent.

As stated in the New York Times by Elizabeth Muller, Executive Director of the Climate Research Group -- “China’s greenhouse gas emissions are twice those of the United States and

growing at 8 percent to 10 percent per year. By 2020...China will emit greenhouse gases at four times the rate of the United States, and even if American emissions were to suddenly disappear, world emissions would be back at the same level within four years as a result of China's growth alone."

Clearly, the one-sided reduction of the American coal industry will not solve global climate change, but will shut-down existing investment in new research that holds the key to huge reductions in CO2 emissions from coal fired plants.....while the rest of the world is free to continue to expand the use of this reliable and economic energy source that has fueled our economy for more than a century.

The skeptics in this debate are those who ignore that coal is used cleanly. The deniers are those who won't acknowledge the true "social cost" of the EPA's anti-coal agenda and the hundreds of Southwestern Pennsylvania families who are losing their paychecks. We can have clean air and keep coal as a vital part of our economy, but we can't do it if the EPA and their allies are allowed to continue waging a devastating war against our jobs.

On behalf of the Boilermaker Construction Industry, I am calling upon Congress to come together to call upon Congress to amend the EPA regulation that has blocked future coal-fired power plant construction and has a devastating direct impact on our jobs, our future and our union.