



**Statement before the House of Representatives Committee on Natural
Resources Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations**

“Unleashing the Golden Age: Examining the Use of Federal Lands to Power American Technological Innovation”

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Chairman Gosar, Vice-Chairman Boebert, Ranking Member Dexter, and Members of the subcommittee, thank you for the chance to discuss the critical role that federal coal plays in powering American technological innovation, including artificial intelligence (AI), cryptocurrency mining, and other advanced technologies. I am Emily Arthun, CEO of the American Coal Council and resident of Campbell County, Gillette, Wyoming—the nation's Energy Capital—where federal coal mining is the lifeblood of the community.

Coal has long been a keystone feature in the American success story—a symbol of industry, production, and prosperity. Coal continues to play a critical role in meeting the United States' growing energy demands, particularly in the context of winning the AI data race. America has always prided itself on energy independence, however anti-coal regulatory policies from prior Administrations have served to weaken our energy independence. In order continue as the global economic leader we must utilize our abundant natural resources, innovative technological advancements, and robust energy infrastructure to secure our future.

Coal remains the most reliable and abundant energy source in the United States. As we advance our technological capabilities, especially in AI, the need for a stable and continuous power supply is crucial. AI demands vast computational power to process data, train models, and deploy applications. Coal-fired power plants provide the consistent energy supply necessary to maintain the high-performance computing infrastructure essential for AI development. By utilizing federal coal reserves, we can ensure our AI initiatives have the dependable energy they require to flourish. This approach enhances energy security by reducing reliance on foreign sources, which is necessary for maintaining competitiveness in the AI data race. Domestic federal coal reserves safeguard our energy independence and protect technological advancements from external disruptions. Additionally, cryptocurrency mining, such as Bitcoin, requires substantial energy. Federal coal can meet this demand, keeping the U.S. competitive globally by powering data centers. This guarantees energy for data centers, manufacturing, and infrastructure, supporting innovation and keeping our global advantage.

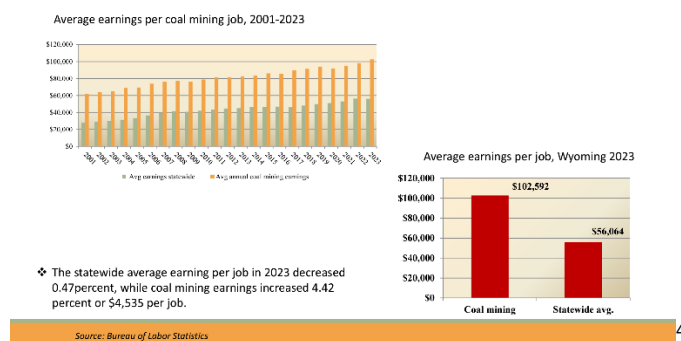
The United States possesses substantial federal coal reserves that are essential for meeting energy demands and facilitating technological progress. These reserves ensure a dependable and cost-effective



supply of coal. According to the Energy Information Administration, the United States has an estimated 250 billion short tons of recoverable coal. The federal government owns approximately 57% of U.S. coal reserves, predominantly situated in the western region of the country, particularly in the Powder River Basin. ¹

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) oversees 279 coal leases covering 421,903 acres across 11 states. In fiscal year 2023, coal production from federal lands totaled 243.2 million tons, accounting for roughly 42 percent of the 577.2 million tons produced nationwide. Federal coal generated approximately \$523.6 million in royalties, \$1.58 million in rentals, and \$3.1 million in bonus payments during fiscal year 2023. ²

The BLM managed land coal jobs for 2023 totaled 29,000 jobs and contributed \$9.2 billion to the economy. ³ By continuing to invest in federal coal leasing, we can sustain these jobs and stimulate economic growth. This economic stability is vital as we strive to lead in AI, cryptocurrency, and other technological fields. The coal industry in the western states is important for state economies. For example, Wyoming employed 5,118 individuals in 2023 with an average salary of \$103,000.



¹ [Coal | Bureau of Land Management](#)

² [Coal | Bureau of Land Management](#)

³ [The BLM: Valuing America's Public Lands 2024](#)

⁴ 2025-2025 WMA Concise Guide to Wyoming Coal



While some argue against the use of federal coal, it is important to recognize that advancements in coal technologies have significantly mitigated environmental impacts. Revolutionized projects like 8 Rivers Allam-Fetvedt Cycle Carbon (AFC-C) at the Dave Johnston Plant in Glenrock WY and Rivotto's Nx25 an emissions reduction solution will transform coal-fired plants with emission-reducing technologies.

To close, I reiterate that federal coal reserves are indispensable for powering American technological innovation. By leveraging these resources, we can support the development of AI, cryptocurrency, and other advanced technologies, ensuring that the U.S. remains at the forefront of global innovation. Investing in coal not only provides reliable energy but also supports economic growth and job creation, making it a cornerstone of our technological and prosperous future.

Thank you. I look forward to your questions.