

United Mine Workers of America

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Statements by Pennsylvania Environmental Protection Secretary McGinty "outrageous, misleading and offensive" UMWA President Roberts says

Statements made last Tuesday by the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) in testimony before a Pennsylvania Senate committee regarding the position of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) on mercury emission legislation pending before the state legislature are "not just surprising and disappointing, but are outrageous—yet apparently deliberate—misrepresentations of the facts that border on the offensive," UMWA International President Cecil E. Roberts said today.

"We have been very clear and consistent in all our communications with Ms. McGinty and with the state legislature, as well as in our filings with the federal courts regarding this issue," Roberts said. "Our opposition to the EPA's mercury rule is narrowly focused on the rule's generous allocation of mercury allowance to sub-bituminous and lignite coal that discriminates against Pennsylvania coal and the state's coal mining jobs.

"We have consistently supported the EPA's proposed trading program for mercury emissions, which will lead to a reduction in mercury emissions across the country—including Pennsylvania—and which is part of the federal agency's proposed rule," Roberts said. "Ms. McGinty knows that, having been advised of it on many separate occasions over the last year.

The Pennsylvania DEP has proposed its own rule for the state regarding mercury emissions which would not allow trading of emissions between coal-fired electricity generating plants, a stance which would destroy the jobs of hundreds if not thousands of Pennsylvania coal miners.

"I reiterated the UMWA's position with respect to the proposed Pennsylvania rule in a letter I sent to Governor Rendell just last week," Roberts said. "The letter (attached to this release) clearly stated our position, and I can't understand why Ms. McGinty would go before a state senate committee and simply ignore that letter and all previous conversations we've had with her on this issue."

"Let me be clear: We do not, and will not, support a plan that will cost Pennsylvania coal miners their jobs," Roberts said. "We remain consistent in our opposition to that no matter if it comes from a proposed federal rule or a proposal from Pennsylvania's own DEP Secretary. I know that once Pennsylvania's coal miners learn of the Rendell Administration's position on this, they will support the UMWA's position. We intend to let them know."

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Link: [UMWA April 21, 2006 Letter to Governor Rendell](#)