

Statement of Peabody Energy's Big Ridge, Inc. Subsidiary

Dec. 5 – Big Ridge, Inc. today said it intends to appeal an administrative law judge (ALJ) decision regarding an election at the Willow Lake Mine in Illinois involving the United Mine Workers of America, and a decision regarding an employee that was dismissed for improper behavior. The ALJ decision is not final. Big Ridge also said that the decision included numerous conclusions that had no basis in fact.

Big Ridge had asked the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) to conduct a new United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) election at the Willow Lake Mine based on numerous instances of intimidation and threats, coercion and fraudulent conduct affecting a May 2011 UMWA election.

The election resulted in a slim majority of 219 to 206 workers voting in favor of UMWA representation. The UMWA sought to replace the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, which had formerly represented the Willow Lake workforce. Big Ridge believes that employees have the right to choose to be represented or union free, which includes the right to a free and fair election that is not driven by intimidation, threats and misinformation.

The Big Ridge complaint to the NLRB brought forth clear evidence that union advocates created an atmosphere of coercion that threatened employees and their families with bodily harm if they did not support union representation. False and fabricated UMWA documents were also distributed during the campaign.

All of these acts contributed to fear and confusion that prevented employees from exercising their democratic right to choose and speak for themselves regarding their working conditions.

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