

Energy & Telecom Committee Members,

The loss of the Colstrip Steam Electric Station units 1 & 2 will mean that there will be people leaving the city of Colstrip. Families and friends will be torn apart and a community will suffer. But one thing to remember is that this is bigger than just one town. Rosebud County will also suffer in the wake of this decision, as will the entire state of Montana.

For this suffering, we have the Sierra Club and the Montana Environmental Information Center to thank. The settlement for their lawsuit is the reason two perfectly viable power plant units will be shut down --despite being capable of many more years of affordable, reliable, power generation.

Anti-coal groups that try to force their will upon society think they are "saving the poor uneducated coal people from themselves." But once they get their way, once they succeed in their goals of stifling an industry that sustains thousands of people across the state, where, then, are our "benevolent" saviors? Will they financially assist in retraining and re-employing the many people they have been striving to put out of work? The answer is "no" because that would take money and money is the driving force behind what they do. Not the environment, not the "common good." Just money.

To these anti-coal groups, we promise this: Even if some of us have to leave the place we call home, we will fight tooth and nail every step of the way. We will fight for ourselves; we will fight for other coal communities across the state and country. You can split us up and spread us out all over the nation, but we will never stop standing TOGETHER with those who fight for coal and coal families. We might live somewhere else someday, but we will always stand Colstrip UNITED.

Respectfully,

Lori Shaw
Colstrip United Movement
July 12, 2016