

August 18, 2015



***Below is Autumn Hanna, Senior Program Director, Taxpayers for Common Sense's statement on the Interior Department's public listening sessions on the Federal Coal Program.***

It is the responsibility of the Department of Interior to manage our natural resources for long-term value. This means ensuring a fair return for any development of taxpayer assets, including coal.

Taxpayers for Common Sense is pleased that the DOI is hearing public comments on reforming the federal coal program in Denver this week because after losing billions in lost royalties and undervalued leases for decades, change is long past due.

With rates set by the Mineral Leasing Act in 1920, federal coal has one of the lowest effective royalty rates among natural resources managed by the BLM.

BLM should review *all* of the ways in which the federal government is being shortchanged, including through the current leasing process that allows industry to pick 'n mix the federal coal tracts they want. To protect taxpayers, BLM needs to take below fair market value bids off the menu.