

**WRITTEN STATEMENT OF MARTA SANCHEZ,
WIFE OF MANUAL SANCHEZ,
TO THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR
October 3, 2007**

I want to thank Chairman Miller for the opportunity to come to Washington and observe these proceedings. I also want to thank the United Mine Workers Association for its generous help to make it possible.

August 6th is when a mining tragedy changed my life and the lives of our children. We could not believe that this was happening. We thought it was a nightmare but tragically it is not. Even now I continue thinking that we lost a father, a husband who was our entire life for 23 years. I cannot believe this. I am impotently angry that my children do not have a worthy grave for their daddy. I feel frustrated that I still have not been told by Mr. Murray or MSHA whether one day having a proper grave will be possible.

My children and I cannot resign ourselves to how it is possible that he went to work one day and now we will never see him again. This has affected me and my children greatly.

I did not want to go to the family briefings by MSHA and the companies because things only got worse. They never gave us any hope for anything. The pain I feel not knowing whether my husband died instantly or whether he suffered greatly inside that mine makes me feel even more frustrated because I feel like I will never be able to rid myself of these thoughts.

It is my hope that MSHA will do more in the future so tragedies like this do not happen to other families because this terrible event has affected us physically, mentally and emotionally.