

**WRITTEN STATEMENT OF NELDA ERICKSON and AMANDA
ROMERO,
WIFE AND DAUGHTER OF DON ERICKSON,
TO THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR
October 3, 2007**

First off, we wish to thank Chairman Miller for the opportunity to be here to observe the Committee. We also want to thank the United Mine Workers Association and all those responsible for helping us come here.

There are many things we would like to see changed. One would be for this tragedy to never happen again. More study needs to go into why there is seismic activity occurring in underground mining areas. There needs to be developed a system of threat levels depending on mining and seismic activity.

The mine industry and MSHA are lacking newer improved communications underground and are lacking in pre-made plans in case of emergencies. MSHA could be more prepared in emergency situations.

One big concern we have is how can MSHA inspect themselves during this investigation. The families need a voice in the investigations also.

The manner in which Mr. Murray treated all family members was disrespectful and disgraceful. No other family members should ever be treated as badly as we were by Mr. Murray.

This tragedy has affected our entire family dramatically. We no longer can trust mine owners or MSHA. Our everyday lives and financial situations have been significantly impacted. We miss our husband and father.