

**WRITTEN STATEMENT OF MICHAEL MARASCO,
SON-IN-LAW OF KERRY ALLRED,
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 testify. I also want to thank the United Mine Workers Association for making it possible to be here.

My father-in-law Kerry Allred was a coal miner. He was a great father, brother, son and grandfather. He was loved by everyone, and well-known. We dearly miss you, Dad.

I want everyone to know that we are very thankful for the thoughts and prayers and for the rescue efforts. You are all our heroes.

I wish to focus my comments on how the families were treated after the collapse, by both the companies and by MSHA.

I want to let everyone know how these last two months have been like a roller-coaster for all of us. From day one we have been let down by Mr. Murray and by MSHA. Mr. Murray told us immediately after the collapse that we could trust God and him and he would stop at nothing to find our loved-ones. Everyday went by where we were thinking maybe today. But we just continually got let down. Mr. Murray appears to have lost interest. Sealing the mine is what is now being discussed.

The manner in which Murray and MSHA approached the families for the first two weeks after the collapse was unbelievable. They just told us what we wanted to hear and not the facts. All we heard was "earthquake, earthquake." We did not want to hear about earthquakes but wanted to know when we were going to see our loved ones again. Murray more than once yelled at us when we would ask questions.

For the families that are Hispanic, there was no translator for the first two days. How does one explain to them what has been going on.

Questions were asked and the responses were always, “that question has already been asked” or “we are looking into it.” I feel that we were hardly treated with the respect we should have been given.

We made suggestions to help the rescue efforts and were just amazed at how quick both Murray and MSHA were to say “no” to all of our suggestions. These are just a few examples of how poorly we were treated.

We all have tragedies in our lives, but this was one no one ever had to experience. Thank you again for the opportunity to be here to talk to you.