

News Statement



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Statement of US Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis on the death of 29 miners at Upper Big Branch South Mine

WASHINGTON – U.S. Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis issued the following statement on the death of 29 miners at Upper Big Branch South Mine:

“I offer my sincere and heartfelt condolences to the families. We now know that 29 miners perished at the Upper Big Branch Mine. May they all rest in peace.

“My thoughts and prayers are with the families, friends, co-workers, neighbors and the entire mining community. I was moved by the extraordinary strength and courage of the families I met with this week, as well as the outpouring of support by the community. It is that love, strength, courage and support that will continue to sustain everyone affected by this tragedy.

“The best way that we can honor these miners is for the Mine Safety and Health Administration to do its job with the utmost integrity and thoroughness. I am confident that will happen. I saw firsthand the commitment and dedication of the MSHA staff when I was in West Virginia on Wednesday.

“The investigative team will now begin its important work to determine exactly what happened, and Assistant Secretary of Labor for Mine Safety and Health Joe Main and I will meet with the President to discuss what actions the administration can take to prevent further tragedies in this industry.

“Although details of the catastrophe are unclear at this time, we do know this: Mine explosions are preventable, miners should never have to sacrifice their lives for their livelihood, and all workers deserve to come home to their families at the end of their shift safe and whole.”

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