

Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition (OVEC)
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Oct. 16, 2002

Nancy Herholdt, Commissioner
WV Division of Culture and History
Chair, Capitol Building Commission
The Cultural Center
Capitol Complex
1900 Kanawha Boulevard East
Charleston WV 25305-0300

Dear Ms. Herholdt:

Pursuant to the West Virginia Freedom of Information Act, I do hereby respectfully request, on behalf of the Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition, that the Capitol Building Commission provide the following information:

Minutes from ALL meetings at which the coal miner statue and its base, with its bas-relief plaques, were discussed.

I would appreciate it if you would expedite this request by either e-mailing or faxing the minutes, as the erection of the final plaques appears to be on a fast track.

--End FOIA request--

As you are probably aware, OVEC endorses the concept of honoring miners, but we object to the one-sided presentation and virtual ad-like quality of the bas-relief plaques so far on and proposed for the base of this statue. While proponents of these plaques may argue that they have been funded with private donations, we counter that the plaques will be in a very prominent spot in the most public place in our state, the Capitol grounds. Such placement implies an "official" endorsement of illegal mountaintop removal / valley fill coal mining and the public relations efforts of the coal industry. This effort should not proceed without public debate.

We hope to be able to ensure that the Capitol Complex remains inviting to all citizens.

Thank you for your attention.

(computer generated, therefore no signature; signed letter will be mailed)
Vivian Stockman, project coordinator
vivian@ohvec.org

Cc:

Commissioner's Assistant Sheila Allen

Gov. Bob Wise

Phil Kabler, *Charleston Gazette*

Lawrence Messina, Associated Press

Mannix Porterfield, Beckley Register Herald

David Cooper, OVEC

Joe Lovett, Appalachian Center for the Economy and the Environment

Bill Raney, WV Coal Association

Chris Hamilton, WV Coal Association