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"Creating American Jobs by Harnessing Our Resources:

Domestic Mining Opportunities and Hurdles"

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Good Morning,

My name is Theresa O'Donnell. I live in Ione, Washington, a small rural town in the Northeast corner of Washington state, 10 miles north of Ione is Metaline, and another mile north is Metaline Falls. The 3 towns combined have a population of approximately 1500 people. The Pend Oreille Mine is about 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles north of Metaline Falls. If you travel another 13 miles to the north you will be at the Canadian border.

The Pend Oreille Mine produces lead and zinc. Zinc is primarily used for corrosion protection on steel used for buildings, bridges and in the automotive industry.

In May of 2004, I left an 8 to 5 desk job to be an "Underground Medic" for Teck at the Pend Oreille Mine. I had never been in a mine before and had no clue what to expect. Working a half mile underground is like working in a whole different world, its mostly dark, cold, and wet, while other places are hot and humid. No matter what the weather is all you see is rock. Sometimes the only communication you have with someone is by light signals with the cap lamp you wear on your hard hat. I had no idea what I was getting into. But the miners

have become another family to me and the opportunities have been endless. I spent most of my time operating the rock breaker at the grizzly, keeping it clear for the haul trucks to dump, while keeping an eye on a crew of awesome guys (and gals) like a mother hen not wanting to be "busy" at what I was hired for as a Medic. I did monthly phone, fire extinguisher and safety equipment checks, annual hearing and spirometry testing , plus random drug and alcohol tests for the safety department. I was encouraged to try new tasks and was certainly never "bored" at work. In 2008 most of us were laid off and the mine went into Care and Maintenance due to economic reasons. Not only was it hard on our small community, with the miners and their families leaving the area for work, and some businesses closing, it also had a major impact on my family. Besides the loss of my job, my son, who is a 4th generation O'Donnell to work at this mine site, was also laid off and had to leave his wife and new daughter to find work away from home, and my daughter-in-law who's hours were cut at the school district because of the children that left the area. In 2009 Teck started a drilling project and I was fortunate enough to be called back (with my son as well) as a geology technician. I currently photograph and bag core for assays for the geologist, plus the monthly checks and tests for the safety department. I also help with the Mine Rescue team trainings so they are ready in the event of a mine emergency. I have also learned new tasks, such as driving 30 ton haul trucks, doing weekly water samples for the environmental department, working in the assay lab, and whatever else I may be asked to do. We came back to a new way of thinking about safety called the Courageous Safety Leadership program. It makes us think about our actions, the ripple effect it has on other people and to be courageous enough to stop someone when they are doing something unsafe, even if it is your boss. It has even

made me think about my safety and others off the job site also. I was recently selected to be the local spokesperson for Zinc saves kids, a program which deals with the devastating impact of zinc deficiency in children and how zinc supplements help strengthen their immune system to help prevent the diarrhea and save lives. Mining impacts all of us in different ways and mine has been nothing but positive.

I want to say thank you to everyone who made this opportunity for me to talk about my mining experience possible.