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## United States Senate

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April 18, 2008

Admiral T. Joseph Lopez, USN (Ret.)  
 Chairman, Board of Governors  
 Imagine West Virginia  
 102 Maple Drive, Suite B  
 Morgantown, West Virginia 26505

Dear Admiral Lopez:

It is a pleasure to learn about Imagine West Virginia, and its commitment to addressing the tough economic policy issues affecting West Virginians, beginning with coal.

Coal has always had its critics. Despite them, coal has not only endured, it has prevailed. It fueled America's Industrial Revolution in the 19th Century. It fueled America's naval battleships in the early 20th Century. It possesses the bright potential to help America get out from under the thumb of foreign oil-wielding despots in the 21st century.

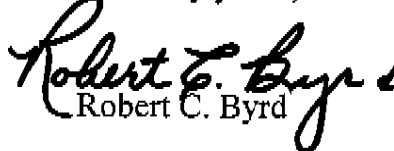
The coal industry has evolved in the last centuries, shaped by safety and environmental critiques. It has professed a willingness to evolve further.

Having Imagine West Virginia – an institute “of West Virginians serving West Virginia” – to provide guidance and expertise on coal and other economic issues affecting our Mountain State, will prove an invaluable resource.

I wish you every success in your endeavors in behalf of West Virginia.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

  
 Robert C. Byrd

RCB:dm