



July 13, 2018

Field Hearing Testimony – Roberta Dell, Chief Union Steward, Spangler Candy Company, Bryan, OH

I come before you today to tell you that I believe in you. That I have faith that you all will come together as a united body to find a solution for this nightmare that so many of us are living.

On behalf of my co-workers, friends, and people I have never met, I would like to thank you for allowing me to speak with you today.

My name is Roberta Dell. I have worked at Spangler Candy Company for 46 years and am 65 years old. I am the Chief Union Steward for Spangler employees and belong to Teamsters Local 20. I love my job and take pride in being able to say I work at the factory that makes Dum Dums suckers. Spangler Candy Company is a great place to work. I could tell you all the facts about Spangler but I will let Bill Martin, President of Spangler Candy Company do that.

I am here to tell you my story. A story of sadness, desperation, and hope. I have worked hard all my life, most times holding down 2 or 3 jobs. I met my husband, Jim Dell, at Spangler Candy Company where he also worked over 42 years. Jim also was a participant in the Central States Pension Plan. I never planned on working "in a factory all my life", but we were blessed with 3 sons, Taylor, Charlie, & Sam. Over the years, life swiftly passed. Jim and I worked hard. We had a plan, we bought a house and raised our wonderful sons. We were taking care of each other and our boys. But before I knew it I was in my 50's and thought, oh crap, retirement is just around the corner and I am not prepared financially for it. We had helped our kids with college expenses, etc.

Then the bombshell hit.....Jim found out in 2004 he had stomach cancer and then in 2014 he told me he had liver cancer and there wasn't much hope. This wasn't our plan. We were to take care of each other. This wasn't supposed to happen to us. We had planned on seeing our sons get married and give us grandchildren. But God had other plans. On June 2, 2015, Jim passed away with all three sons by his side, which was his last wish. Our oldest son was married four days later in New York City, and then we had to return home to bury their dad. It was a very difficult time.

He thought he had taken care of all of us. Because I was still working and in pretty good health, and I would have my pension and social security to fall back on, I would be okay. So Jim took care of our sons in his will with my blessing. We were going to take care of each other but with Jim gone, I started to ask myself, "who was going to take care of me and what was I going to do?".

I now sit here before you with sadness and desperation. I have planned to work until age 68 but with the uncertainty of the pension I don't know if that will be possible. I am not the only one. So many I have talked with are in similar situations. Several are now finding they are raising their grandchildren,

many are living paycheck to paycheck. People who have lost jobs and had to start over after losing their savings. Some have had a major medical issue that has drained all their savings for retirement.

They, like me, thought our pensions would be there for them, and they didn't have to worry. None of us thought we would be in this position, living from paycheck to paycheck with our futures with such uncertainty. I have always felt the pension all these 46 years has been my savings. We need your help! Please find in your hearts to put differences aside and become united to find a solution. Like so many others, I look to you, I believe in you, have hope and faith in you to help us find a way to save us from this nightmare we are all facing! Thank you for your time and hard work.

God Bless you all, Roberta Dell.