

Black Butte Coal Layoffs

Cheyenne- Black Butte Coal Company has laid off 19 employees according to media reports. Republican leaders were quick to point fingers, the Wyoming Democratic Party has released the following statement (PDF Version):

Governor Gordon, Senator Lummis, and other Republican leaders in Wyoming are quick to point fingers of blame when something goes awry, but offer little by way of solutions or ideas to address issues. The layoffs that occurred at Black Butte Coal Mine in Sweetwater County are devastating for those families and demoralizing for the community. Unfortunately, it is neither the first nor last time that we're going to see headlines sharing similar stories.

The eagerness of GOP leaders to make bogey men out of President Biden and the Democratic Party can be best explained as an effort to focus the attention away from their own failures to adequately confront the reality of our situation. The fact of the matter is that the coal sector has been and will continue to decline regardless of who occupies the Oval Office or which party holds a majority in our state and Federal legislatures. What is particularly egregious is that armed with that knowledge and serving in positions of influence and power, Republicans have chosen to double down on rhetoric, bury their heads in the sand, and chase pipe dreams rather than attempt to plan or prepare for a future they've long-known was coming.

On the other side of the aisle, President Biden, Democrats in Congress, and the Wyoming Legislature are seeking solutions to help coal country and investing in programs for dislocated workers and incentives to build next-generation industries in affected communities. Thanks to their efforts, more than \$7 billion is available in federal funding – dollars that could

have a direct and significant impact on the lives of many Wyomingites.

Wyoming needs public servants who are serious about service; leaders who will put the needs of the people they represent ahead of the letter behind their name. With 2024 rapidly approaching, I would implore voters to consider whether it's time to reject what's clearly not working from Republican officials and replace it with bold, thoughtful, and forward-looking leadership that will put the days of looking for scapegoats and pointing fingers in the rear view mirror.

Mandy Weaver, Communications Director, Wyoming Democratic Party