

**Utah Mining Association  
Testimony  
Before the  
Mine Safety and Health Administration's  
Technical Study Panel Meeting  
on Utilizing of Belt Air in  
Underground Coal Mining  
Salt Lake City, Utah  
May 16-17, 2007**

MSHA/OSRV

Document Number 201

Mr. Chairman and esteemed members of the Technical Study Panel, I am pleased to appear before you today on the important topic of belt air utilization in underground coal mining.

I am David Litvin, President of the Utah Mining Association. The Utah Mining Association, known as the "UMA" was founded in 1915, to be the voice of Utah's mining industry. It is one of the oldest and most prestigious business associations in Utah. Our purpose is to support and promote the mining, and mineral industry and other related industries within the State of Utah.

UMA members include approximately 200 companies that have mining operations in Utah, or provide support activities for this vitally important industry to the State of Utah. In fact, in 2006, the Utah mining industry accounted for nearly 50% of the State's \$6.8 billion in exports.

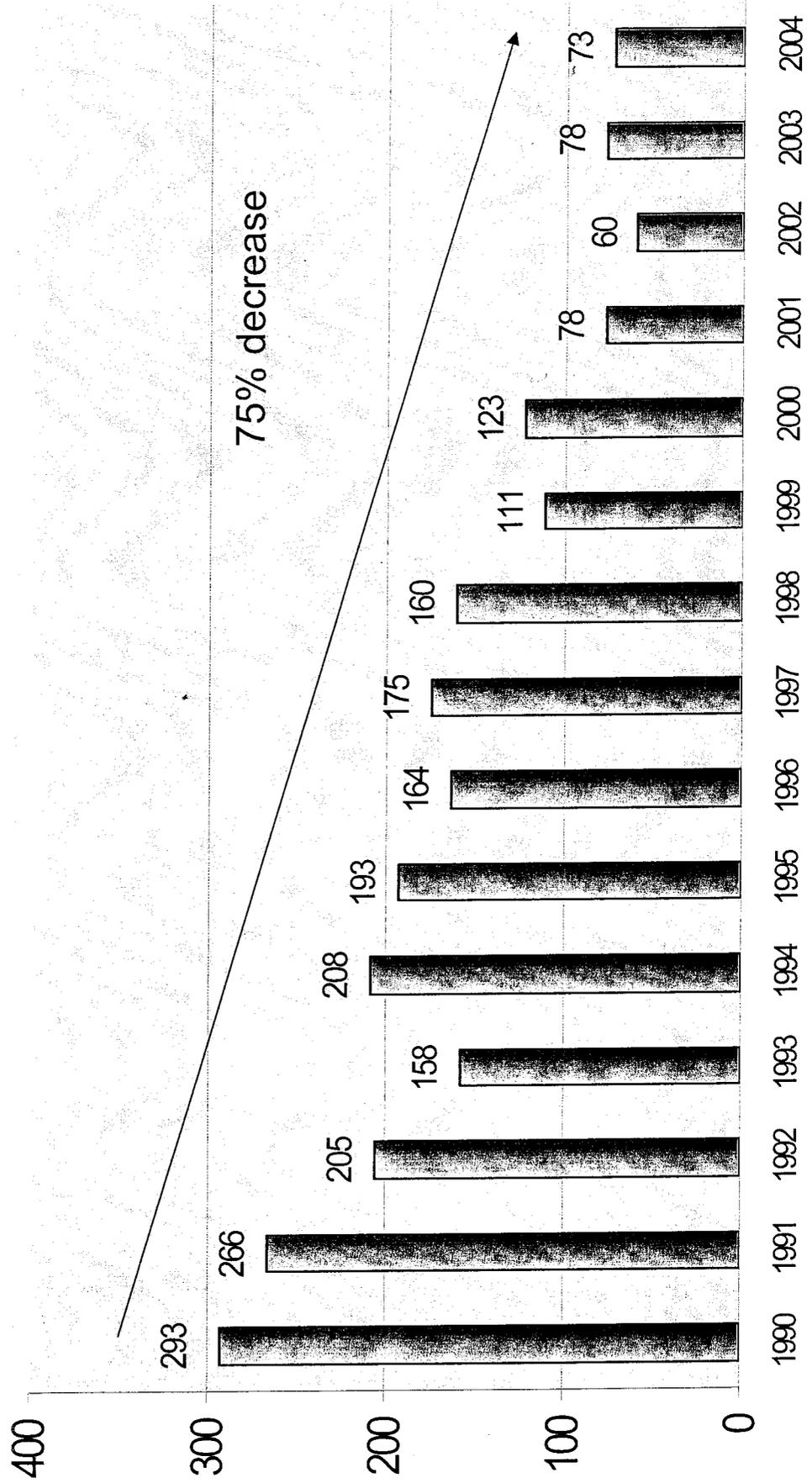
For coal, Utah ranked 12<sup>th</sup> in the nation for total production in 2006, producing over 26 million tons. Utah is unique compared to other western coal producing states in that all our coal comes from underground mines, some of which are the deepest in the United States.

For the period from 1990 thru 2004, Utah's coal mining injuries decreased 75 percent as shown on the attached chart. These safety statistics show that the use of the belt air two entry system in Utah's underground coal mines has been a demonstrated safe technology.

For today's meeting before the MSHA Technical Study Panel, the UMA has arranged for several Utah coal operators and technical experts to appear before the Panel to discuss all aspects of belt air two entry system usage in Utah's underground coal mines: Safety benefits for both the workers and equipment, ground control measures, mine monitoring safety features, conveyor belt properties, and the need in Utah for the belt air two entry system because of deep mining and surrounding geology.

In conclusion, the UMA thanks the MSHA Technical Study Panel for their visits to see firsthand belt air two entry system usage in Utah's deep underground coal mines, and the meetings here in Salt Lake City. The testimony you will hear, and your visits to the Utah coal mines, clearly demonstrate that the belt air two entry system is a safe and needed technology for Utah's deep underground coal operations, necessary to properly ventilate our coal mines, and for effective ground control in a manner where safety is enhanced – not compromised – by its use. It is important for the Panel to appreciate the overall safety benefits for both mine workers and the equipment derived from this belt air ventilation two entry system. History has proven this belt air two entry system is both the safest and most effective demonstrated technology for Utah's deep underground coal mines.

# Utah Coal Mining Injuries 1990-2004



Source: Mine Safety & Health Administration (MSHA)

