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**UPPER BIG BRANCH SECURITY CHIEF CHARGED WITH OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE AND
FALSE STATEMENTS**

CHARLESTON, W.Va. - Hughie Elbert Stover, 60, of Clear Fork, Raleigh County, West Virginia, has been charged with two felonies in connection with the federal investigation of events at Massey Energy Company's Upper Big Branch Mine (UBB). Stover is Chief of Security at UBB and at least two other Massey operations. A federal grand jury indicted Stover last week on charges of making false statements to federal agents and obstructing a federal investigation. The indictment was unsealed today after Stover was arrested at his home.

According to the indictment unsealed today, Stover made materially false statements to an FBI Special Agent and a Special Investigator for the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA). These federal agents were investigating allegations that security guards at UBB routinely notified mine personnel when MSHA inspectors arrived at the mine. Allegedly, Stover falsely denied that such a practice existed and falsely told the agents that he would have fired any security guard who provided such advance notice. According to the indictment, Stover himself instructed UBB security guards to notify mine personnel whenever MSHA inspectors arrived at the mine.

The indictment also alleges that Stover recently caused a person known to the grand jury to dispose of thousands of pages of security-related documents stored in a Massey building near the UBB mine, with the intent to impede the federal investigation.

"The conduct charged by the grand jury — obstruction of justice and false statements to federal investigators — threatens our effort to find out what happened at Upper Big Branch," said U.S. Attorney Booth Goodwin. "With 29 coal miners lost and thousands more waiting for answers about what caused the disaster, this inquiry is simply too important to tolerate any attempt to hinder it. My office will continue to devote every available resource to this most critical of cases."

"The explosion at Upper Big Branch was a national tragedy, and this investigation is a priority for the Department of Justice," said Assistant Attorney General Lanny A. Breuer of the Criminal Division. "The indictment unsealed today shows our deep commitment to getting to the truth about what happened, including holding to account anyone who may impede this critical investigation."

The charges against Stover result from an investigation by the FBI and the Department of Labor's Office of Inspector General, with assistance from MSHA Special Investigators detailed to the criminal probe.

Stover is scheduled to be arraigned on March 15, at 11 a.m., in Beckley, W.Va.

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