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Tammy Miser Won't Be Stopped, Part 2

When I talked to Miser last week, it had just been one of those days. Her voice was weary, though quickly energized when she started to talk about her work. “Just trying to get more support for the Protecting America’s Workers Act,” she says. “I can’t get our senator to commit to anything. We got one senator who’s not running again, another is like ‘Well, I’m not really on the committee,’ I’m like B.S. He either has an opinion or he doesn’t.” Such is the nature of Miser’s work these days. She’s trying to get signed into law all of the practices she found lacking as she worked through her brother’s death in 2003.

“It would cause OSHA to set up a program to deal with the families,” Miser says of the act. “While we wouldn’t be able to participate in the OSHA investigation, we’d get a representative to go through to get it.” The PAWA would also help keep companies accountable. “They would not be able to classify anything,” Miser says. “Which is big because they can’t go back and say it’s a repeat violation. They seem like little things, but it’s really important. It also raises the fines and penalties.”

In addition to making it easier for families to get information, the bill would also make it easier for families to give information. “In this bill, the families would be allowed to make statements,” Miser says. “We would be afforded that right. A lot of the times, the families have information that would make a huge impact, but OSHA doesn’t ask. I don’t know how many times they came back and said if only we’d known.”

And, as always, Miser’s work maintains the personal element. “What really made me push for the actual bill itself is that every one of the families have a different experience,” Miser says. “We should know the procedures, and understand the process. If there a clear set of rights, then we know we’ve done all we can.”

For Miser, it always comes back to the people. If you visit the USMWF website (www.USMWF.org), you’ll see the pictures of those loved ones lost in workplaces everywhere, and that’s what keeps these issues so sharp in Miser’s, and others’, minds.

Submitted by Andrew Fatato

