



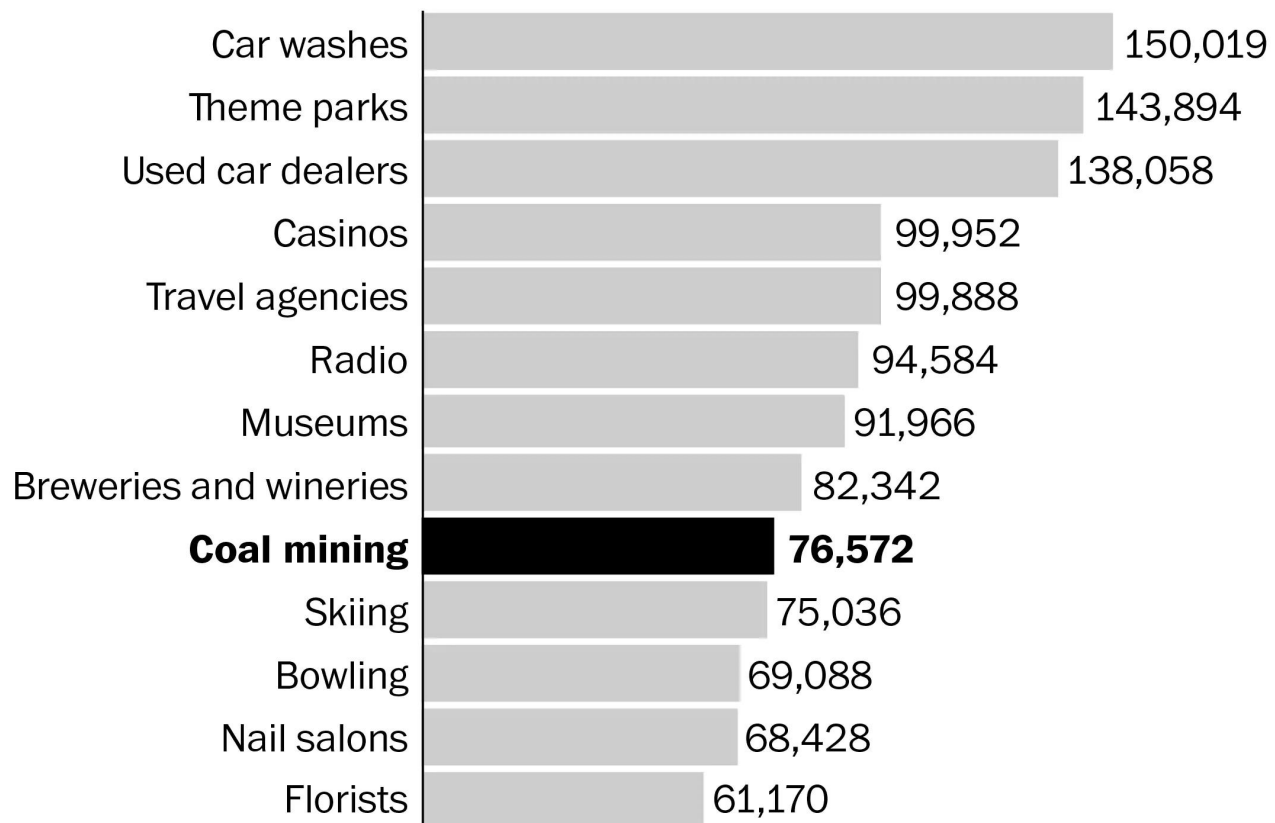
Talk Amongst Yourselves

What could yoga tell us about the Administration’s Orwellian “Affordable Clean Energy” Plan, which [my colleagues have eviscerated](#), and whose name resembles the Holy Roman Empire? Lots, actually: in particular, that it relies upon a false promise of job creation.

[An important piece last year by Christopher Ingraham of the Washington Post](#) detailed just how small the coal industry figures in the economic life of the nation. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in February 2017, the industry employed 50,300 people. Note: that isn’t miners. That’s the whole industry. (An earlier estimate by the Census Bureau from 2014 had the number closer to 76,000 — still quite small). [There are more yoga instructors in the United States](#) than coal miners — and that gap will continue to increase.

The coal industry's small economic footprint

Number of employees in 2014



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Source: Census Business Patterns

Now let's do some comparisons. As Ingraham notes, the entire coal industry "employed about as many as [Whole Foods](#) (72,650), and fewer workers than Arby's (close to 80,000), [Dollar General](#) (105,000) or [J.C. Penney](#) (114,000). The country's largest private employer, Walmart (2.2 million employees) provides roughly 28 times as many jobs as coal." In other words, despite its historical importance, coal is negligible economically. It could double in size, and still not make a dent — and of course, this would also reduce employees in other industries (California's solar industry alone employs 100,000) as well as imposing massive health other costs through climate change and diseases from criteria pollutants.

So then why is Trump doing this? It seems to me that the answer is obvious, and no, it isn't about West Virginia and Kentucky, at least from an economic standpoint. Part of it is a cultural pose: Melt The Planet To Own The Libs. But it is also in no small part [to help major Republican political contributors such as Robert Murray](#), whose disastrous ownership of the

Crandall Canyon Mine not only generated dozens of serious health and safety violations but also led several deaths when the mine collapsed. [Don Blankenship](#), who went to jail for health and safety violations at his mine, also raises lots of money for Republicans.

Put another way, the Administration plan isn't environmental policy, and it isn't economic policy. It is corruption. That isn't any kind of stretch at all.