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House of Representatives

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
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January 14, 2021

Dear Members of the Environmental Quality Board,

I'm writing in support of the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) proposed CO2 Budget Trading Program.

As the Representative for Pennsylvania's 115th District, I share my constituents' concern, matched by a majority of citizens across the Commonwealth, that we must take meaningful and prompt action to address climate change and protect public health. DEP's proposed rulemaking is an important and measured step toward those goals. Equally important, this proposal presents significant opportunity for investment in our communities and our future.

The need for this rulemaking is clear. Pennsylvania has already warmed nearly 2°F on average since 1970, with three times more extremely dangerous heat days, and five times as many heat wave days anticipated for 2050. The frequency of severe weather events, particularly rainfall and flooding, have also markedly increased. These impacts have been particularly felt in my District and the Pocono Valley, adversely affecting urban and rural areas, our agricultural community, public infrastructure, and private residents. Additionally, climate change is projected to adversely impact the winter recreational industry which is significant to my district.

By linking with the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) – a proven, market-based program – Pennsylvania can take the first critical steps needed to decarbonize our electricity sector, achieving both environmental and economic benefits. As participating states – many of whom are our neighbors – already know, RGGI spurs business and job growth without punishing ratepayers. Clean energy employs more than twice the number of Pennsylvania workers as fossil

fuel industries, and the sector is adding jobs five times faster than the overall state employment growth rate. But RGGI proceeds can also be used to deploy technologies at existing generation and industrial facilities to further reduce emissions, spur innovation, and bolster jobs. DEP's analysis on their rulemaking projects a net increase of 27,000 jobs in Pennsylvania from RGGI by 2030. That matches experience from other RGGI states, which themselves have seen GDP growth that has outpaced the rest of the country.

The benefits also extend to homes and businesses. Research performed by the Acadia Center has shown that electricity prices in RGGI states have actually fallen by 5.7% - outperforming price levels in non-RGGI states. Analysis performed separately by DEP, Resources for the Future, and the Kleinman Center for Energy Policy at the University of Pennsylvania have indicated that electricity prices in Pennsylvania likely decreases with state participation in RGGI, in part on use of program proceeds. It bears mentioning that market studies have also shown that keeping inefficient fossil-fired plants operating actually increase consumer costs.

In addition to reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, RGGI will also result in lower emissions of other serious pollutants that are an everyday threat to public health. RGGI has already prevented hundreds of premature deaths and tens of thousands of respiratory symptoms in participating states. DEP analysis found that the emission reductions from linking to RGGI will avoid hundreds of premature deaths and tens of thousands of hospital visits in Pennsylvania.

Now is the time to act. RGGI is a commonsense choice for growing the economy, providing jobs, and protecting our air. I support DEP for pursuing this rule and urge them to move forward quickly to finalize this important opportunity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maureen E. Madden", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Representative Maureen Madden, 115th legislative district