



Stephen Hoffman

From: ecomment@pa.gov
Sent: Thursday, December 3, 2020 1:03 PM
To: Environment-Committee@pasenate.com; IRRC; environmentalcommittee@pahouse.net; regcomments@pa.gov; ntroutman@pasen.gov; timothy.collins@pasenate.com; gking@pahousegop.com
Cc: c-jflanaga@pa.gov
Subject: Comment received - Proposed Rulemaking: CO2 Budget Trading Program (#7-559)

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Re: eComment System

The Department of Environmental Protection has received the following comments on Proposed Rulemaking: CO2 Budget Trading Program (#7-559).

Commenter Information:

Mary Isaacson
 State Representative, 175th District (misaacson@pahouse.net)
 610 N 2nd Street
 Philadelphia, PA 19123 US

Comments entered:

RE: Proposed Rulemaking: CO2 Budget Trading Program (#7-559)

I am writing to submit my comments during PA-DEP's public comment period in support of Pennsylvania joining RGGI, the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. RGGI started over twelve years ago and we are far more than twelve years behind in addressing greenhouse gases, clean air, and environmental accountability. It is imperative that we immediately join this effort so that as a state we can not only invest in renewable energy projects, efficiency, and conservation, but also greatly reduce climate pollution and begin to address the climate crisis.

The impacts of the climate crisis are becoming clearer every day, from higher summer temperatures and more dangerous storms right here in Pennsylvania, to wildfires out west and more devastating hurricanes down south. As the fourth-largest emitter of greenhouse gases in the nation and one of the large climate polluters in the country, Pennsylvania has a responsibility to be a leader in implementing climate solutions and reducing emissions. Carbon emissions in our state could be reduced by 188 million tons by 2030 by joining this important climate program -- equivalent to taking more than 36 million cars off the road.

Joining Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont and Virginia in RGGI is a key step towards that goal as it has

proven to be the most successful state-level program in the nation when it comes to addressing greenhouse gas emissions. From 2008 through 2018, carbon pollution has decreased by 47% in participating RGGI states, outpacing the rest of the country by 90% .

Air pollution reductions from RGGI will particularly benefit those most impacted by poor air quality, such as children, seniors, and low income and environmental justice communities. By joining this program, we will be able to significantly improve our air quality by reducing pollution from sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide, and particulate matter. These pollutants are linked to health problems including respiratory illness, heart attack, stroke, cancer and mental health problems. Joining RGGI will prevent hundreds of premature deaths from respiratory illnesses as well as decrease hospital visits for respiratory related illness by 30,000. We must take these steps to protect the health and well-being of our residents and ensure all Pennsylvanians have clean air to breathe.

RGGI is also expected to offer Pennsylvania significant economic benefits. The initiative is projected to create 27,000 new jobs in Pennsylvania and put nearly \$2 billion into the state's economy over the next decade alone. Studies have also shown that the cost of implementing RGGI is negligible for rate payers, and if done correctly, will actually save consumers money. In fact, electricity prices have fallen by 5.7% in RGGI states, while prices have increased in the rest of the country by 8.6%. During these times of financial uncertainty for so many Pennsylvanians, my constituents would certainly benefit from these cost reductions.

Article 1 Section 27 of the PA Constitution grants every Pennsylvanian "a right to clean air, pure water, and to the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic and esthetic values of the environment." By reducing power plant emissions under RGGI, we work to uphold that mandate. Through this program, Pennsylvania can drive down climate and air pollution, inject much-needed money into our state's economy, and create thousands of good jobs right here in the commonwealth. Above all else, we need to create a safe, liveable climate for generations to come, and RGGI is the first step for Pennsylvania.

I urge you to approve the plan for Pennsylvania to join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

No attachments were included as part of this comment.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Jessica Shirley

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