



RGGI Testimony

My name is Gaye Fifer. I have lived in Swissvale, PA for 11 years. I am a retired public school teacher and have been working on environmental issues all my adult life. I believe that it is very important for us to leave a world with clean air and clean water for future generations. I saw children affected by poor air quality, with higher incidences of asthma in neighborhoods near industrial facilities. Those children are suffering the results of negligence and greed that they have no way to influence. I want them to have a chance to grow up and to be productive, healthy citizens. My work has left me hopeful for better opportunities and possibilities as they learn to become leaders, but this won't happen if we continue to use up resources and dirty our air and water.

The most important reason we should join RGGI is because of the threat climate change poses. We are already noticing the effects of climate change in PA (heat waves, changing seasons, flooding, landslides, and agricultural issues.) I also feel responsible for what we "export" to other states and countries. We could be a much better model of caring for the next generation and for people who are more likely to experience the effects of climate change imminently.

In addition to reducing the emissions that are causing climate change, joining RGGI would have obvious public health benefits. 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, Pennsylvania 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 issues. In Pennsylvania, our constitution guarantees the right for all residents to have clean water to drink and clean air to breathe. Joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative is one major step we can take to ensure our air is cleaner and to reduce pollution.

Joining RGGI makes sense in every way to me. We can steward our resources, clean up our air & water, provide new clean energy jobs and move Pennsylvania forward into a more environmentally sustainable future. Wouldn't you want this for your children?