



Testimony for CO2 Budget Trading Program Regulation

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I am speaking in support of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. I have lived in the city of Pittsburgh since 1984. My children were born here in the mid-1990's. When they started playing sports, they were both diagnosed with asthma. I learned then that residents of Allegheny County are more likely to have asthma than the general population, by quite a significant amount. This is due in part to air pollution.

The air pollution we have in Pittsburgh will only get worse as the effects of climate change progress. Warmer air traps ground-level ozone, which forms the smog that chokes us and creates long term health problems. As temperatures increase, we'll see even more air quality action days. I shudder to think of what that will mean for Pittsburgh's most vulnerable residents. I'm also worried about other consequences of climate change that we'll experience here in Pennsylvania....

I could look at my children struggling to get enough air and know that this was the fault of our legislators failing to enforce existing legislation, take appropriate steps to end this age-old problem in our state, and keep their constitutional obligation to Pennsylvanians to breathe clean air. Certainly they are not representing their constituents in this matter; up to one

quarter of some populations in Allegheny County have asthma and yet very little has been done. Have you ever seen a child struggling to get enough oxygen? Your child?

Having moved recently from Oakland to Regent Square, I experience the foul air even more frequently. I have been embarrassed to host out-of-town friends at times. I have discouraged others from moving here due to our air toxicity.

Will Pennsylvania join 10 other states to take action on climate change, protect our residents, help clean our air and ensure a healthy future? Will Pennsylvania be forward-thinking and proactive? Or will Pennsylvania continue to live in the stone age of ignoring climate change and thinking that pollution is just something we have to endure, in spite of its poisoning effects, to save a handful of jobs and support an industry which is already on its way out? Does the legislature want to show that they care about Pennsylvanians, take steps to reduce carbon emissions, and team with other forward-thinking legislatures? I hope our lawmakers will pass the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative to help us move toward their obligation to ensure that we are doing our part to avoid the worst impact of climate change, and so we can have clean air to breathe, which, again, is our right under the state's constitution. And if that doesn't seem compelling enough, watch a child struggling to breathe. Your child.