



Stephen Hoffman

From: ecomment@pa.gov
Sent: Monday, January 4, 2021 5:14 PM
To: Environment-Committee@pasenate.com; IRRRC; environmentalcommittee@pahouse.net; regcomments@pa.gov; ntroutman@pasen.gov; timothy.collins@pasenate.com; gking@pahousegop.com; siversen@pahouse.net
Cc: c-jflanagan@pa.gov
Subject: Comment received - Proposed Rulemaking: CO2 Budget Trading Program (#7-559)

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The enclosed comment was received as part of the following testimony:

Testimony name: Public Hearing 8 (1pm) - #7-559
Testimony date: 12/11/2020 12:00:00 AM
Testimony location: WebEx

Re: eComment System

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

Commenter Information:

Daniel Rossi-Keen
 RiverWise (daniel@getriverwise.com)
 1319 Davidson St
 Aliquippa, PA 15001 US

Comments entered:

I would like to begin by thanking all who are present for the opportunity and privilege to register my support of RGGI. I would also like to apologize in advance for my somewhat slurred speech. I am currently dealing with a bout of shingles that has temporarily paralyzed half of my face. So, I suppose you can count yourself lucky that this is only an audio call.

I am speaking to you today on behalf of an organization called RiverWise, where I serve as Executive Director. RiverWise is a nonprofit organization working to develop a regional identity around the rivers of Beaver County, Pennsylvania. To accomplish this work, we are currently partnered with roughly 100 different organizations working on more than 30 sustainable development projects in numerous municipalities along and adjacent to the Ohio and Beaver Rivers. These projects include things like air quality monitoring, community parks, bike trails, the creation of municipal energy infrastructure, and much more.

Central to the work of RiverWise is the creation of ecodistricts, which we have now organized in Beaver Falls, Monaca, and Aliquippa. An ecodistrict is an organized team of stakeholders who

seek to view the development of their community holistically. In Beaver County, our current ecodistrict work focuses on enhancing six primary quality of life areas including air, water, mobility, energy, food, and equity.

I mention all of this context to give you a sense of where I am coming from when I tell you that I support the adoption of RGGI. I am not naive enough to think that RGGI will singlehandedly solve all the problems emerging from climate change. No single intervention is likely to do that. Neither do I think that RGGI will fully eliminate carbon dioxide pollution. But I do believe that if stewarded wisely and spent strategically, the proceeds from RGGI can help to support a holistic and audacious transition to a more imaginative and sustainable energy future for communities like the ones I serve in Beaver County.

As I say to anyone who will listen, the central battle in the fight against climate change is a battle for the imagination of our residents and those who have been elected to serve them. Unfortunately, advocates of a clean energy future are often left talking hypothetically about what might someday happen rather than concretely showing what is actually possible in the present. As a leader in sustainable community development in Beaver County, I need to be able to stop talking in the abstract about the future and begin demonstrating what it looks like to bring that future to life in the present. Of course, doing so requires financial resources. And I believe that if properly implemented, RGGI can provide many of the resources required to move toward a sustainable vision for our region.

Resources are required to demonstrate that an alternative energy future is not only theoretically possible but that it is also economically viable and beneficial for creating a diversified future that can stave off yet another cycle of regional boom and bust. Resources are required to bring to life RiverWise's vision for municipal scale energy production, showing residents of Beaver County how we can pump our water using solar power, how we can power our municipal fleets using cleaner energy sources, and how we can solarize our bridges to offset municipal energy costs. Resources are required to demonstrate how strategically utilized power purchase agreements can create clean energy in ways that can help to subsidize sustainable innovation in perpetuity, all while creating clean energy at lower costs. Resources are required so we can stop talking hypothetically to our area youth about an amorphous green energy workforce and instead initiate programs, training, and opportunities for green jobs that reinvigorate our education system, grow our regional economy, and give young people legitimate options for an energy-focused future.

The time for talking about these things in places like Beaver County is long past. What we need is focused and ongoing funding to create these realities in the present. The future of our health and our economies hinges on the creative vision of committees such as this one. And so, I encourage you not only to adopt RGGI, but also to implement it in ways that can will perpetuate an audacious energy future for the Commonwealth.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

No attachments were included as part of this comment.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Jessica Shirley

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PA Department of Environmental Protection

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