



Stephen Hoffman

From: ecomment@pa.gov
Sent: Tuesday, January 5, 2021 2:54 PM
To: Environment-Committee@pasenate.com; IRRC; environmentalcommittee@pahouse.net; regcomments@pa.gov; ntroutman@pasen.gov; timothy.collins@pasenate.com; gking@pahousegop.com; siversen@pahouse.net
Cc: c-jflanaga@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:

Eileen Flanagan
 Earth Quaker Action Team (eileenflanagan1@gmail.com)
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 Philadelphia, PA 19129 US

Comments entered:

My name is Eileen Flanagan, and I live in Philadelphia, PA. I'm speaking today on behalf of Earth Quaker Action Team as the former board chair. A faith-based group founded in southeastern Pennsylvania, EQAT's mission is to work for a just and sustainable economy. For the past five years, our focus has been the Power Local Green Jobs Campaign.

Unfortunately, a just and sustainable economy is far from what we have right now. It saddens me that my home state is one of the highest emitters of carbon dioxide in the country. That means that we are disproportionately contributing to climate change around the world, including in our own communities. We are locking in a future of increasing heat waves, flooding, drought, and even tornadoes, which growing up in Montgomery County, were something I only knew of from watching The Wizard of Oz. It is clear that climate chaos will affect all segments of our state—businesses, farmers, schools—but its deadly effects will fall especially hard on those who are already economically vulnerable.

In addition to the dangers posed by climate change, Pennsylvania's reliance on fossil fuels has

caused extreme pollution. I remember the first time I brought my daughter to the emergency room with asthma at age five. When I asked what caused it, the Children's Hospital nurse said it was likely from pollution. And yet I know that my Northwest Philadelphia neighborhood is not the worst affected. PA has one of the largest racial exposure gaps in the country, the result of fossil fuel facilities being disproportionately located in Black and brown communities. This has a plethora of unequal health impacts, most recently, increasing vulnerability to Covid-19. It is long past time that Pennsylvania transitions off of fossil fuels. The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative is an important step in that direction.

I know that critics of RGGI cite concern for the fossil fuel industry and especially the workers. Speaking from my own family experience, I know economic and technological changes do fall hard on workers, and it's important that we support them in transitioning to new industries. Both of my great-grandfathers were coal miners in the anthracite region, though those jobs were mostly gone by the time my father returned from World War II. He had to leave Pottsville and found work on a Sun oil tanker before he eventually settled in Montgomery County with my mother. Her father had been a blacksmith, shoeing horses out of his Philadelphia garage. Although he only had a fourth-grade education, when he saw the horseless carriage, he understood what that would mean for his business. So, while training his sons in his own trade, he also made sure they learned auto mechanic skills that helped them through the Depression. That kind of foresight is needed now, to prepare Pennsylvanians for the jobs of the future.

One of the strengths of RGGI is that it will both limit the dangerous emissions, and provide revenue to help us with the energy transition that is inevitable, but still too slow. Pennsylvania is now second to last for solar capacity on the east coast, which means we have tremendous potential for growth. RGGI is predicted to create more than 27,000 jobs in Pennsylvania through renewable energy and energy efficiency. In Philadelphia, the poorest big city in the country, our communities desperately need family-sustaining jobs, as well as clean air to breathe. Earth Quaker Action Team sincerely hopes that the hundreds of millions of dollars that will be generated by RGGI will be used to address both emissions and inequality—especially racial inequality, which has caused so much needless suffering. With RGGI projected to add \$1.9 billion to the state's economy by 2030, Pennsylvania will have the opportunity to help our entire state, while prioritizing those who need new opportunities the most.

In closing we at EQAT encourage you to affirm RGGI and make modifications to the rulemaking to incorporate inclusion and equity and environmental justice principles. Thank you for your attention.

No attachments were included as part of this comment.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Jessica Shirley

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