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## Testimony for CO2 Budget Trading Program Regulation



Before I talk about RGGI, I want to tell you a little about myself. I grew up in Washington, D.C. in the 1950's and 60's. As you know, Washington, D.C. is about 150 miles south of Philadelphia.

Winters in Washington during my childhood were considerably cooler than they have been recently, and are currently, in Philadelphia. Temperatures were routinely in the 30's and sometimes lower. There was snow; not always, but usually a couple of times a winter. It sometimes lay on the ground for up to five days.

How different things are now, 150 miles to the north. In Philadelphia, the three foot snow fall of early 1996 and the two bitterly cold winters of this last decade caused by the southward extension of the polar vortex were anomalies. Last year, there was barely any snow. This year may be the same.

My father worked in government with scientists of many kinds, among them physicists and nuclear physicists. He taught me as a child about global warming, then called the greenhouse effect. He described the effect of trapped carbon dioxide on and near the surface of the earth. His colleagues, the scientists, to a man (and they were all men), agreed that over the long term this carbon entrapment could become a devastating problem.

We ignored the problem. It would not be ignored and it caught up with us. Now, if we cannot quickly prevent increases in global temperatures, we will destroy our planet, ourselves and all the other animals and plants that share it with us.

Hence, the immense importance of RGGI, the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. RGGI caps the pollution from power plants and reduces these caps each year. So, the air gets cleaner every year. Power plant owners have to pay for their pollution, which provides an incentive for them to reduce emissions. Improvements in air quality by reductions in sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide, and particulate matter pollution will result in decreases of asthma and other respiratory diseases. As a chronic allergy sufferer, I will really appreciate that. So will the inhabitants of communities suffering from environmental injustice for whom the rates of these illnesses are intolerably high.

In the RGGI states—that is, all the Northeastern and mid Atlantic states from Maine to Virginia EXCEPT Pennsylvania—carbon pollution has fallen by 47% and electricity prices have fallen by 5.7% while increasing significantly in the rest

2.

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of the US. Think what would happen if Pennsylvania, the 4th highest green house gas emitter in the U.S. were to join the RGGI states!

The future is here and we have to face it. The youth of this country are well aware of our climate emergency, and afraid. My goddaughter's 11 year old son lay awake at night thinking about it. Are we going to let them down, even more than we already have? I hope not! That is why I passionately support RGGI.

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December 14, 2020