



## Stephen Hoffman

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**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-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 10 (6pm) - #7-559  
**Testimony date:** 12/14/2020 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:

Kathryn Pollard  
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Comments entered:

Hello and thank you for having me at this important hearing on the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, (RGGI).

I am particularly excited to be speaking here in support of a solution to climate change; a regional solution; one that my state can provide a meaningful addition to, and one that has already proven successful in ten other states in our mid-Atlantic region that are participants.

A bit about me: I am a nutrition educator and researcher, specializing in sustainable nutrition, and plant-based nutrition in particular. I teach nutrition for the University of New England; I on the staff of the Amer. College of Lifestyle Medicine; and I write about how our food habits effect climate change. That food, and our habits impact climate is good news, actually: it gives us an opportunity to make meaningful change towards a healthier planet, as well as affect our personal health.

From my work, I see the interconnections of habits, and health, and I also see the impact of environmental pollution on our health. It is all interconnected - our personal health, our wellbeing, and the environment in which we live.

Consider pollution which affects millions of people, just in our state alone, through asthma and respiratory illnesses, skin conditions, and also chronic diseases like cardiovascular disease, as air pollution facilitates atherosclerosis development and progression. Pollution exacerbates any existing respiratory weakness, including symptoms from viruses, like COVID-19 and the common flu. We can reduce this and reduce deaths, through RGGI, as other states have done. It will improve the quality of life for everyone in our cities, and it is where we can start to make the change that we are now forced to face.

RGGI simply is a powerful tool at our fingertips, to kickstart meaningful change. Now, nobody WANTS to change; it's hard (personally and structurally). But we have no choice. We must act, and this is an easy step to take towards controlling the worst effects of climate change. We can only succeed through cooperation, and we had better get used to it. RGGI is a baby step.

There are also broader steps available to us, including federal initiatives working their way through Congress, most notably The Energy and Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act, HR 763 (<https://energyinnovationact.org/how-it-works/>), a bipartisan initiative that offers a comfortable and immediate market-based plan to fund our transformation to clean energy, without taxation, and with a promise of good jobs to create it!

We know from the science that we must take steps now to avoid the worst, and we are already experiencing the effect, through extreme weather events, drought, heat waves, and recent years of warmer winters here in PA, just to name some effects of global warming. 2018 had the wettest summer here in Central PA, producing mold and health risks for our students in old school buildings. 2020 had the hottest summer on record here; for all those working outside, consider their exposure to heat stress. All the food we eat depends on these people, farmers in our state and around the world. Also consider sea level rise encroaching on our coastal cities; even Philadelphia is in the way of rising waters, which could rise 19[KP1] " by 2050. This is why we must start acting now. We can't ignore the changes, even if we are more comfortable here in PA than most of the world.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the world's foremost body of climate science, has a clear message to us all: to avoid catastrophic consequences of rising temperatures, we must do everything in our power to limit global warming to 1.5°C over pre-industrial levels. Well, are already close. We have increased our warming over a degree. Increasing to two degrees of warming could destroy ecosystems on around 13% of the world's land area, and increase the risk of extinction of many insects, plants and animals (<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-018-05984-3>), and that is what we must prevent. We depend on them. Their existence represents our existence.

The good news is that changing infrastructure and making industry responsible for carbon emissions will usher in a healthier economy. It will create jobs; stable, well-paying jobs. It will create opportunities to redefine our power plants and energy grid. And through the work of our citizens, we will have a cleaner, more efficient energy system.

For all these reasons, health, quality of life, job opportunity, and securing a livable future for those generations behind us, I urge The PA Environmental Quality Board to adopt RGGI

Thank You,

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No attachments were included as part of this comment.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,  
Jessica Shirley

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