



## Stephen Hoffman

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**From:** ecomment@pa.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, January 4, 2021 5:14 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-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 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:

Magdalena Sikora  
 (masikora@umich.edu)  
 440 E. Irvin Avenue  
 State College, PA 16801 US

Comments entered:

Hello, My name is Magdalena Sikora. I am a resident of State College, PA -- my family has been here for 28 years. Thank you so much for this opportunity to testify on behalf of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

Pennsylvania's entrance into RGGI is wonderful news as carbon pollution is expected to be cut by 21% here by the year 2030! While this does fall short of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's goal -- of 45% reductions by 2030, we desperately need this in our state as we are the 4th highest emitter of greenhouse gases in a nation which is the second-largest emitter in the world.

I testify today to ask that RGGI goes into effect with rules and regulations that ensure PA is reducing greenhouse gas emissions significantly & equally across the entire state and communities bearing the heaviest burdens from our reliance on fossil fuels are protected and

funded.

This past summer was the hottest on record in State College. While fortunate to have air conditioning in our home, we found it broken at the beginning of the summer, but we could not get an appointment for repair until the end of August as the pandemic had created a backlog. My mom and I spent the humid, 90 + degree summer days hot and uncomfortable, struggling to stay sharp and focused at work or to find exercise even possible. We are also a family in grief so those hot days without respite, were extremely difficult. It was difficult to be an efficient employee, it was difficult to get through the days, but this summer is our new norm.

- The average temperatures in PA are forecast to keep increasing and days with a heat index above-90 degree will total around 40 a year.
- As humans encroach on more wildlife habitats, we expose ourselves to animals carrying potential pandemic-causing viruses -- so this devastating pandemic may happen again.
- Tick and mosquito-borne illness are also on the rise with the warming climate without sustained freezing temperatures we used to have during the winter. For the first time in 28 years of living here, my mom developed what doctors believed to be anaplasmosis from a tick bite in our yard last summer. Another friend's mother, the same. Without antibiotics, I'd have lost my mom and I'm sure many of you have also had a similar situation. Oh, and fun fact -- With the increasing number of these bacterial infections, antibiotic use also rises, spreading the risk of antibiotic resistant bacteria across the globe.

But still I live in a location spared from the most overt and significant impacts of air and water contamination -- I have to drive quite far until I see a power plant or a natural gas well. I was 200 miles away when the Philadelphia Energy Solutions refinery exploded last year.

And so, I call for the PA Dep of Energy to ensure the protections for environmental justice communities within their RGGI rulemaking:

- I ask for no less than 50% of the revenue generated through the cap-and-invest system to be directed toward projects intent to develop renewable energy infrastructure or pollution mitigation, to abolish food deserts, or to develop green spaces.
- I ask that these projects protect communities from future harm or right the unjust practices they've had to endure.
- I ask that RGGI not allow polluters to pass their energy costs to those with the least. Large fossil fuel companies have had their day and now we need to clean and protect our planet and those living on it.
- I ask that when issuing air pollution permits, the Department take environmental justice into account; for instance, the Clean Air Act does not determine whether another polluting facility is already near when they issue permits.

I ask that RGGI not allow fossil fuel power plants to increase their emissions: We must ensure RGGI provides nothing short of emission reductions on all fronts.

And finally, RGGI should guarantee implementation of specific, publicly-available follow-up studies on the effects of the program in order to prevent any unforeseen, detrimental incentives or effects of the cap-and-invest market put in place.

Since we speak in terms of economic productivity in this country: I can say that all of us are better workers when we have green spaces to rest our minds -- as was mentioned by an earlier speaker -- and also when we have access to food and an environment that keeps us healthy. We must protect the only home we have; it is the right thing to do for ourselves and our planet.

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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Jessica Shirley  
Director, Office of Policy  
PA Department of Environmental Protection  
Rachel Carson State Office Building  
P.O. Box 2063  
Harrisburg, PA 17105-2063  
Office: 717-783-8727  
Fax: 717-783-8926  
[ecomment@pa.gov](mailto:ecomment@pa.gov)