



Testimony for CO2 Budget Trading Program Regulation

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Thank you for this opportunity to provide written testimony before the Environmental Quality Board regarding the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI).

RGGI will bring many benefits to Pennsylvania - a cleaner environment, a healthier population and a stronger economy. Pennsylvania will also benefit from a new revenue source. Through the RGGI auctions of CO2 allowances, it is estimated that in 2022 Pennsylvania will receive \$300M in additional revenue.

How should this money be invested? I propose that a substantial portion of it be targeted to job development for two groups: 1) Environmental Justice communities and 2) workers in the fossil fuel industry. Environmental justice (EJ) communities are typically Black, Brown or Indigenous neighborhoods that have disproportionately suffered the effects of pollution. EJ communities have experienced high levels of unemployment for generations and deserve preferential consideration for jobs brought about by the implementation of RGGI. But job development should be directed to a second group as well - workers in the fossil fuel industries. While these workers have a history of good paying, secure jobs they now face a future of substantial unemployment as we transition to a green economy. It is regarding the concerns of this group, fossil fuel workers, that I will focus my comments.

Unemployment is something my family experienced firsthand. When our children were in high school, my husband lost a good paying job at AT&T due to industrywide workforce reductions. It was a very difficult time for us. We faced economic and emotional challenges and it was several years before we regained our footing. Recently I witnessed that same anxiety in others in the aftermath of the PES Oil Refinery explosion in 2019. I attended a public hearing on the future of the refinery that included many refinery workers and their spouses. I recall speaking to one couple who told me about young children at home and deep concerns about their future. I saw in their eyes the same fear and uncertainty that my husband and I faced when we were dealing with unemployment in our family. And then about a month later PES announced the layoffs of 1000 workers without meaningful severance and without benefits while executives of the company received huge bonuses. That was wrong, deeply wrong. And we cannot allow that to happen to others as

Pennsylvania transitions from an extractive, fossil fuel economy to a renewable, green economy.

RGGI will provide a new and much needed revenue stream for Pennsylvania. With those funds, we need to create a comprehensive and long-term job transition program for workers from the fossil fuel industry. Opportunities exist for thousands of new jobs in renewable energy such as wind and solar, and in the energy efficiency sector. We need to ensure that those are secure, unionized, long-term jobs with family sustaining wages, good benefits and reliable retirement pensions. Such a job transition program will be a complex process and therefore planning needs to start early to be ready for the changes ahead.

I often wonder what happened to that young couple I spoke with at the PES Oil Refinery hearing. I'm certain that the layoffs were a considerable hardship for them. Let's make sure this doesn't happen to any other Pennsylvanians. With funding from RGGI, let's create a strong and comprehensive job transition program to move valuable workers from the fossil fuel industry into the new green economy.

Thank you.