



## Stephen Hoffman

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**From:** ecomment@pa.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 6, 2021 8:56 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-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 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:

Cathleen Weinert  
(cathy.weinert@gmail.com)  
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Comments entered:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Department of Environmental Protection's proposed carbon dioxide budget trading program. I am Cathleen Weinert, I'm a veterinarian, and I live in Pittsburgh. I urge you to adopt this program so that Pennsylvania can cut carbon pollution and join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

Why do I care about this?  
I have a son with asthma.  
I live in a city, where decades of pollution have begrimed people's lungs and our buildings. My husband and I are hikers, and I care about the spoiled rivers and the toxic environment near and far from where coal is produced and where it is converted into electricity.  
I care, because we created this pollution and we have a fiduciary responsibility to the planet to clean it up. 150 years ago, we invented machines to make use of these abundant natural fuels,

and humans were lifted into amazing prosperity. But now, the by-products of burning these fuels threaten the earth. And, even though they are deeply embedded in our economic life, we have a responsibility to stop using them.

Many speakers here have ably addressed the benefits of a carbon emission "cap and trade" program for Pennsylvania. Benefits for the environment, public health, jobs and the economy. There is abundant data from other states who joined the RGGI a decade or more ago to support this.

We all know this is the right thing to do.

That progress on this has been stuck for so many years in PA speaks to the risk that these changes pose for so many Pennsylvania communities.

West Virginia and PA are the only two NE and mid-Atlantic states that have not joined the RGGI and they are the second and third largest coal producers in the US. It makes sense that Pennsylvania has been cautious.

We have to figure out how we can transition away from these fuels with the least amount of harm to communities who depend on the jobs and other revenue provided by them. We have all profited from cheap energy, and now we have a moral obligation to fix this, both in the communities that have disproportionately borne the costs of burning these fuels, and in communities that will lose jobs and much of their tax revenue with these changes.

How will we pay for this?

I support the proposed carbon limits regulation because it ensures that the power sector pays some of the costs of the transition to cleaner energy. The Clean Air fund created by these payments will be a valuable tool for Pennsylvania and 25% of the fund, is ear-marked by HB 2856 to support worker and community transitions. This is estimated to be \$75 million in the first year.

We also need the Federal government to invest heavily in Pennsylvania's new cleaner economy and particularly in projects that will benefit communities that have been negatively impacted by this power, and those that now stand to lose the most as plants are shut down.

Coal producers may need leeway to refinance debt and to raise rates for consumers while they shut down their plants. Nationwide, the cost of the transition, while enormous, is both temporary, and a tiny fraction, less than 1/10 of 1% of the revenue from sales of electricity.

Consumers nationwide, who have benefited from Pennsylvania's cheap power, and who can afford it, should be willing to tolerate small very small increases in their electrical bills during the transition.

As we plan for a transition that is inevitable, and that is already happening, we desperately need some of the most important stakeholders to come to the table- coal producers, coal plant owners, workers and coal-town legislators.

Together, we can reduce carbon emissions, and protect those who have the most to lose during the transition. States who are already engaged in this process have led with some good ideas: for example, in Colorado, unions successfully pushed for legislative language to require supplemental

income for those who lose jobs, to cover all or part of the difference in salary between their old jobs and their new ones.

It is abundantly clear that Pennsylvania needs to adopt these carbon limit rules and get started toward a cleaner future and toward building a strong foundation for our growth and prosperity.

Thank you to the DEP for holding these hearings and for allowing me to testify.

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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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