



FRACTRACKER
ALLIANCE



RGGI Public Hearing Testimony

December 14, 2020

Brook Lenker

FracTracker Alliance

My name is Brook Lenker. I reside in Camp Hill, PA and am the executive director of FracTracker Alliance, a Pennsylvania-based nonprofit organization that maps, analyzes, and communicates the risks of oil, gas, and petrochemical development. We do this to advance just energy alternatives that protect public health, natural resources, and the climate.

Climate change is the paramount issue of our times, unleashing worsening impacts on agriculture, human health, forest health, infrastructure, waterways, and wildlife. From pervasive droughts to erratic floods, the evidence is irrefutable.

The cost to cope and adapt to these grievous effects will only compound, straining public coffers and private checkbooks. Adaptation is unavoidable. Mitigation is essential. Accelerating and prioritizing renewable energy, and energy efficiency, is both a moral imperative and a most prudent investment.

Its past time for Pennsylvania to join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. As fossil fuel employment wanes in the state, clean energy jobs multiply. The 2020 Pennsylvania Clean Energy Industry Report found that between 2017 and 2019, clean energy job growth accounted for seven percent of all new jobs created in the Commonwealth. Over this same time period, the clean energy industry grew faster than the overall statewide labor market. The same report found the clean energy economy to be “a good source of jobs for veterans and Hispanic or Latinx communities”. That is encouraging, and ironic, since the vagaries of climate change, and fossil fuel pollution and production, dole out their poisons most egregiously on lower-income, non-white neighborhoods.

Pennsylvania can be leader, or a laggard. I hope our we choose the former. Joining RGGI positons the state for success, building synergies that foster

prosperity, cleaner air, and a healthier population, paying untold dividends immediately, and for generations to come.

That's not cliché. It's quite true and we must act now. Carbon dioxide is the nutrient of atmospheric heating. Methane pollution is the steroid. Particulates exacerbate asthma, and other serious ailments. Severe storms and flash flooding destroy property and lives. If polluter fees are questioned, despite their modest levy, think about the costs of sea level rise, and the other liabilities of inaction.

By reasoned calculus, RGGI membership is a practical and positive measure. It's not the leap we need, but it is a very wise step, and absolutely needed.

Thank you.