



Stephen Hoffman

From: ecomment@pa.gov
Sent: Wednesday, January 6, 2021 8:56 PM
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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 9 (1pm) - #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:

Phoebe Bolz
 (pbolz@brynmawr.edu)
 101 N. Merion Ave C-147
 Bryn Mawr, PA 19010 US

Comments entered:

Good afternoon, and thank you for the opportunity to offer my testimony today. My name is Phoebe Bolz, I'm a sophomore at Bryn Mawr College, 20 minutes outside of Philly. I've only considered myself an environmental activist for the past couple years, but I've been terrified of the climate crisis for most of my life. One of the most important moments for me was actually watching a movie called Before the Flood. It's a great documentary that follows a middle-aged Leonardo DiCaprio as he discovers the reality of climate change. He learns how in 2016, cities and communities around the world have already begun to experience the negative impacts of this crisis.

This movie was a shock to my system, as I started to understand that, if we didn't take serious action against this looming crisis, I might not have a future, that I might not make it past 2050. I was so scared. This film was also the first time I heard about a carbon tax, and about cap and trade systems. I was a 15-year-old watching this movie, and I hardly understood what either of

those things meant, and yet they made so much sense to me. In their simplest terms, these programs made polluters pay.

And, as I've learned from living in Pennsylvania, the fossil fuel industry certainly isn't paying now. In fact, in the 2012-13 fiscal year, Pennsylvania handed out 3 billion dollars in tax breaks to the fossil fuel industry. Back in 2015, these ideas of a carbon tax, or a cap and trade program, just didn't seem achievable. I never thought there would be enough motivation to start de-incentivizing these energy sources that actively harm our planet and our livelihoods. It was all too tightly controlled by the industry.

But I first heard about RGGI this summer, and I was so excited. The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative is an incredibly successful cap and invest program. If Pennsylvania joined RGGI, we could avoid 188 million tons of carbon pollution by 2030 in this state alone. That's the same as taking 4 million cars off the road every year, and 11 thousand cars off the road every single day. Just imagine the difference—breathing cleaner, less toxic air instead of letting our air quality worsen for the next 10, 20, or 30 years. I can feel that difference.

This program genuinely excites me, because it's a program that actually invests in my future. As a young person, I don't know what my life will look like in 30 years. I don't know what it will look like in 10 years. I have no choice but to advocate for good policies and programs that will protect my future, and hope that politicians and decision-makers take the kind of decisive climate action that we need to ensure that I will be safe and happy, not forever affected by this growing climate crisis.

RGGI gives me hope that a place like Pennsylvania, so tightly controlled by the fossil fuel industry, can take its first steps towards securing a livable future for every Pennsylvanian. That's why I am urging the DEP and Pennsylvania decision makers to support this program, and to support the futures of young people like me across the commonwealth. Thank you for allowing me to testify today.

No attachments were included as part of this comment.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Jessica Shirley

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