



Stephen Hoffman

From: ecomment@pa.gov
Sent: Monday, January 11, 2021 2:44 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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Re: eComment System

The Department of Environmental Protection has received the following comments on Proposed Rulemaking: CO2 Budget Trading Program (#7-559).

Commenter Information:

Karen Wolf, RN, NP, PhD, DFNAP
 Alliance of Nurses for A Healthy Environment (kawolf26@mac.com)
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Comments entered:

Comments on Proposal for Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to join RGGI

As a citizen of Pennsylvania and a nurse practitioner I am writing to urge our state join in the The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). RGGI offers a market based, job creating, proven tool for Pennsylvania to tackle the problems that climate change. In doing so, it also strives to provide all Pennsylvanians with the Constitutionally guaranteed right to clean air. As noted in Article 1, Section 27 of the PA Constitution "The people have a right to clean air, pure water, and to the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic and esthetic values of the environment..."

Over recent years as a member of the Nurses Alliance for healthy Environments I have watched the adoption and response to Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. This cooperative effort among ten, soon to be eleven, New England and mid-Atlantic states began efforts to cap and reduce CO2 emissions from the electric power sector. This reduction of emissions has been impressive. If adopted in Pennsylvania it will assure the reduction of burning coal or natural gas produces carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, sulfur oxides, particulates (PM) and volatile organic compounds. These compounds also produce mercury (volatile) and fly ash. The release of mercury into the environment pollutes the fresh- water systems and downstream inhalation and ingestion through such vectors as fishing. Mercury is toxic to the central and peripheral

nervous systems. The inhalation of mercury vapor can produce harmful effects on the nervous, digestive and immune systems, lungs and kidneys, and may be fatal. One major concern is that it is especially harmful to the developing fetus and is known to cause neurological damage resulting in behavioral disorders. Fly ash is a major contributor to diseases. The fly ash particles can become lodged in the deepest part of your lungs, where they trigger asthma, inflammation and immunological reactions. Studies link these particulates to the four leading causes of death in the U.S.: heart disease, cancer, respiratory diseases and stroke.

In 2019 PA had 7 of the top 25 cities in the nation with the highest levels of year-round particle pollution and ranked 3rd in the nation for carbon dioxide emissions.

By reducing carbon dioxide emissions, the other pollutants are reduced; leading to cleaner air which would be expected to improve health and, therefore, reduce the cost of health care and the number of lost workdays.

The adoption of RGGI offers a forward- thinking approach to address fossil fuel pollution. This the first mandatory market-based program in the United States to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. RGGI is a cap and invest program - through the Initiative, states invest proceeds in energy efficiency, renewable energy, and other consumer benefit programs. RGGI would provide an opportunity to move our job training into a sustainable energy- oriented approach that addresses wind, sola, nuclear, geothermal and hydro power. Retooling our workers for the future is not only necessary, but also desired to off-set any workers displaced from jobs in regressive fossil fuel industry.

Implementation of RGGI will reduce the number of jobs in the fossil fuel industry. But jobs will be created in the wind, solar, nuclear, hydro and geothermal energy industries. The PA DEP projects that there will be a significant net gain in jobs in the energy sector/industries by implementing RGGI. Training/retraining programs will need to be available for displaced workers. As a nurse who has cared for workers harmed by fossil fuel. Extraction, I urge moving to a healthier and sustainable approach to energy production.

In summary, it is important for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to protect it citizens and plan for the future. Adopting RGGI is a critical step to achieve this goal. By reducing carbon dioxide emission and other pollutants we can achieve cleaner air which would be expected to improve health and, therefore, reduce the cost of health care and the number of lost workdays for citizens of Pennsylvania.

No attachments were included as part of this comment.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Jessica Shirley

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