

**Stephen Hoffman**

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**From:** ecomment@pa.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 13, 2021 2:32 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:

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## Comments entered:

I would like to express to those with the authority to decide whether PA joins the RGGI, or not, my very strong support for deciding in the affirmative – we must join! As the 3rd largest emitter of carbon dioxide, PA has a responsibility to our nation, to the world – and to our children, to take aggressive steps to reduce CO2 emissions, as well as other emissions such as methane, that contribute to the warming of our planet.

2020 was the hottest year on record – temperatures were tied with 2016 but it was hotter if you factor in the cooling La Nina, which did not cool us this time. Along with this came record expenditures to address weather-related disaster and infrastructure repair, a decline in the quality of ecological services we depend upon, negative impacts on industries such as agriculture, forestry, fishing, tourism, skiing – the list is long.

However, my support for PA joining the RGGI is based on more than the very clear environmental and economic imperatives to do so. As a teen and young adult, I lived in upstate New York, near the Adirondacks, and I saw first-hand the devastation of acid rain to those forests and lakes. Many mountaintops looked barren and bedraggled as the evergreens died and other trees were denuded of foliage. Many lakes acidified to the point where they could not support life, and a lot of money and time was spent putting lime in lakes to try and recover ecosystems that could support fishing.

Fortunately, I was also able to witness the miraculous recovery of mountains and lakes because of the sulfur-dioxide permit trading system, implemented through the Clean Air Act. I strongly supported this effort because it did not tell businesses what to do or how, it merely established evidence-based caps on how much sulfur dioxide could be safely emitted and then created a market where those businesses that underachieved could trade with those that overachieved. It unleashed innovation, and this approach yielded results at drastically lower costs and in much less time than was anticipated.

As a scholar who studies innovation, I can say with confidence that businesses innovate in response to opportunity and in response to constraints. If RGGI is implemented in an evidence-based, incentive-driven fashion, as it intends, rather than a burdensome command-and-control approach, I am sure the benefits will be far greater than any of us can currently imagine. Global competitiveness absolutely demands a smart and aggressive approach to sustainability, including our carbon footprints. PA is blessed with a wealth of natural resources – and also a wealth of university and industrial scientists and engineers who absolutely have the skills and the passion to rise to this challenge. They just need policy makers and business leaders to have the courage to unleash them.

Please support PA's entry into the RGGI.

We can only gain from this, despite the inevitable unknowns and fears. It is time for fearless leadership.

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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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