



Stephen Hoffman

From: ecomment@pa.gov
Sent: Wednesday, January 13, 2021 4:13 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:

Derek Green
 City of Philadelphia Councilmember (derek.green@phila.gov)
 City Hall, Room 594
 Philadelphia, PA 19107 US

Comments entered:

I am writing to submit my comments in support of Pennsylvania joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative ("RGGI") during the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's public comment period.

The impacts of the climate crisis are becoming clearer every day all across our country, from higher summer temperatures and more dangerous storms here in Pennsylvania, to wildfires in the western states, and more devastating hurricanes along the Atlantic and in the Gulf of Mexico. As the fourth-largest emitter of greenhouse gases in the nation, Pennsylvania has a responsibility to be a leader in implementing climate solutions and reducing emissions. A key step towards that goal is joining RGGI, which has proven over the past twelve years to be the most successful state-level program in the U.S. for addressing greenhouse gas emissions. From 2008 through 2018, carbon pollution has decreased by 47% in participating RGGI states, outpacing the rest of the country by 90%. If Pennsylvania joins RGGI, we are projected to reduce the Commonwealth's carbon emissions by a massive 188 million tons by 2030 – equivalent to taking more than 36 million cars off the road.

Reducing emissions from dirty power plants also has tremendous health benefits. Lower air pollution in RGGI states has led to significantly fewer premature deaths, heart attacks, and respiratory illnesses. Studies show that by joining RGGI, Pennsylvania could prevent hundreds of premature deaths from respiratory illnesses and avoid 30,000 hospital visits for respiratory related illnesses. At a time when public health is a key priority for most Pennsylvanians, taking

steps towards better air quality, reducing preexisting conditions, and tamping down on supply from our medical providers should be top concerns for the Commonwealth's policymakers. RGGI is also expected to offer Pennsylvania significant economic benefits. The initiative is projected to create 27,000 new jobs in Pennsylvania and put nearly \$2 billion into the state's economy over the next decade alone. Studies have also shown that the cost of implementing RGGI is negligible for rate payers, and if done correctly, will actually save consumers money. In fact, electricity prices have fallen by 5.7% in RGGI states, while prices have increased in the rest of the country by 8.6%. During these times of financial uncertainty for too many Pennsylvanians, my constituents would benefit from these cost reductions.

Article 1 Section 27 of the Pennsylvania Constitution grants every Pennsylvanian "a right to clean air, pure water, and to the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic and esthetic values of the environment." In reducing power plant emissions under RGGI, we would work to uphold that mandate.

Pennsylvania policymakers should feel confident that participating in RGGI would help our state lower carbon emissions and air pollution while promoting job and economic growth. Its track record in neighboring states shows carbon pricing is an efficient, comprehensive way to reduce carbon emissions. RGGI also has the added benefit of bringing hundreds of millions in new revenues to the state with flexibility on how it can be spent. In the minds of Pennsylvania voters, this is a settled issue, with overwhelming majorities in support of environmental policies that promote clean air.

I hope policymakers embrace Pennsylvania's entry into RGGI for a healthier future that includes cleaner air, lower energy prices, and family sustaining jobs. I urge you to approve the plan for Pennsylvania to join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

No attachments were included as part of this comment.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Jessica Shirley

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