



**Stephen Hoffman**

**From:** ecomment@pa.gov  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 14, 2021 12:28 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:

Raquel Janes  
(janesraquel@yahoo.com)  
1501 W Rose St  
Walla Walla, WA 99362 US

Comments entered:

Testimony for Proposed Rulemaking: CO2 Budget Trading Program (#7-559)  
As delivered orally during the public hearing on 12/8/20.

Good afternoon. My name is Raquel Janes, I am a student at Whitman College in Walla Walla Washington, but I live in Plainville, Connecticut; a member state of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. In my 21 years, I have witnessed and been affected by the rising climate crisis, as a concerned American; and I am speaking to you today to urge Pennsylvania to join this same program that Connecticut and other states have adopted.

I was born and raised in Tampa, Florida, and my family still resides there. I was a very active child and teenager and spent most of my time at the beach competing as an open water swimmer. My home near the gulf provided me the perfect opportunity to grow up with the ocean in my backyard, yet the rising temperatures turned that outlet into the source of my early climate anxieties.

When classes began in late summer, hurricane days for us were like snow days up north. We loved the free day off, but never understood the stress and anxiety it brought our parents. We spent our days off watching movies while my family would stock up on the basic necessities and I was taught how to board up my windows.

But as I grew older, those hurricane days turned into weeks, the storms became more intense, my streets flooded, and my relief was replaced with anxiety. My education was placed on hold for a storm that my family and I had zero control over. In school, we learned that the climate crisis drastically changes weather patterns, and my home near the gulf was most vulnerable to these changes. My access to school, practice, and the ability to even visit my family now relied on my governments addressing climate change to the same severity that my community felt its impacts during the hurricane season.

I've lived in several states since my childhood, and I have come to learn that the ecosystems around the country mirror that same delicate balance as the one that was in my backyard. I've also learned that we have the tools and resources to not only maintain that balance but reverse the damage that we have done to disrupt them, as long as we act before it is too late. My education in high school should not have been expendable to a political agenda, especially if those crises' could have been lessened or avoided entirely had we taken action sooner. Reducing air pollution should not be a political issue, clean air is a human right. To refuse that right to those who pay taxes to live and work in a city or state and send their children to public schools is not only inhumane, but underlines the responsibility of a people supported government to base their actions on what is the most healthy, just, and safe for their constituents.

If I could go back, I would absolutely trade my hurricane days for going to school if it meant securing the safety of my neighbors and avoiding thousands of dollars in damage. Maybe if my governments had acted sooner, I wouldn't have to wish. But climate change is an ongoing battle, and we have no time to regret what we could have done.

Air and climate pollution don't care about state boundaries and what Pennsylvania decides will undoubtedly impact the rest of the country. I'm urging you to consider what you want the children of not just Pennsylvania but the children of America to remember about their childhood; because if nothing is done, my memories of anxiety, storm drills, and my family's fears of natural disasters will be passed on to the next generation, perhaps even beyond my coastal community. I understand now, as an adult, that those hurricane days should have been taken as warning signs to act sooner; don't let the next generation of children grow up thinking that the safety of their small hometown ranked second place to big polluters. RGGI is an opportunity for Pennsylvania to reduce climate pollution, air pollution, and prove to the people of Pennsylvania and America that the health of their people and their children's futures comes first; I can't imagine a responsible politician wanting it any other way. Thank you for your time

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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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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