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RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF REGIONAL GREEN HOUSE GAS INITIATIVE

My name is Daphne More and I thank you for this opportunity to present testimony in support of Pennsylvania's entry into the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). I am a residential architect with a small design practice that works closely with families and individuals to improve their homes and property. As part of my architectural work I spend time listening to clients' concerns and exchanging data with them about issues that impact the quality of their lives such as energy efficiency, material selection, and wellness. I am also an active member of the Committee on the Environment (COTE) affiliated with the American Institute of Architects. Protecting the public's welfare in the built and natural environments is central to our mission. Through these combined experiences I have learned that the public cares deeply about the effects of climate change. The public wants and deserves a healthy and resilient future. RGGI is a profitable, effective carbon reduction strategy that can help us achieve this goal.

The evidence is overwhelming that the abundance of CO₂ (carbon dioxide) and other greenhouse gasses in the earth's atmosphere is negatively impacting the quality of life in the US. Americans are experiencing the effects of climate change with growing intensity as extreme weather patterns wreak havoc on their lives. The elderly and children are especially vulnerable during heat waves that can lead to dehydration and strokes. The worsening air quality is linked to growing respiratory problems. Flooding, high winds and heavy rain are destroying properties, displacing people from their homes and affecting the economy. Today, these conditions are exacerbated by the continual threat of the COVID-19 virus. Because the energy generating sector in Pennsylvania is one of the leading sources of GHG emissions, we must make carbon reduction and energy efficiency a top priority.

The most successful strategies for reducing GHG levels across the US require a multi-pronged approach with coordinated efforts for the greatest regional benefit. In 2017 PA had already achieved nearly 19% of the required 26% GHG reduction targeted for 2025. Studies suggest however, that

reaching the 2050 goals of 80% reduction of GHG emissions will need a more aggressive, strategic plan. RGGI offers the state of Pennsylvania a path forward. Our neighbors in the Northeast, CONN, DE, ME, MD, MA, NH, NJ, NY, RI and VT are already working cooperatively to reduce and offset GHG emissions through an electricity sector cap and trade program. They are successfully taking steps to reverse the effects of climate change and in so doing, helping to protect the public's health from harmful pollution. By "banking and trading" carbon allowances they are creating investment opportunities resulting from the auction of CO2 allowances to further reduce GHG emissions. The economic benefits are measurable; the jobs this creates are real. Isn't it time for Pennsylvania to join its neighbors and enjoy these rewards as well? Proceeds resulting from the CO2 auction could be invested in improving energy efficiency and embracing additional carbon reducing strategies in the commonwealth.

According to the 2020 Green House Gas Inventory Report, per the Executive Order 2019-01 signed by Governor Wolf, the residential sector in PA experienced declines in GHG emissions from 2005 to 2017. However, it still consumed a total of 51.72% of commonwealth electricity (TWh). 228,174 Btu's of natural gas were spent to provide heat and hot water to residences causing 12 (MMTCO2e) in GHG emissions. This needs to change. Helping home wners transition from gas-fueled appliances to electric (non-fossil-fueled) could be the first step in decarbonizing the residential sector and transitioning communities to 100% renewable energy. Because wind and solar do not produce GHG emissions, communities would also benefit from improved air quality and better health. At the household scale, improved energy efficiency would result in lower utility bills, freeing up resources for other necessities. By increasing the buying power of homeowners and creating real jobs, RGGI has the capacity to stabilize Pennsylvania's economic and environmental future.

Sincerely,

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