

**Stephen Hoffman**

From: ecomment@pa.gov
Sent: Tuesday, December 8, 2020 12:52 PM
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Cc: c-jflanaga@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:

Gov. Wolf wants to enlist Pennsylvania in a futile battle to change the weather.

He's proposed that Pennsylvania join something called the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative or "RGGI".

RGGI is an agreement between Northeast states to reduce greenhouse gas emissions via a cap-and-trade system.

If Pennsylvania joins RGGI, power plants in the state will have to purchase permits to emit carbon dioxide (CO2).

The scheme is for the price of the permits to increase and their availability to decrease every year so that it becomes more and more expensive for power plants to emit CO2.

What could go wrong with a plan to make electricity cost more every year?

If you listen to Gov. Wolf, the answer is nothing.

He claims that emissions will decline by a cumulative 188 million tons by 2030.

He says electricity prices will be 3% lower than they otherwise would be by 2030.

He says personal income will only be slightly lower by 2030 but state revenue will be slightly higher.

Gov. Wolf also claims that there will be public health benefits worth an estimated \$6.3 billion by 2030.

What's not to like?

So the whole idea of this scheme is to "combat climate change." Will it?

Regardless of whether you believe United Nations science on climate, an indisputable reality is that human activities produce about 55 billion tons of emissions every year.

The UN says those emissions are increasing with no end in sight.

So by 2030, when Pennsylvania's RGGI membership supposedly will have reduced state CO2 emissions by 188 million tons, the world will have emitted more than 550 billion tons.

So RGGI in Pennsylvania will reduce global emissions by a measly 0.034% at most.

The insignificance to the global climate and weather of that level of emissions cut is obvious.

So RGGI will accomplish nothing for the climate or environment.

But electricity prices will be 3% lower, says Gov. Wolf.

Well, how will electricity prices be lower if the cost to produce electricity is going to increase every year?

That's easy. Pennsylvanians would be paying slightly less for electricity because they will be using a lot less electricity.

Gov. Wolf wants to reduce cumulative electricity use in Pennsylvania by a whopping 27,822 gigawatt-hours by 2030.

The other term for this so-called "demand reduction" policy is rationing.

Though the world is awash in cheap energy, Gov. Wolf intends to ration electricity in Pennsylvania and Pennsylvanians will be paying more for less electricity.

Don't forget that compared with states without excessive CO2 emissions regulations, the other states in RGGI have already seen their electricity prices rise 64% faster, according to the Commonwealth Foundation.

What about Gov. Wolf's projections for personal income and state revenue?

I know of no state government that can successfully predict your or its income 10 years in the future.

But if you work in, or depend on the coal or fracking industries – like hundreds of thousands in Pennsylvania -- RGGI is not designed to be a job security program for you.

Such high-paying jobs are earmarked to be redistributed to much lower wage wind and solar workers.

Although Gov. Wolf projects the state to come out ever so slightly financially ahead by 2030 because of RGGI's cap-and-tax design, this is nonsense.

There will be offsetting and lost tax revenues from reduced coal mining and fracking.

Also, it's hard to imagine how making people pointlessly poorer will boost state tax revenues.

Finally, there is the claim that RGGI's emissions cuts will bring public health benefits that, if hypothetically monetized, are worth billions of dollars. This is more total nonsense.

Pennsylvania's air quality is already clean and safe.

Air pollution in Pennsylvania is at historically low levels.

Claims to the contrary are based on statistical shenanigans and other junk science outside the scope of this 5-minute testimony.

Air quality is not killing or sickening anyone. Not a cough or a wheeze is caused by anything coming out of any power plant.

There is simply no scientific or medical evidence indicating that anyone's health is being harmed by Pennsylvania air quality.

But if you doubt me, let's debate it at a special hearing convened by the Pennsylvania Department of Environment Protection. You will lose, but learn a great deal.

In contrast, we know that unemploying people and making them poorer hurts their health.

That is certain to happen as Gov. Wolf's RGGI membership kills coals mining, fracking, power plants and their support industries.

What's the bottom line?

Pennsylvania's participation in RGGI will accomplish nothing for the environment, climate or public health.

Instead, energy prices will increase, making Pennsylvania and Pennsylvanians poorer.

Gov. Wolf's electricity rationing will only hurt the standard of living in Pennsylvania.

The cap-and-tax wolf is at the door, Pennsylvania. Don't open it.

No attachments were included as part of this comment.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
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