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Testimony for CO2 Budget Trading Program Regulation

Thank you. I will be speaking as a private citizen.

My name is Hannah Jones. I am a 19-year-old from Pittsburgh, and an undergraduate at Pitt. As you may already be aware, Western Pennsylvania's asthma rates are unusually high because of air pollution. In 2019, the Allegheny County Asthma task force report estimated that 11% of children in the county are diagnosed with the disease. That's 3% higher than the national average! But what do stats like this mean? What does it mean for almost 25,000 children who grow up with asthma? I certainly can't speak for everyone, but I have some understanding of what it's like to grow up and be limited by my breathing.

I was preschool-aged when I had my first asthma attack. It was scary. I vividly remember the panic in my mother's eyes as she tried to get me to calm down so I wouldn't pass out. I ended up going to the ER. I'm very fortunate that my parents had the resources to treat my asthma throughout my childhood. When I'd get sick, they would get up in the middle of the night to put me on the nebulizer. And throughout grade school, my mom made sure I took my daily preventative inhaler and would remind me to take my emergency inhaler to any sports practice.

Even when well-managed, asthma is incredibly frustrating. It can get better, but it never goes away completely. I'm a runner. I did cross country *and* track and field for all four years of

high school. Breathing, not tiredness or injury has always been the greatest challenge for me. Because it doesn't matter if your muscles are not tired and you want to keep going. You have to stop if you can't breathe.

What is infuriating is that it doesn't have to be this bad for me and so many others who have breathing difficulties. Pennsylvania is one of the most polluted states in the country. So my living here hasn't helped my condition. I became aware of the problem my junior year of high school when my environmental science teacher handed out packets with data about western PA's air quality. It had stats particulate matter, ozone, nitrogen dioxide.... everything. I was shocked by how many months we simply failed the EPA standard for particulate matter. It was no wonder I and so many other kids have asthma in this area. Even though my family is here, and I think Pittsburgh is a wonderful city, I don't want to live here anymore because of the poor air quality. I don't want to raise children here either. I have twin sisters who also have asthma. My grandmother moved here from Florida to help my mom take care of us, and now she has breathing problems. The American Lung Association in their 2020 State of the Air gives Pittsburgh an F grade for ozone and particle pollution, and it is the 8th most air polluted city in the country.

If you act now, you can improve the lives of so many people and those yet to be born here. You can make sure that fewer parents have to watch their children gasp for breath or spend sleepless nights making sure they get all their breathing treatments. You can keep more people healthy and safe and wanting to live here. Needless to say, I support RGGI.

Thank you for your time.