

**Stephen Hoffman**

From: ecomment@pa.gov
Sent: Wednesday, December 9, 2020 8:25 PM
To: Environment-Committee@pasenate.com; IRRRC; environmentalcommittee@pahouse.net; regcomments@pa.gov; ntroutman@pasen.gov; timothy.collins@pasenate.com; gking@pahousegop.com
Cc: c-jflanaga@pa.gov
Subject: Comment received - Proposed Rulemaking: CO2 Budget Trading Program (#7-559)

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The enclosed comment was received as part of the following testimony:

Testimony name: Public Hearing 1 (9am) - #7-559
Testimony date: 12/8/2020 12:00:00 AM
Testimony location: WebEx

Re: eComment System

The Department of Environmental Protection has received the following comments on Proposed Rulemaking: CO2 Budget Trading Program (#7-559).

Commenter Information:

Kelly Organ
(kelly.ann.organ@gmail.com)
66 Penn Boulevard
East Lansdowne, PA 19050 US

Comments entered:

Hello,

Thank you for allowing me to share my comments today. My name is Kelly Organ. My comments are offered as a private citizen and a resident of East Lansdowne, Delaware County, Pennsylvania.

I strongly support the Department of Environmental Protection's proposed standard to join the bipartisan Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI).

There are three main reasons I believe we should join RGGI:

1. It's common sense financially
2. It's good for the future of our state

3. It's the right thing to do ethically

First: joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative makes good financial sense.

RGGI has been a considerable success in the 10 states where it's already in place, raising nearly \$3 billion to invest in energy efficiency and clean energy projects.

It is estimated that joining the RGGI will create more than 27,000 net jobs, and add \$1.9 billion to our commonwealth's economy.

Particularly important right now, the health benefits of joining RGGI and improving the air quality of our state are also enormous, including \$6.3 billion in health care savings, 30,000 fewer hospital visits for respiratory illnesses like asthma among children and adults.

This combination of revenue generation and cost reduction makes good financial sense, and is an important step forward.

Second: joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative is good for the future of our state.

I love Pennsylvania. My husband and I bought our first home here, excited to build a life in a state blessed with such beautiful natural lands and such diverse and welcoming people. We spent summers in our youth at summer camps in the Laurel Highlands, and now we spend our weekends and vacations hiking in the Allegheny National Forest and rafting down the Youghiogeny River. Pennsylvania is a beautiful place, and I am grateful to live here.

But Pennsylvania is also the third largest greenhouse gas polluting state and has the fifth dirtiest power plant industry in the nation. According to The American Lung Association's State of the Air 2020, smog levels are increasing in Pennsylvania. Increased temperatures caused by fossil fuel warming are a leading factor behind the growing incidents of insect-borne diseases such as West Nile Virus and Lyme Disease, which sees an estimated 120,000 cases per year in PA.

Medical research also concludes that over 2,700 Pennsylvanians died prematurely in 2018 from Pennsylvania's air pollution problem. In fact, Pennsylvania holds the inauspicious claim of having the third most air pollution-related deaths in the U.S. And beyond our borders, our pollution is believed to have contributed to more than 2,300 premature deaths in other states as well.

This is scary to me. It's scary to imagine the air becoming less and less safe to breathe. It's scary to imagine our wild lands disappearing. It's scary to imagine new diseases, more extreme storms, and more frequent flooding -- all of which we are already seeing. I am young; my husband and I are just starting our lives together and dream of raising children in a world that feels familiar to us.

This carbon pollution control program can reduce harmful climate-changing CO2 emissions, protect public health, and position Pennsylvania as a leader in the growing clean energy economy. Joining RGGI is certainly not enough, but it's a start. It's scary to imagine a future Pennsylvania if we don't do something about climate change now -- but it's also hopeful to imagine the future of this great state if we do act now.

Last: joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative is simply the right thing to do.

Taking care of the environment and reducing carbon emissions is not just good economic sense; it is our moral obligation.

I am a Christian, so I believe it is our responsibility to care for creation and fight for the causes of the oppressed. Environmental justice has not been granted equally to everyone. The Pennsylvanians who, by necessity, live in the areas of the highest pollution are not the rich -- they are the poor, whose lives we so often discount as less important. It is wrong to not consider their health and well-being.

It is wrong to do nothing as Pennsylvanians with asthma and other respiratory conditions struggle to breathe in our worsening air.

It is wrong to continue to prop up the fossil fuel industry, which is unsustainable, unsafe, and destroys the health of those who work in it and those who live nearby.

It is wrong to sacrifice the long-term sustainability and health of our state for short-term economic gain.

It is wrong to not do our part in this global work to minimize the harmful effects of climate change on our own citizens and those around the world.

Joining RGGI is common sense, future-oriented, and the right thing to do.

No attachments were included as part of this comment.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Jessica Shirley

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