



Testimony for CO2 Budget Trading Program Regulation

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Hello, my name is Greta Bunin. I live in Cheltenham Township in Montgomery County, where I am a member of the Environmental Advisory Council. By profession, I am an epidemiologist and spent most of my career studying the causes of cancer.

I am here today to urge the Environmental Quality Board of DEP to approve the CO2 Budget Trading Program Regulation because I am so concerned about climate change as a citizen of course but also as a mother and an epidemiologist. We know the proposed program works as similar ones have reduced CO2 emissions in neighboring states.

As a citizen serving on my local Environmental Advisory Council, I see that the effects of local action are limited. For example, the Environmental Advisory Council may be able to convince township officials to purchase electric vehicles as gasoline vehicles need to be replaced and promote home weatherization, composting and diets with more plant foods, but we can't do much about the energy delivered by the grid to our homes and businesses. Making the state's energy grid cleaner, exactly what joining RGGI will do for PA, will make a much larger difference.

As a mother, I worry about what life will be like for my 20-something daughter, the others of her generation and younger generations. Judging from my daughter, young people are rightfully scared about what their future will hold. I know we are running out of time to avoid the worst effects and it's very difficult to look young people in the eye and tell them it's going to be OK. All of us, especially those of us in older generations, have a moral obligation to do all we can to minimize climate change.

As an epidemiologist, I know that climate change will damage our health in many ways. I'll focus on effects of just one result of climate change - rising temperatures here in PA where our climate will be much like that of today's Miami. The temperature rise will increase air pollution. Air pollution, particularly small particulates, is known to increase the death rate overall, the death rate for heart disease, the incidence of lung cancer, asthma, and even premature births. In addition, air pollution likely increases high blood pressure, diabetes, heart attacks, and strokes, and many other medical conditions. Besides direct effects on disease, climate change indirectly damages health when severe weather events close health care facilities and interrupt patients' medical care for chronic conditions and conditions that require continuous care such as cancer.

We need to act now. This program and joining RGGI is a great step forward that we know works based on the states that are already members. The cap on CO2 pollution and the investments made possible by the auction of the CO2 allowances reduce greenhouse gas emissions from power plants and allow for investment in renewable energy.

I urge DEP to adopt this rule without major revision. But minor revisions are needed so that as we reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, we invest in two groups of PA communities – those that have historically born the burden of air pollution from fossil fuel industries and those that will lose fossil fuel jobs. For example, these communities should be first in line for the new, good paying, green energy jobs that will be created by the state joining RGGI.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.