



Testimony for CO2 Budget Trading Program Regulation

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Good afternoon. My name is Howard Sherman. I'm a Pennsylvania resident testifying today as a concerned private citizen. I live at 267 N. Highland Avenue in Lansdowne. Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on the question of whether Pennsylvania should join RGGI, the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

We all know beyond dispute that the unrestricted burning of fossil fuels has led to multiple adverse health impacts among Americans, including shortened life expectancy and greater vulnerability to the impacts of diseases, among them COVID-19. We also know beyond dispute that our unrestricted burning of fossil fuels is increasingly warming the planet, with consequences which we already see in natural disasters that become more frequent and more severe with each passing year.

As a senior citizen with a history of bronchitis, having to breathe contaminated air puts me at greater risk than most Pennsylvanians for severe illnesses and shortened life expectancy. In former years, I enjoyed and maintained an active practice of running, hiking, and other means of vigorous outdoor exercise. Those activities are important to keep me healthy. In the last few years, however, I've had to limit my outdoor exercise on certain days, subject to warnings that the air quality is unhealthy for people like me. That's only my story, but the same air pollution and its adverse health impacts affects Pennsylvanians of all ages and all walks of life, including everyone attending this hearing today and all of you who will make the decision on RGGI.

As serious a problem as toxic air pollution is in our current time, we know that the long run cumulative impacts of global warming due to unrestricted fossil fuel burning present an even greater crisis. We're already seeing its impacts, in lost and damaged lives and in massive social and economic dislocations. Yet the current impacts, as the most reliable scientific predictions tell us, are a mere harbinger of what is to come if we fail to reduce our burning of fossil fuels.

The greatest burden, according to the best scientific predictions, will fall on the younger generations, the children and grandchildren of our generation. At some point, in future years, they're going to be looking at us and judging us, asking, "What did you do, or fail to do, in your time to mitigate this catastrophe?" How much did we think of them and the consequences they'd have to bear when we made our choices? Most of you attending this hearing and those on the Board who are responsible for making a decision on RGGI, have children and grandchildren of your own, I assume. What will you tell them about your decision when, in a

future time, they confront you about the burden placed on them if you decide to continue our unrestricted burning of fossil fuels? Equally, what do you tell your own conscience if you intentionally, knowingly choose to do nothing in full knowledge that the worst consequences of your decision will fall on your own children and grandchildren?

At present, Pennsylvania is the fourth largest emitter of greenhouse gases in the U.S. How can we tolerate this—why should we tolerate this—knowing the consequences that will fall on our descendants?

Members of the Environmental Quality Board and the Department of Environmental Protection, it is past time that we step forward and join RGGI, for the sake of all Pennsylvanians, present and future. I urge you, for the health of each of us living here today and the well-being of our descendants, to vote unanimously to support Pennsylvania joining RGGI.

Thank you.