



Good afternoon – thank you for giving me a few minutes to speak today. My name is Riley Spahr and I am here both as a representative of Defend Our Future and a resident of Harrisburg Pa. I am here today to advocate for the inclusion of Pennsylvania into the RGGI program.

I have voiced my concerns about the current state of our climate to anyone that would listen be it friends, family, community members, or assignments for school. I am all too aware of the hazards posed by air pollution to our communities here and around the country; the changing climate and the consequences we are already starting to see from that. My mother always tells me how frightened she is about the future of our planet whenever the news shows another wildfire or natural disaster, another slash to environmental funding or withdrawal from programs like the Paris climate agreement, and us as a country avoiding the impending problem of climate change. She tells me this is her planet, her kids planet, her grandkids planet, and so on. She is not alone in these sentiments and many of us in Pennsylvania feel the exact same way.

It is crucial that we bolster environmental protection legislation and incorporate programs like RGGI as quickly as possible. Because carbon pollution poses the biggest threat to our environment and is the main contributor to climate change, It is imperative that we act now and I encourage all of our elected and appointed federal leaders to share this view. RGGI is a program designed to cap and reduce CO2 emissions from the power sector. RGGI and programs like it can lead to expansion of over 90,000 clean energy jobs in Pennsylvania

according to data from 2019 as well as position the state as a leader in the clean energy economy. Through RGGI, States sell nearly all emission allowances through auctions and invest proceeds in energy efficiency, renewable energy, and other consumer benefit programs. In turn, this boosts the clean energy economy and creates green jobs in these RGGI states. Furthermore, air pollution reductions generated by RGGI have been shown to have reduced impacts to children's health including asthma, preterm births, and low birth weights with estimated avoided health costs of up to \$350 million. So not only is taking part in RGGI immensely beneficial for our environment, but it has profound economic benefits, job creation, and long-lasting health impacts for our children, elders, and those with compromising preexisting conditions. Thank you for holding this important event and thank you for your time.