



STATEMENT TO THE PENNSYLVANIA DEP ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY BOARD
PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED RULEMAKING: CO₂ BUDGET TRADING PROGRAM
DECEMBER 14, 2020, 6 PM, SLOT #59

Good evening. My name is Andrea Strout, and I live in Buckingham, Pennsylvania (Doylestown mailing address, 18902). I'm testifying as a private citizen in favor of Pennsylvania's participation in RGGI. But it's my husband's story I'd like to tell.

Dan was born in Fayette County, Pa: coal country. Coal was the family business. His parents met at the company store; much of his family lived in company housing. Dan's most vivid childhood memories are of the ash from beehive ovens that permanently blanketed houses, cars and trees, and of playing in "red dog" (slate) dumps with his siblings.

My husband's not the testifying type, which is why I'm telling his story. But a photo from 2017, showing the President surrounded by miners as he signed the executive order that repealed the Clean Power Plan—promising it would "bring back coal"—motivated him to write a letter to the editor of our local paper. Dan felt it was important to share his perspective with others, especially those whose lives, incomes and identities, going back many generations, revolved around coal.

I'd like to share just a couple of excerpts from that letter, which ran in the Bucks County *Herald* in April 2017:

"Six [of my] uncles and both grandfathers went down into the mines. My ancestors dug coal in England and Wales.

"I became a teacher, and my five brothers and sisters likewise pursued other lines of work. We've had the usual ups and downs, but we have generally done well. So what I want to tell the anxious miners in the March 28 photo with President Trump is this: *There is life after coal.*"

The transition to a fossil-free future won't be easy. But with thoughtful planning, it can be more equitable and less painful than at previous such hinge moments. In fact, we're already well into that transition. It's wildly past time we were.

The true cost of our reliance on extracted fuels isn't the price of a barrel of oil, a short ton of coal or a cubic foot of natural gas. It's the billions upon billions needed to mitigate, repair, rebuild, remediate, treat and otherwise offset the effects of increased droughts, wildfires, algae blooms, unsafe drinking water, sea-level rise and violent storms.

For the sake of all who share this planet, let's slap a *real* price tag on carbon—finally.