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### Testimony for CO2 Budget Trading Program Regulation

Thank you for permitting me to share my comments today. My name is Andrew Schumacher. I am a first-year osteopathic medical student at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine. I am also an evangelical Christian.

This pandemic season has made me acutely aware of how dizzying our world can be. The storm of information relentlessly reminds us that suffering is around every corner. With no one to turn to, feelings of helplessness, confusion, and apathy begin to creep in. These are dark times.

It is in these dark times that I am reminded of the true meaning of Christmas as stated in John 1:5, "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." Jesus provides me hope in this season, and I will strive to live out what he said was most important: loving God fully and loving our neighbors as ourselves. Unfortunately, climate change is already impacting our neighbors and God's creation here in the United States and around the world.

One week ago, The Lancet published their findings of the impact climate change has had on human health over the last twenty years.<sup>1</sup> Among the findings were increased heat-related deaths, increased prevalence of natural disasters, increased human exposure to wildfires, and increased suitability for transmission of infectious diseases. The people suffering these impacts are my future patients. It is therefore my responsibility to counsel them about the risks that climate change poses to their health and to future generations.

These health impacts only coincide with the warming effect caused by the emission of greenhouse gases. In 2018, Pennsylvania burned 1.3 million barrels of oil, 23.5 million tons of coal, and 539 billion cubic feet of methane for electricity. This produced 77 million metric tons of carbon dioxide qualifying our state as the third largest greenhouse gas emitter in the nation.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, over 2,700 Pennsylvanians died prematurely in 2018 from Pennsylvania's air pollution problem,<sup>3</sup> including pollution produced by the electric generation industry, granting our state the inauspicious claim of having the third most air pollution-related deaths in the nation.<sup>4</sup>

To deal with these life-threatening health impacts, I support the Department of Environmental Protection's proposed standard to Join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) and cut carbon pollution, with the co-benefit of other pollutants, from electric power generation.

According to the Pennsylvania RGGI Modeling Report published on September 25, some of the expected economic benefits of this program include:

- Decreasing energy prices long term
- \$2 billion in revenue for PA by 2030
- Rising electricity exports to 37% of PA's total generation by 2030
- Job creation in rural communities
- Expedited diversification of coal industry, which is facing an 80% decline by 2030

Lastly, 72% of Pennsylvanians say it is important to them that their electricity comes from energy that does not create carbon emissions.<sup>5</sup> We are part of the problem, but we are willing to be part of the solution.

Thank you.

#### References

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