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Private Citizen

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify in enthusiastic support of Pennsylvania joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, commonly referred to as RGGI. My name is Marcia Rapone and I am testifying today as a private citizen from West Grove, PA, which is a rural town in southern Chester County.

I, like many others here tonight, am concerned about climate change. I have adopted little strategies in my day-to-day life to try to reduce my carbon footprint. I bring my own bags to the grocery. I bought the most fuel efficient vehicle I could afford. I have insulated my hot water heater and installed new more energy efficient windows in my home. I try to be conscious of where my food comes from and how it is produced. I am saving for solar panels for my south-facing home and I have chosen renewable energy to power my home. But all of these things, and the myriad other small things that I try to make habit in my life, they are still not enough. I do not have the buying power, nor the clout to drive systemic market change.

But you do.

I would like to tell you a story about a group of federal purchasing agents that I had the opportunity to work with many years ago. They purchase goods and services related to feeding, clothing and arming America's fighting forces. From on the ground intel from the field, they learned that plastics, especially plastic water bottles, were not able to be disposed of properly. What could they do about this? They were thousands of miles away in another country. Well... they partnered with industry and eventually, over a long, almost 10-year period of study, they developed a biobased plastic solution. The new material passed the rigorous evaluations needed to ensure it would meet the needs of our boots on the ground. This research was cutting edge at the time. It took vision and a dedicated champion. It was hard. A lot of patience was required, but they persevered. I believe the vision these purchasing agents promoted ended up shifting the marketplace. Biobased plastics in packaging is now commonplace. I am not saying that this solved all the world's problems with plastic. I am not saying that we don't have opportunities to do even better. But it was a courageous first step, championed by brave individuals who were trying to make a change for the better.

You have the same kind of opportunity in front of you. You are courageous individuals proposing a rule that has the ability to drive market change here in Pennsylvania. I am grateful to you for your dedication. I know that this path has been hard and that listening to hours and hours of testimony, reviewing pages and pages of facts and figures, and working in this politically charged environment has been a challenge. Thank you for persevering.

Bipartisan leadership within the Commonwealth has set the stage for this moment. Our representatives and senators passed the Climate Change Act of 2008. The DEP has quantified

the main source of greenhouse gas emissions in our state coming from industry, electricity generation, and transportation, in that order. 29% of our greenhouse gas emissions come from electricity generation. RGGI is our opportunity to drive that number down.

RGGI is by no means perfect and is by no means the only answer. But, it is an opportunity for PA leadership to demonstrate their commitment to actually mitigating the impacts of climate change on the residents of Pennsylvania. I enthusiastically support Pennsylvania joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. Thank you so much for allowing me to testify tonight.