



Stephen Hoffman

From: ecomment@pa.gov
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2020 3:07 PM
To: Environment-Committee@pasenate.com; IRRRC; environmentalcommittee@pahouse.net; regcomments@pa.gov; ntroutman@pasen.gov; timothy.collins@pasenate.com; gking@pahousegop.com
Cc: c-jflanaga@pa.gov
Subject: Comment received - Proposed Rulemaking: CO2 Budget Trading Program (#7-559)

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The enclosed comment was received as part of the following testimony:

Testimony name: Public Hearing 4 (6pm) - #7-559
Testimony date: 12/9/2020 12:00:00 AM
Testimony location: WebEx

Re: eComment System

The Department of Environmental Protection has received the following comments on Proposed Rulemaking: CO2 Budget Trading Program (#7-559).

Commenter Information:

Sarah Martik
(sarahmartik@gmail.com)
893 High Point Drive
Coal Center, PA US

Comments entered:

I offer comments today in support of the proposed regulations to establish the CO2 Budget Trading Program. I offer these comments with much respect to the DEP and Governor for taking on a difficult and politically sensitive challenge and with the hopes that my comments will speak to the desired impacts of this program, beyond the desired reduction in CO2 emissions.

I know what it means to live in an area that was once dominated by the production of coal (I literally live in Coal Center, PA). It means that, as the power of the coal industry has declined over the past few decades, areas similar to mine have seen little investment to stem the bleeding brought on by economic hardship and lost opportunities. For areas that are clinging to power production as one of their last remaining economic drivers, I understand the concerns they have about implementing this program. My own town was spared some of the worst impacts of the decline in coal by the presence of California University of Pennsylvania. It's a source of good jobs for hundreds of people, and more than that it tremendously benefits the

community: I went to a free preschool at CalU; I learned to swim in their pools in classes taught by their swim team; I attended a low-cost but nationally-accredited performing arts academy there; and my high school job at the local Dairy Queen relied on students and employees from the university coming in to eat every day.

If it sounds like this one institution helped to shape my life, that's because it did; and by extension, investments by the state shaped my life. The revenues generated by the RGGI program have the ability to do the same thing for so many like me.

We know that cap-and-trade programs typically place additional burdens on environmental justice communities, especially communities of color. I am very concerned that statewide carbon emissions could lower overall while the burden of dirty air increases on the shoulders of EJ communities. However, we also know that RGGI is an economic driver: \$300 million in revenue is expected to be generated in the first year for PA. I want to make sure that we utilize this new revenue to really invest in communities that need it most. Prioritizing a shift to a sustainable, clean power source is a good start: I want to see PA invest in renewable energy infrastructure and energy efficiency developments; but I want to see other site-specific quality-of-life investments, too, such as investments in pre-K, development of green space, funding for low-cost/no-cost tutoring programs or arts programs -- things that people can point to and say, "This shaped who I am."

I am aware of the statistics pointing to RGGI being a jobs creator, with an expected net increase of about 27,000 jobs and \$1.9 billion added to the state's economy by 2030. However, I want to make one clear point about jobs and investments into new projects: the cycle of plastic - from fracking and cracking to burning plastic waste - should not receive one dime of investment from the RGGI program. Investment into industries like that would indicate to me that involvement in RGGI is at face value only, that we as a state do not really care about meeting the challenges of climate change, nor do we really care about the holistic wellbeing of people in our Commonwealth.

I am excited to be able to engage in this process, and I look forward to seeing what we as Pennsylvanians can do when we step up to take on climate change. As one of the highest greenhouse gas emitters in the country, we have a responsibility to do this work. In the process, though, I ask that the state be unapologetically firm in re-investing in the overall quality of life for residents who most need that investment.

No attachments were included as part of this comment.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Jessica Shirley

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