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Testimony for Environmental Quality Board Proposed Rulemaking – CO2 Budget Training Program

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Testifying as: Private Citizen

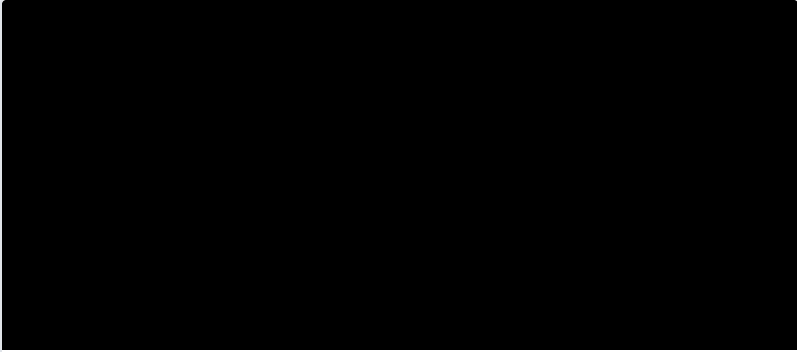
Date: 12/9/20

My name is Judy Morgan and I am from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Thank you for this opportunity to speak.

Because of a lifelong interest in both the environment and social justice, I feel very committed to moving rapidly to 100% renewable energy, to avert climate change, and to end the unfair burden of the fossil fuel industry on people of color and the poor, as well as on future generations. I am here today as a private citizen, but also am a member of several environmental organizations and co-founder of NW Philly Climate Action Network, now a project within Philadelphia Neighborhood Networks.

There is extensive evidence on ways that the fossil fuel industry has inequitably imposed harm on the poor and people of color. According to recent research, African-Americans nationally are exposed to [1.54 times more air pollution](#) in general than white people. In the Northeast, communities of color breathe in [1.66 times more polluted air](#) from vehicles than white residents. African-Americans are 75% more likely to live close to power plants.

In a national study, the counties most likely to be impacted by natural disasters, including floods and fires resulting from climate change, have an average population that is [81% minority](#), and they are statistically [more vulnerable](#) to the damage left in the wake of these events. A study by Rice University and the University of Pittsburgh showed that after natural disasters, white people actually *accumulate* wealth on average, while [people of color lose wealth](#).



**STUDY: After Natural Disasters, Whites
Accumulate Wealth While People of...**

There are marked racial differences in the cost of disasters.

On a personal note, In the last couple of years, my cousin and aunt were forced to flee from their homes in Sonoma CA several times because of out-of-control fires exacerbated by climate change. My cousin Lori, a poet, wrote a poem about the touching connections made by those in the shelters—white and brown, babies, teenagers, elderly—forced into hiding together from the flames. The frightened refugees from those fires are a symbol of how more and more of us will be affected if CO2 emissions are not brought down rapidly.

RGGI provides an important strategy in reducing reliance on fossil fuels, and supporting energy-efficiency and renewable energy approaches that will create jobs for local people. For moral and ethical, as well as practical and economic, reasons, RGGI is the right choice now for reducing the threats of both climate change and increasing social inequality.

Thank you for your time and I thank the Environmental Quality Board for organizing this public comment process.