



Testimony for CO2 Budget Trading Program Regulation

Presented by:
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Good afternoon.

My name is Steve Aaron. I'm a small business owner in Dauphin County, and I'm also one of the organizers of a coalition called Nuclear Powers Pennsylvania. We work to educate our fellow Pennsylvanians about the economic and environmental benefits of nuclear energy and the industry's positive impact on local communities throughout the Keystone State.

There has been some discussion in recent months about the negative economic impact on the fossil fuel sector should Pennsylvania put into place a market-based effort to reduce carbon pollution from electric power plants. I don't think enough has been said about the potential economic and employment impact facing our nuclear industry. The operations of Pennsylvania's four nuclear plants account for 15,000 full-time direct and indirect jobs. We have an ecosystem of more than 500 companies working in nuclear energy, including names like Westinghouse and GE Hitachi. Our nuclear fleet contributes about \$2 billion to the state GDP and is responsible for \$65 million in net state tax revenues.

Don't forget each of the state's eight nuclear reactors must be refueled every 18-24 months. When they go offline, more than a thousand laborers – most from right here in Pennsylvania – enter the plants for additional employment opportunities. These are good-paying jobs and the local businesses in those communities count on that infusion of income every other year.

Here where I live in Central Pennsylvania, we have had to come to grips with losing Three Mile Island because policymakers chose not to recognize the tremendous value nuclear power delivers to our state. As a consequence, we have lost hundreds of family-sustaining jobs, the United Way has lost a key contributor, our civic institutions have lost volunteer board members, and those laborers now have one less plant for employment opportunities. This isn't theoretical. These are jobs that will never be replaced.

Of course, we lost more than just an economic engine for our region. We also lost our largest source of emissions-free energy. TMI alone produced more zero-emission energy than all of the state's renewable energy combined.

Until Pennsylvania starts to level the playing field for carbon-free electricity producers, we are concerned other Pennsylvania communities will suffer the same fate as Middletown, home of Three Mile Island. While we were pleased to see the owners of the Beaver Valley nuclear plant chose to keep that plant open, they have made it clear they would need to revisit deactivation if the state doesn't remain on course with its carbon-reduction plans. Were that to happen, we'd be facing thousands more lost jobs and a further depletion of our ability to deliver carbon-free electricity.

At a time when all Pennsylvanians are feeling the stress and anxiety of record high unemployment as we try to manage this pandemic, I think we all can agree that every job – every paycheck – is precious. I hope you'll consider the men and women who work in Pennsylvania's nuclear industry as you make your recommendations for Pennsylvania's energy future.

Thank you.