



Testimony for CO2 Budget Trading Program Regulation

Good evening, and thank you for the opportunity to testify tonight in support of Pennsylvania joining RGGI. My name is Maya Rozin, and I am a senior at Strath Haven High School, living in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania. For me, the major turning point in my relationship with environmental activism was when I read *The Sixth Extinction* by Elizabeth Kolbert in junior year. She wrote about her travels to countries around the world, and how she witnessed the death of a species in each one due to warming temperatures. The reason for this, as she describes, is that we're living in the Anthropocene- a time period where humans have unparalleled influence over the environment. If we continue to burn fossil fuels, Kolbert writes that an irreversible chain reaction will occur in just the next few decades, eventually leading to the Earth becoming uninhabitable.

Reading this book was a complete shock to me, because I realized that this climate crisis will occur in my lifetime unless drastic changes are made. As someone who loves nature, but is too young to have traveled extensively, I fear that I won't be able to see a lot of the Earth's beautiful places. Climate change has the potential to rob me of this opportunity. However, I also am someone with a lot of privilege, and marginalized communities are already experiencing effects of climate change. Just a town over from me, the residents of Chester are forced to breathe air with high levels of industrial greenhouse gasses, causing the [American Lung Association](#) to give the township an 'F' in air quality in past years. In Pennsylvania, our constitution guarantees the right to clean water to drink and clean air to breathe, so failing to do something for these communities is not only negligent, but unconstitutional.

As the fourth-largest emitter of greenhouse gases in the nation, Pennsylvania has a responsibility to be a leader in implementing climate solutions. We have the opportunity to do so by joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, or RGGI. This program has proven effective, with carbon pollution decreasing [by 47%](#) in participating RGGI states from 2008 to 2018, [outpacing the rest of the country by 90%](#). Carbon emissions in our state could be reduced by [188 million tons by 2030](#) by joining this program -- equivalent to taking more than 36 million cars off the road.

If we join RGGI, this reduction in carbon emissions would allow PA communities near me, like Chester, to breathe easier. We only have a few years to reduce our emissions and prevent catastrophe, so it is imperative that the DEP and Pennsylvania decision-makers act accordingly. Thank you for allowing me to testify today.

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