

Good Evening!

Before I begin, I would like to thank the Department of Environmental Protection Environmental Quality Board for the opportunity to speak this evening within the context of these virtual public hearings and offer testimony for CO2 Budget Trading Program Regulation, which will establish Pennsylvania's participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (AKA: RGGI), as well as reduce carbon dioxide pollution from power plants in Pennsylvania.

I offer these comments on behalf of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden, Pennsylvania. As Catholic Sisters, we recognize that creation, in all of its wondrous diversity, is a gift of God and requires our care and respect. The tradition of Catholic teaching offers a developing and distinctive perspective on environmental issues. In his encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis points out that "the climate is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all. At the global level, it is a complex system linked to many of the essential conditions for human life. A very solid scientific consensus indicates that we are presently witnessing a disturbing warming of the climatic system...a number of scientific studies indicate that most global warming in recent decades is due to the great concentration of greenhouse gases (carbon dioxide, methane, nitrogen oxides and others) released mainly as a result of human activity."

According to your own website (<https://www.dep.pa.gov/Citizens/climate/Pages/RGGI.aspx> accessed on 12/7/2020), "by participating in RGGI Pennsylvania will reduce climate pollution from carbon emissions by a massive 188 million tons by 2030. Emission of other harmful pollutants like nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxide, and particulate matter emissions will also drop significantly".

As Environmental Justice Communities are especially vulnerable to the negative effects of a warming climate, pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions—particularly in regards to negative health outcomes and decreased property values, the Sisters of St Joseph of Baden, Pennsylvania support Pennsylvania's participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative—both as a step toward preserving the climate that we all share, as well as a way to potentially decrease disparities and inequity within the Commonwealth. Thank you.