



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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IN RE: CO2 BUDGET TRADING PROGRAM

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BEFORE: LAURA GRIFFIN, CHAIR
DAREK JAGIELA
JENNIFER SWAN
SARAH PINTER

HEARING: Tuesday, December 8, 2020
9:00 a.m.

Reporter: Patrick Troy

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NONE OFFERED

P R O C E E D I N G S

MS. GRIFFIN: Good morning. I'd like to welcome all of you to the Environmental Quality Board, or EQB, public hearing on the proposed rulemaking for the Pennsylvania Carbon Dioxide, or CO2, Budget Trading Program.

My name is Laura Griffin. I am the regulatory coordinator for the Department of Environmental Protection. I'm facilitating this hearing on behalf of the Environmental Quality Board. Assisting me today is Sarah Pinter, our executive policy specialist; Darek Jagiela, our host; and Jennifer Swan, who most of you have probably corresponded with to register for this hearing today.

I officially call this hearing to order at 9:01 a.m. This public hearing will be recorded in its entirety. Additionally, a stenographer will be transcribing the hearing. The purpose of this hearing is to formally accept testimony on the proposed rulemaking. This proposed rulemaking was adopted by the EQB at its meeting on September 15th, 2020. It proposes to establish a program to limit carbon dioxide emissions from

1 fossil fueled power --- fossil fuel fired power
2 plants located in Pennsylvania with an electricity
3 generation capacity equal to or greater than 25
4 megawatts.

5 The purpose of this proposed
6 rulemaking is to reduce CO2 emissions, which is a
7 greenhouse gas and a major contributor to climate
8 change impacts, and to do so in a manner that
9 protects public health, welfare, and the
10 environment. Under the authority of Pennsylvania's
11 Air Pollution Control Act, the proposed rulemaking
12 would establish Pennsylvania's participation in the
13 Regional Greenhouse --- Greenhouse Gas Initiative,
14 or RGGI, which is a regional carbon dioxide budget
15 trading program.

16 In addition to reducing CO2 emissions,
17 Pennsylvania will also see a decrease in harmful
18 NOX, sulfur dioxide, and particulate matter
19 emissions, as well as ground-level ozone pollution.
20 Human exposure to these air pollutants contributes
21 to respiratory and cardiovascular health problems,
22 including asthma, bronchitis, heart attacks, and
23 strokes. By participating in RGGI, DEP estimates
24 that Pennsylvania will see carbon dioxide emission
25 reductions of around 188 million tons by 2030.

1 This concludes the summary of the
2 rulemaking. If you would like to access a more
3 detailed explanation of regulatory amendments
4 included in this rulemaking, you can visit e-comment
5 on DEP's webpage and select regulations.

6 In order to give everyone an equal
7 opportunity to comment on this proposal today, I'd
8 like to establish the following ground rules. Sarah
9 is going to provide some of this information in the
10 Q and A box on the side of the WebEx screen so you
11 don't need to write everything down.

12 First, I will call upon the witnesses
13 who have signed up to testify at this hearing. All
14 who signed up were assigned a number indicating the
15 order in which witnesses will be called on to speak.
16 Only those who signed up by contacting Jennifer Swan
17 as indicated on the EQB webpage will be called upon
18 to provide testimony today. Testimony is limited to
19 five minutes for each witness. And I will have a
20 timer on the screen that you should be able to see
21 on the right-hand side of the screen.

22 I will note that we do have one
23 commenter today who is being assisted by an
24 interpreter. To allow for sufficient time for that
25 translation, that witness will have ten minutes.

1 Please note that written and spoken
2 testimony both carry the same weight. If you should
3 run out of time for your spoken testimony, we will
4 read the rest of your comments from your written
5 testimony.

6 As we advised in your registration
7 correspondence, please provide a copy of your
8 written testimony to our e-mail address,
9 regcomments@pa.gov. That's
10 R-E-G-C-O-M-M-E-N-T-S@pa.gov. Your e-mail must note
11 that you're submitting testimony for proposed
12 rulemaking CO2 Budget Trading Program along with the
13 following information: your first and last name,
14 mailing address, e-mail address, and if you are
15 commenting on behalf of an organization.

16 Please note that the testimony is not
17 required to be five minutes long. If others who
18 have provided testimony before you are making
19 similar statements to yours, feel free to shorten or
20 summarize your verbal testimony at this time and
21 then still provide your full testimony by e-mail.
22 This will allow us to hear from more commenters at
23 this hearing.

24 Through the signup process,
25 prospective commenters were requested to designate

1 one witness to present testimony on behalf of an
2 organization.

3 When you're called on to speak, please
4 state your name, address, which is --- your city and
5 state are sufficient --- and your affiliation if you
6 happen to have one. Please state this for the
7 record prior to presenting your testimony. The EQB
8 would appreciate your help by spelling out your name
9 and any terms that may not be generally familiar so
10 that the transcript can be as accurate as possible.

11 Because the purpose of this hearing is
12 to receive comments of a proposal, EQB members or
13 DEP staff cannot address questions about the
14 proposed rulemaking during the duration of the
15 hearing.

16 In addition to or in place of verbal
17 testimony presented at today's hearing, interested
18 persons may also submit written comments on this
19 proposal. Again, written and verbal comments hold
20 the same weight when considered in the finalization
21 of this proposed rulemaking. All testimony and
22 written comments provided become a part of the
23 official public record. All comments must be
24 received by the EQB on or before January 14th, 2021.

25 There are a few different ways to

1 submit written comments, which is separate from the
2 testimony that's being given today. Comments may be
3 submitted online through e-comment, which is
4 accessible from DEP's website, by clicking on the
5 e-comment icon near the top of DEP's web --- DEP's
6 homepage, which is www.dep.pa.gov, or comments may
7 be submitted by e-mail at regcomments@pa.gov.

8 All comments are entered into
9 e-comment and are accessible to the public. A
10 subject heading of the proposed rulemaking and the
11 return name and address must be included in each
12 e-mail.

13 Comments may also be sent through
14 postal --- US Postal Mail, addressed to the
15 Environmental Quality Board, P.O. Box 8477
16 Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17105-8477.

17 All testimony received at this hearing
18 as well as written comments received by January
19 14th, 2021, will be considered by the EQB and will
20 be included in a comment and response document,
21 which will be prepared by DEP and reviewed by the
22 EQB prior to the Board taking its final action on
23 this regulation.

24 In advance, I appreciate everyone's
25 patience and for taking the time out today to

1 provide comments. I will also apologize in advance
2 if I mispronounce anyone's name. I'm going to do my
3 best today.

4 I would now like to call for the first
5 commenter.

6 Is Ethan Story available?

7 MR. STORY: I am here.

8 HEARING OFFICER: Okay.

9 Ethan, I'm starting the timer. Go
10 ahead, please.

11 MR. STORY: Ethan Story, Pittsburgh,
12 Pennsylvania, Center for Coalfield Justice.

13 Good morning, everyone, and thank you
14 for the opportunity to speak at this public hearing.
15 My name is Ethan Story. I'm a community advocate
16 for the Center for Coalfield Justice, a non-profit
17 organization located in Washington, Pennsylvania.
18 And I'm providing my testimony on behalf of the
19 Center for Coalfield Justice and its members.

20 We applaud the Department for taking
21 steps in their proposed CO2 Budget Trading Program.
22 First, this program, also known as RGGI, marks great
23 progress in the state's actions to curb greenhouse
24 gases that fuel climate change. Second, according
25 to the Department's analysis, RGGI will create tens

1 of thousands of well-paying green energy jobs. And
2 third, it will generate funding that can be used to
3 help transition --- help transition communities who
4 currently rely on fossil fuel-based energy
5 production, some of which have been declining for
6 years through a green energy-based production.

7 While the proposed rule is critical
8 for cutting greenhouse gas from fossil fuel sources,
9 it's important that the Department consider and take
10 the necessary steps to ensure historically
11 vulnerable communities such as environmental
12 justice, both income and communities of color, do
13 not see further harm from pollutants under the RGGI
14 program.

15 It's more than good policy for the
16 Department to take such steps. It's the
17 Department's constitutional obligation to do so.
18 Article I, Section 27 of our state's constitution
19 identifies two distinct yet related fundamental
20 rights and corresponding duties:

21 Article I, Section 27 explains that
22 the citizens of this Commonwealth have a fundamental
23 right to, quote, clean air, pure water, and the
24 preservation of natural scenic, historic, and
25 aesthetic values of the environment, end quote.

1 This imposes a duty on the Commonwealth, including
2 the Department, to not disregard these rights
3 through governmental action or non-actions that
4 would unreasonably cause actual or likely
5 deterioration of those environmental features.

6 Section 27 also states that the
7 natural resources in Pennsylvania are owned by the
8 people and not the Commonwealth. Moreover, Section
9 27 provides, quote, as trustees of these resources,
10 the Commonwealth shall conserve and maintain them
11 for the benefit of all the people, end quote. In
12 other words, Section 27 creates a trust in all
13 agencies of the Commonwealth government, including
14 the Department, to hold a fiduciary duty to take
15 necessary precautions and steps in order to protect
16 that trust.

17 The Center for Coalfield Justice and
18 its members urge the Department to uphold their
19 constitutional obligation by making the following
20 improvements to the proposed rule:

21 One, when issuing air pollutant
22 permits, the Department must base its final
23 determination on an informed decision. This
24 decision must be based on a medical level.
25 Information such as residents' testimony, current

1 and proposed ambient air quality, permittee
2 violation history, public benefit, population
3 statistics, nearby schools, long-term care
4 facilities, nursing homes, essentially a cost
5 benefit analysis must be considered.

6 Second, the rule should contain
7 specific mechanisms to study the impact and adjust
8 for effects that are unexpected or undesirable. A
9 vague commitment to the concept of adaptive
10 management is simply not sufficient. Specific
11 mandatory follow-up measures must be integrated into
12 the regulation where possible. We know that there
13 are often unforeseen flaws that require modification
14 after a system like RGGI is in place. And that is
15 what is essentially to conduct the appropriate
16 studies and report those findings to the public.

17 Third, the direct effect of RGGI is
18 likely to be regressive, disproportionately
19 burdening for low-income households with higher
20 energy costs. Therefore, the state should use
21 auction revenues to counter this effect.
22 Additionally, the auction revenues should be
23 invested back into the very communities that have
24 been historically and presently face the burden of
25 fossil fuel evolution. Investment into community

1 schools, greenspaces, and sustainable, well-paying
2 jobs should be a priority.

3 And lastly, the Department should not
4 allow coal waste-fired power plants and combined
5 heat power energy sources to externalize the
6 pollution costs completely. Instead, the rules
7 should reflect that such power sources be charged a
8 reduced rate for emission allowances. Here, the
9 goal of lowering emission levels and generating
10 funds are both met without the burden of pollution
11 falling on the state, and ultimately the taxpayer.

12 Thank you for considering our
13 testimony, and I appreciate your time.

14 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Ethan.

15 Our next speaker is Gordon Whitman.

16 MR. WHITMAN: Good morning.

17 I live in Philadelphia, and I'm here
18 representing Faith in Action.

19 The main point that I want to make
20 this morning is that joining Regional Greenhouse Gas
21 Initiative is long overdue. The implementation
22 needs to make equity the top priority so that
23 everyone is able to benefit from this initiative.

24 And I'm speaking as a Philadelphia
25 resident who lives 20 blocks from a power plant that

1 would be covered by RGGI. I'm noting that while
2 everyone in Pennsylvania will benefit from limiting
3 pollution, those of us who live closest to power
4 plants have the most at stake in improving air
5 quality.

6 I'm also speaking as a person with
7 life-long asthma, noting that joining RGGI is
8 projected to reduce the number of children with
9 asthma by 45,000 over the next ten years.

10 And I'm speaking as a person of faith
11 who believes that we have a moral obligation to
12 protect the people and the places we love, to be
13 responsible stewards of our environment for future
14 generations, and to make racial and economic equity
15 a cornerstone of every policy choice we make.

16 And finally, I'm speaking as a senior
17 advisor at Faith in Action, which is the national
18 umbrella organization for Power Interfaith here in
19 Pennsylvania and is dedicated to advancing racial
20 and economic equity.

21 In that capacity with Faith in
22 Faction, supporting power, in 2019, I worked on an
23 effort to help houses of worship in Pennsylvania go
24 solar. The biggest obstacle we faced was the
25 difficulty in accessing capital in Pennsylvania

1 compared to other states moving to solar-made clear
2 economic and moral sense for congregations. It
3 would save money on their electric bills and have a
4 predictable cost of electricity. But we could not
5 obtain the financing that would have been available
6 in other states. That was a direct result of how
7 far behind Pennsylvania is in supporting clean
8 energy.

9 In addition to the pressing need to
10 update the state's renewal energy portfolio
11 standards, joining RGGI will help level the playing
12 field and make more capital available for clean
13 energy and good jobs and income that investment
14 creates.

15 The main point, though, is that ---
16 that I want to make is that the key to successfully
17 implementing RGGI in Pennsylvania is to make sure
18 that both the health and economic benefits of this
19 regional initiative are targeted to the communities
20 that have suffered the most through pollution and
21 face the greatest obstacles in accessing clean
22 energy and clean energy jobs.

23 What that means is that as DEP
24 implements RGGI, it must make equity a priority in
25 every aspect of how the initiative is implemented,

1 including monitoring, tracking, and reporting the
2 impact of emission upon local communities,
3 disaggregating data by race, income, and proximity
4 to power plants and other sources of pollution, and
5 the DEP must be willing to make adjustments to avoid
6 the unintended consequences of hot spots.

7 And we must invest in revenue
8 generated from RGGI in energy efficiency and
9 renewable energy in low-income communities and
10 communities of color, those who are most excluded
11 from access to capital and jobs and are able to
12 benefit from the transition to clean energy.

13 Pennsylvania's future is clearly about
14 clean energy. But we need to make sure everyone is
15 included. Thank you for your consideration.

16 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Gordon.
17 Mitch Chanin.

18 MR. CHANIN: Hey, thank you.
19 Can you hear me?

20 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can.
21 Thank you, Mitch. Go ahead.

22 MR. CHANIN: Okay. Great.
23 Thanks for the opportunity to testify.
24 My name is Mitch Chanin. I live in
25 Philadelphia. I work with a number of social

1 justice and environmental groups. But I'm speaking
2 only for myself today and not officially on behalf
3 of any organization.

4 Like the previous speakers, I want to
5 express my strong support for Pennsylvania joining
6 RGGI. But I do have some significant concerns and
7 recommendations for addressing them.

8 I won't spend a lot of time on talking
9 about why I think RGGI is important, but wanted to
10 note that last month was the hottest November in
11 recorded history globally and 2020 is on track to be
12 the hottest year in human history. And at the same
13 time, FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency,
14 recently reported that Philadelphia, where I live,
15 is the county where people are most vulnerable to
16 heat waves in the United States, and so it's really
17 critical for the wellbeing of people here in Philly
18 that we reduce greenhouse gas emissions very
19 quickly. And I think RGGI could be an effective way
20 to do that.

21 At the same time, I am concerned that
22 RGGI may have the --- unless additional regulations
23 are implemented --- that RGGI may have the
24 unintended consequence of increasing and further
25 concentrating toxic air pollution in vulnerable

1 communities as coal --- electricity from coal-fired
2 power plants becomes relatively more expensive in
3 comparison to electricity from gas-fired power
4 plants.

5 And I support some of the
6 recommendations that have already been made by
7 Center for Coalfield Justice and I'm sure that other
8 groups will bring forward, but I wanted to share a
9 story that illustrates why this is important.

10 In the past few years, I've been
11 supporting residents in the Nicetown community here
12 in North Philadelphia in challenging plans for a
13 gas-fired power plant, combined heat and power plant
14 in the neighborhood. This is a plant that SEPTA,
15 our transit agency, is building in order to generate
16 electricity for a regional rail system.

17 One of the justifications for that
18 project is that SEPTA believes that it will reduce
19 their greenhouse gas emissions by substituting some
20 electricity bought from coal-fired power plants with
21 locally generated electricity from this gas-fired
22 power plant.

23 However, the neighborhood where this
24 plant is being built is already overburdened with
25 pollution. Nearly a third of kids in Nicetown have

1 asthma. The plant will be right next to a bus depot
2 that serves 300 diesel busses, and it's just a
3 couple blocks from US Route 1, a highway that is
4 traveled by a hundred thousand cars and trucks every
5 day.

6 We participated in many steps of the
7 air permitting process for that plant. But at no
8 time was there any air quality tests conducted in
9 the actual neighborhood. There was no cumulative
10 impact assessment to look at the impact of multiple
11 pollutants together, and there was no health impact
12 analysis; nor was there any response to the concerns
13 that many of us raised about ultrafine particulate
14 matter, which is generated in significant quantities
15 by gas-fired power plants but is not yet regulated
16 by the state or by city air quality regulators.

17 And so --- And then the plant is small
18 enough that it wouldn't be regulated at all under
19 RGGI. In addition, it's a combined heat and power
20 plant, which would be another reason that it would
21 be exempted from regulation under RGGI.

22 So I think it's just really important
23 that additional air quality regulations be
24 implemented along with RGGI or a side --- as part of
25 RGGI or alongside RGGI in order to prevent this from

1 happening in any other neighborhoods.

2 If RGGI does lead to an increase in
3 gas-fired power plant production of electricity, we
4 absolutely need to make sure that it's not
5 increasing the health burden in communities like
6 Nicetown by implementing recommendations like those
7 that Ethan from Center for Coalfield Justice put
8 forward.

9 But at the same time, I want to echo
10 the concern that the revenue generated from
11 auctioning of permits be invested in communities
12 like Nicetown, where people are sick from air
13 pollution and at the same time people are suffering
14 from unaffordable utility bills and dilapidated
15 housing conditions. And I hope that the revenue can
16 be prioritized for investment in communities like
17 that one.

18 And yeah, thanks very much for the
19 opportunity to testify.

20 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Mitch.

21 Our next speaker is Abha Saini. I
22 knew Abha is on the --- if I'm pronouncing that name
23 correctly --- was on the call at the beginning.

24 MR. JAGIELA: They aren't muted, but
25 I'm not hearing anything.

1 MS. GRIFFIN: Okay.

2 Well, we'll give it another second.
3 But if not, we'll need to move on to Representative
4 Rabb.

5 Okay.

6 Abha, are you with us? Can you hear
7 us?

8 All right.

9 We'll try to come back, then.

10 Is Representative Chris Rabb
11 available?

12 REPRESENTATIVE RABB: Good morning.

13 MS. GRIFFIN: Good morning.

14 REPRESENTATIVE RABB: This is Chris
15 Rabb, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania
16 General Assembly.

17 I'm testifying today to talk about
18 RGGI and echo the concerns previously raised by
19 testifiers with regard to the need to prioritize and
20 center RGGI around racial equity.

21 More broadly, reducing emissions from
22 dirty power plants has tremendous health benefits.
23 Lower air pollution in RGGI states has led to
24 significantly fewer premature deaths, heart attacks,
25 and respiratory illnesses.

1 RGGI is a bipartisan multistate
2 program started in 2008 that works by setting a cap
3 on pollution from power plants and reducing those
4 caps each year.

5 Studies have shown that RGGI in
6 Pennsylvania could prevent hundreds of premature
7 deaths from such respiratory illnesses and avoid
8 30,000 hospital visits for respiratory-related
9 illnesses. At a time when public health is a top
10 priority for most Pennsylvanians, taking steps
11 towards better air quality should be a top priority
12 for our Commonwealth.

13 And it's one of the largest climate
14 polluters in the country. Pennsylvania is the
15 fourth largest emitter of greenhouse gasses in the
16 nation. Pennsylvania joining RGGI would have an
17 outside impact on reducing emissions in our state.

18 Our constitution guarantees the right
19 to clean drinking water and air for all residents.
20 We are one of only two states that has that green
21 amendment built into our state constitution. Our
22 state constitution, in joining RGGI, is the one
23 major step we can take to ensure our air is cleaner
24 and to reduce pollution.

25 Air pollution reduction from RGGI will

1 particularly benefit those impacted by poor air
2 quality, including children, seniors, and low wealth
3 and environmental justice communities. When we talk
4 about environmental justice, we're talking about
5 fair treatment and meaningful involvement of people,
6 regardless of race, color, national origin, or
7 income with respect to the development,
8 implementation, and enforcement of environmental
9 laws, regulations, and policies.

10 Those environmental justice
11 communities that RGGI would benefit are those where
12 people, children, seniors, and those who are already
13 vulnerable or medical fragile might not even be
14 aware that they're being poisoned through no fault
15 of their own. If those folks don't know they're
16 being poisoned, they can't know what to do to stop
17 it.

18 I know the problem exists, and I know
19 how unjust it is to some people because of their
20 race or their income are disproportionately put in
21 harm's way. And I know that we can stop it. And so
22 I'm using this moment to raise my voice as a valued
23 member of the Pennsylvania Legislative Climate
24 Caucus, the Black Caucus, and the founding Chair of
25 the Equity Caucus to address this issue directly.

1 And I know that people of color in my district and
2 beyond face disproportionate racist
3 pollution-related asthma and cancer.

4 We are the reason Governor Tom Wolf
5 has put our state on track to join our neighbors in
6 RGGI. And I believe that RGGI is what we need to
7 get Pennsylvania on track to get to 100 percent
8 renewable energy by 2050, which is actually a piece
9 of legislation that has over 100 cosponsors in the
10 last legislative term to make happen. That
11 transition to 100 percent renewable energy would
12 provide the creation of family-sustaining green
13 collar jobs, would harness a newly skilled
14 workforce, giving Pennsylvania academic institutions
15 and other stakeholders the opportunity to advance
16 new fields of technology to produce commercial and
17 civic innovations.

18 Joining RGGI is a necessary step, a
19 vital step, and a way to literally saving our
20 collective lives and those of future generations.
21 Thank you.

22 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you,
23 Representative Rabb.

24 Our next speaker is Liesel Schwarz.

25 MS. SCHWARZ: Hello.

1 Can you hear me?

2 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, I can. Thank you.

3 Go ahead, Liesel.

4 MS. SCHWARZ: Wonderful.

5 Good morning, and thank you so much
6 for hearing my statement today.

7 My name is Liesel Schwarz, a private
8 citizen living in Glenside, Pennsylvania, and I'm
9 speaking on behalf of myself and not any
10 organization that I work for.

11 To understand why I've chosen to speak
12 with you today, there are two facts that you need to
13 know about me:

14 First, I am a sustainability
15 professional by training and practice. I have two
16 degrees in sustainability, and I work as a
17 sustainability professional for an institution of
18 higher learning located in Pennsylvania. I
19 understand the science behind climate change, and I
20 know what will happen to the citizens of
21 Pennsylvania if the risks of climate change are not
22 mitigated. I know the uneven distribution of impact
23 that our citizens will feel across the state, and I
24 know the mess that we are leaving for our children
25 to clean up.

1 But I also understand the economic
2 impact changing our energy and transportation
3 infrastructure will require. And while it is a
4 heavy lift, I believe that market-based solutions
5 will address --- may be able to use to address this
6 problem, solutions that produce better paying and
7 safer jobs for our citizens, ones that don't impact
8 our fellow citizens' ability to live long and
9 healthy lives. We have the responsibility to make
10 decisions that consider the livelihood of all of our
11 citizens but also recognizing the inequalities of
12 our current system.

13 I believe RGGI provides a proven and
14 effective solution for all the problems brought on
15 by Pennsylvania's dependence on fossil fuels.
16 Businesses and, yes, even fossil fuel companies
17 appreciate the stability and predictability of a
18 RGGI structure. State governments are able to
19 reinvest the funds raised to improve the lives of
20 citizens who are negatively impacted and who are all
21 able to enjoy a more stable future.

22 The second thing you need to know
23 about me is that I'm a mom of a 16-month-old
24 serious, adventurous, nature-loving boy. And they
25 always say that having children changes your life

1 from early mornings to the extra three bags you need
2 to pack to even leave the house, to the constant
3 worry of their safety. It's this last part that
4 causes me to wake up in the middle of the night: his
5 safety from stairs, moving vehicles, and climate
6 change.

7 I was home alone with my son when the
8 derecho came through this summer. I grabbed my son,
9 and we hid in the basement until the storm passed.
10 This is a memory that still gives me nightmares.
11 Extreme storms like this are only going to become
12 more common in our area due to the progression of
13 climate change.

14 There are mornings when I wake up and
15 the weather says that the air quality advisory is in
16 effect due to the heavy levels of pollution that are
17 in our --- in our area, the predictions of a world
18 he would be inheriting if we don't do something now.

19 I cannot look at his adorable, innocent face and do
20 nothing to protect his future.

21 I'm here to ask you to look at the
22 faces of your sons and daughters and your
23 grandchildren and tell them that you're going to
24 everything you can to make sure that they grow up in
25 a world that is clean, that has safe jobs. Choose

1 one step towards that future for all the ones that
2 we love.

3 Thank you for letting me share my
4 feelings today.

5 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Liesel.

6 And Amy Sinden is our next speaker.

7 MS. SINDEN: Hi.

8 Can you hear me?

9 MS. GRIFFIN: Hi, Amy.

10 Go ahead. Thank you.

11 MS. SINDEN: Amy Sinden from
12 Philadelphia, testifying in my personal capacity.

13 I've been on the faculty at Temple Law
14 School since 2001, where I teach courses and have
15 published extensively in the areas of environmental
16 law, regulatory policy, natural resources, and
17 climate change. Thank you very much for the
18 opportunity to testify today in favor of the RGGI
19 rule.

20 I support this rule because it's good
21 law, it's good policy, and it's good karma.

22 First, it's good law. It's good law
23 because DEP has clear authority to do this under the
24 Pennsylvania Air Pollution Control Act. It's good
25 law because DEP has not only the authority to do

1 this, but an obligation to do this under the
2 Pennsylvania Constitution.

3 Our Supreme Court has said in no
4 uncertain terms that all agencies and entities of
5 the Commonwealth government have a duty under our
6 constitution's environmental rights amendment to
7 prevent and remedy the degradation, diminution, or
8 depletion of Pennsylvania's public natural resources
9 for the benefit of all people, including future
10 generations. That means you have a constitutional
11 duty to reduce the carbon emissions that are
12 unleashing global climate chaos.

13 It's also good law because it will
14 soon be required by federal regulation. Once
15 President-elect Biden takes the oath of office on
16 January 20th, one of the top items on his to-do list
17 will be directing his new EPA administrator to
18 exercise their authority under the Federal Clean Air
19 Act to require states to reduce greenhouse gas
20 emissions. RGGI will be key to Pennsylvania's
21 ability to comply with that federal duty.

22 It's good policy because in addition
23 to reducing the carbon emissions that are driving
24 the climate crisis, it will create jobs, improve the
25 health of Pennsylvania's residents, save us all

1 money on our energy bills, and position Pennsylvania
2 as a leader in the clean energy economy.

3 It's good jobs policy. At 90,000 and
4 counting, clean energy jobs already outnumber fossil
5 fuel jobs in Pennsylvania. And DEP's own analysis
6 shows that RGGI will add more than 27,000 clean
7 energy jobs to that total and add nearly \$2 billion
8 to the state's economy.

9 It's good health policy. By cutting
10 back the soot and smog and fine particle pollution
11 that comes from burning fossil fuels, RGGI will save
12 lives and make us all healthier, reducing severity
13 of asthma, other respiratory diseases, and heart
14 disease, among other health problems.

15 You can't put a price on good health,
16 but the number crunchers try to do it anyway. They
17 calculate the health benefits at over --- at \$6
18 billion over the next decade. And that's
19 undoubtedly a significant underestimate because it
20 fails to account for most of the pollutants we'll be
21 cleaning out of the air with this rule.

22 It's good consumer policy. With
23 investments in energy efficiency that can come from
24 RGGI, electric bills can actually go down. Recent
25 studies show that RGGI will save consumers in the

1 northeast and mid-Atlantic states more than \$2
2 billion annually on their energy bills. Given all
3 of these benefits, not surprising that
4 Pennsylvanians overwhelmingly support this rule ---
5 this move. The Yale climate nexus found that 80
6 percent of Pennsylvanians support regulation of CO2
7 emissions and 72 percent specifically support
8 Pennsylvania joining RGGI.

9 Finally, it's good karma. It's no
10 exaggeration to say we are facing the biggest crisis
11 ever to confront the human species. What the
12 climate has in store for us in the coming years and
13 decades if we don't change course quickly is going
14 to make this COVID pandemic look like child's play.
15 The scientists have told us we are running out of
16 time. And this is a very good step. But please,
17 please, stand firm against those who would weaken
18 this rule. Keep the cap ambitious. Make sure you
19 can adjust it downward if DEP's estimates of
20 existing emissions turn out to be too high. Please
21 eliminate the set aside for waste coal. And please
22 ensure that low-income households and environmental
23 justice communities overburdened by pollution get
24 their fair share of the benefits of this program.

25 Thank you very much.

1 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Amy.

2 Speaker number eight today is
3 Senator-elect Carolyn Comitta.

4 SENATOR-ELECT COMITTA: Good morning.

5 Can you hear me?

6 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can. Please go
7 ahead.

8 SENATOR-ELECT COMITTA: Thank you very
9 much. Thank you.

10 Good morning, everyone. My name is
11 Carolyn Comitta, and I am the state senator-elect
12 for Pennsylvania's 19th District.

13 I want to thank the Environmental
14 Quality Board for holding the hearing. I'm speaking
15 today in strong support of the draft rule on the CO2
16 budget trading program.

17 By moving forward with the draft rule
18 to link Pennsylvania with the Regional Greenhouse
19 Gas Initiative, RGGI, we are recognizing the urgency
20 of the climate crisis and taking action to protect
21 our climate, boost our economy, and safeguard the
22 health of Pennsylvanians for generations to come.
23 Setting a limited on power-sector pollution will
24 allow us to take responsibility for its
25 contributions to global climate change and establish

1 the Commonwealth as a leader in the clean energy
2 economy.

3 As a major fossil fuel producing state
4 with the fourth dirtiest power sector in the nation,
5 Pennsylvania has the responsibility to strive for
6 ambitious and impactful carbon pollution reduction.

7 One DEP analysis shows that linking with RGGI would
8 ensure a 188-million-ton carbon reduction over the
9 life of the program.

10 Another analysis shows a simultaneous
11 increase in our role as an energy exporter by as
12 much as 65 percent from 2018 levels. Linking with
13 RGGI has an immense economic advantage. A flexible
14 market-based program maximizes cost-effective
15 pollution reduction without picking technological
16 winners or losers, an approach well-suited to
17 Pennsylvania's diverse energy portfolio.

18 In addition, DEP projects a net
19 increase of 27,000 jobs in Pennsylvania from RGGI.
20 Meanwhile, the average residential electric bill
21 could see a 35 percent decrease by 2031. These are
22 real jobs and real savings for real people across
23 the Commonwealth.

24 Beyond these economic benefits, these
25 emissions reductions have incredible implications

1 for environmental and public health. Cleaning up a
2 dirty power sector means not only reducing dangerous
3 climate pollution, but also cutting soot, smog, and
4 other harmful pollutions that compromises the air we
5 breathe every day.

6 A study from the Columbia University
7 School of Public Health on the health benefits to
8 children estimated that linking with RGGI avoided
9 112 pre-term births, 537 asthma cases, and 56 cases
10 of low-term --- term low birth weights in the
11 participating states. These incredible benefits are
12 from a single pollutant over a five-year period.
13 Imagine what this program could do for our
14 children's health for decades to come.

15 Here in Pennsylvania, polling
16 consistently shows that more than 70 percent of our
17 constituents strongly support action on climate
18 change. And this draft rule has diverse support
19 from businesses and institutions to environmental
20 and health groups. It provides Pennsylvania with a
21 critical opportunity to tackle climate change while
22 securing immense health and economic benefits for
23 its residents.

24 This is an opportunity for us to live
25 up to our constitutional duty to protect the

1 people's rights to clean air, pure water, and the
2 preservation of the natural environment. This is an
3 opportunity we cannot pass by.

4 If we fully appreciate the urgency of
5 the climate crisis and the importance of preserving
6 and protecting our environment for future
7 generations, we must act. Now is the time for
8 Pennsylvania to stand as a leader.

9 Thank you for the chance to testify
10 today and for all you are doing to support
11 Pennsylvania's path toward a clean energy future, a
12 safe and healthy future for our children. Thank
13 you.

14 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Senator-elect
15 Comitta.

16 Speaker number 9 today is Raymond
17 Najjar.

18 Raymond, are you with us?

19 MR. NAJJAR: Yeah.

20 Can you hear me?

21 MS. GRIFFIN: We can.

22 Please go ahead.

23 MR. NAJJAR: Great.

24 Good morning. My name is Raymond
25 Najjar, and I live in State College, Pennsylvania.

1 I'm a professor of oceanography in the Department of
2 Meteorology and Atmospheric Science at the
3 Pennsylvania State University, where I've been
4 employed for 27 years.

5 I'm drawing today from my relevant
6 experience in climate science and oceanography.
7 I've contributed to several climate impact
8 assessments: three for Pennsylvania; one for the
9 United States; and several for Delaware Bay,
10 Chesapeake Bay, and their watersheds, which take up
11 a large part of the Commonwealth's area.

12 The greenhouse effect has been studied
13 for two centuries. It is a fact that global warming
14 over the last century is a result of the emissions
15 of carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gasses
16 from fossil fuel burning and other human activities.

17 The impacts are already staggering and so numerous,
18 I only have time to give a few examples.

19 In 2018, 134 billion potential work
20 hours were lost globally due to extreme heat, a 34
21 percent increase above the 2000 baseline.

22 Ecosystems we depend on are being severely
23 compromised through the bleaching of coral reefs and
24 the raging of forest fires. The forest fires in the
25 Western US this past summer and fall were so bad

1 that even here in Pennsylvania, our skies were
2 darkened by the soot that was generated.

3 Over the past hundred years,
4 Pennsylvania has warmed by about 2 degrees
5 Fahrenheit, in accordance with expectations from
6 rising greenhouse gasses. And the warming rate is
7 accelerating.

8 Throughout the Mid-Atlantic region,
9 the impacts of warming on ecosystems are being felt
10 in multiple ways. Plants are blooming and leafing
11 out earlier, native bees are arriving earlier, and
12 birds are getting smaller. Most threateningly, the
13 larval peak of ticks is arriving earlier, very
14 likely contributing to the explosion of Lyme disease
15 in the Commonwealth.

16 Warming has led to more of our
17 precipitation falling as rain instead of snow, which
18 is fundamentally changing the character of the
19 Commonwealth, threatening winter recreation
20 industries and affecting some wildlife like the
21 snowshoe hare, which is contracting in its range due
22 to a loss of snow pack.

23 Warmer winters have also allowed the
24 woolly adelgid, an invasive insect, to more
25 aggressively attack our state tree, the eastern

1 hemlock.

2 Sea level rises, plus nuisance
3 flooding to increase dramatically in Philadelphia.
4 And it's also caused the solidity of the Delaware
5 Bay downstream of Philadelphia to increase.

6 If we keep up the pace of global
7 greenhouse gas emissions, summers in Philadelphia,
8 by mid-century, will resemble those of Orlando,
9 Florida today. In State College, we can expect
10 two-thirds of the summer to have days above 90
11 degrees Fahrenheit by the end of the century. In
12 Philadelphia and other municipalities that border
13 the tidal Delaware River and Bay, the supply of
14 fresh water for drinking and industry will be
15 compromised by increases in salinity resulting from
16 sea level rise and drought.

17 That's the bad news. The good news is
18 that we can stop the catastrophe that is unfolding
19 by doing our part to reduce greenhouse gas
20 emissions. The United States, as the largest
21 cumulative emitter of greenhouse gasses, has a
22 special role to play. In Pennsylvania, as a leader
23 in both energy production and pollution control, can
24 be at the forefront of innovation and the great
25 energy transition that must take place to get us out

1 of this mess.

2 You will likely hear that it's too
3 costly to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. The
4 truth is that even if you forget about all of the
5 costs of the negative impacts that I've mentioned,
6 it is still cheaper to make new electricity from
7 renewable sources like wind and solar than it is
8 from fossil fuels.

9 Fossil fuels have done much for us.
10 And I am thankful to all of the workers who have
11 risked their health and sometimes their lives to
12 create the energy abundant world we live in. But
13 now, thanks to technological growth, economies of
14 scale, and the efforts of visionary activists and
15 policy makers, we have renewable energy sources that
16 are better, cleaner, and cheaper than fossil fuels.

17 We need to rapidly accelerate the
18 deployment of renewable energy. And Pennsylvania's
19 participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas
20 Initiative is a critical step in helping us do so.

21 Thank you.

22 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Raymond.

23 I'm told our speaker number four, Abha
24 Saini, is now with us.

25 MS. SAINI: Abha Saini.

1 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you.

2 MS. SAINI: Commonwealth of
3 Pennsylvania ---

4 MS. GRIFFIN: I'm sorry. Go ahead.

5 MS. SAINI: Okay. Thank you.

6 Good morning. Thank you for the
7 opportunity to provide testimony in support of the
8 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's establishing a carbon
9 dioxide budget trading program regulation and
10 joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative,
11 pronounced as RGGI.

12 My name is Abha Aria (phonetic) Saini.

13 I live in Collegeville, Pennsylvania. I've worked
14 as a biologist and senior scientist for over 20
15 years in biomedical research and development. I am
16 serving as chair of the Climate Reality Project,
17 Philadelphia and Southeastern Pennsylvania chapter.
18 And I'm speaking today on behalf 162 members of our
19 chapter. We are volunteers and concerned citizens
20 working to catalyze a regional and statewide
21 solution to the climate crisis.

22 Climate change is the greatest
23 existential threat we face. Clean air to breathe,
24 pure water to drink, healthy food to eat, and safe
25 shelter from extreme weather are the greatest

1 existential needs we face. In fact, our
2 Pennsylvania's State Constitution, in Article I,
3 Section 27, recognizes these needs and states that
4 the people have a right to clean air and pure water
5 and that the Commonwealth shall conserve and
6 maintain it for the benefit of all the people.

7 Yet, these needs are being threatened.
8 Right now, human activity and carbon dioxide
9 emissions from fossil fuel-fired electric generating
10 units, EGUs, power plants are dumping billions of
11 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent into our
12 atmosphere, causing our atmosphere to heat up to
13 dangerous levels. This must stop. Our said
14 atmosphere, less than 200 miles high of it, is the
15 only protective shield most life on earth has
16 against the deadly ravages of radiation shooting
17 down from space. Today, Earth's atmosphere is sick
18 with an accelerating toxic overload of carbon
19 dioxide gas equivalent. These greenhouse gases are
20 trapping too much heat within our air, oceans, and
21 rivers, and setting off, in turn, a spider web-like
22 cascade of compounding negative effects on
23 environmental human and economic health in life.

24 The immediate reduction of carbon
25 dioxide pollution is critical for any realistic

1 sustainable strategy for solving the climate crisis.
2 If we do nothing to drastically reduce carbon
3 emissions now, the scientific evidence state
4 predictions for catastrophic global warming will be
5 the reality that our current and future generations
6 will face.

7 Throughout Pennsylvania, we already
8 see the impact of accelerated global warming,
9 including excessive heat, precipitation, and
10 flooding, and more frequent extreme weather events,
11 which are all expected to continue if we do not take
12 serious action to address clear root causes of the
13 problems, such as excessive carbon emissions from
14 EGUs.

15 What are we waiting for? We need
16 urgent action. The Intergovernmental Panel on
17 Climate Change reports that global annual greenhouse
18 gas emissions must be reduced from now until 2030 by
19 45 percent from 2010 levels, which were 47 billion
20 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent. That's
21 about 22 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide
22 equivalent that must not be released into the
23 atmosphere in the next nine years.

24 The Pennsylvania Greenhouse Gas
25 Inventory 2020 report finds that Pennsylvania was

1 responsible for approximately 263 million metric
2 tons of carbon dioxide gas equivalents emitted into
3 the atmosphere in 2017. Nearly 30 percent of those
4 emissions came from the electricity production from
5 EGUs. These fossil fuel-fired power plants are
6 continuously emitting millions of tons of carbon
7 dioxide and other toxic pollutants into our
8 atmosphere year after year. In fact, Pennsylvania
9 is the fourth-largest emitter of carbon dioxide
10 pollution from EGUs in the nation and the largest
11 carbon polluter of all the RGGI states.

12 In 2018, Pennsylvania's carbon
13 emissions were the equivalent of a combined total of
14 eight of the RGGI member states. Clearly,
15 Pennsylvania is part of the problem of excessive
16 carbon emissions in our country and not yet part of
17 the solution.

18 Joining RGGI is one solution and is
19 projected to result in a reduction of 188 million
20 tons of carbon dioxide pollution between 2022 and
21 2030. A good start.

22 Our climate reality chapter strongly
23 supports this proposed rulemaking carbon dioxide
24 budget trading program. Joining RGGI is the right
25 decision for Pennsylvanians.

1 Thank you.

2 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Abha.

3 Our next speaker, speaker number ten,
4 is Representative Leanne Krueger.

5 REPRESENTATIVE KRUEGER: Hi. This is
6 Leanne Krueger.

7 Can you hear me clearly?

8 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can.

9 Go ahead, please.

10 REPRESENTATIVE KRUEGER: Thank you so
11 much.

12 Leanne Krueger, Delaware County State
13 Legislator. Thank you for the opportunity to
14 present public comment today to the Environmental
15 Quality Board in support of the proposed rulemaking,
16 called the CO2 Budget Trading Program, which
17 empowers Pennsylvania to join RGGI, the Regional
18 Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

19 My name is Leanne Krueger, and I serve
20 as the state representative for the 161st
21 Legislative District in Delaware County. I have
22 been in office for five years. And for all five of
23 those years, I have served as a member of the House
24 Environmental Resources and Energy Committee. I
25 submit these comments as a legislator and also as a

1 Pennsylvania citizen who is very concerned about the
2 impacts of climate change on my family, my
3 community, and on our Commonwealth.

4 Climate change is already impacting
5 Pennsylvania. We have experienced record-breaking
6 extreme storms, serious flooding, and our
7 agriculture and winter tourism industries have
8 already been impacted. The need for climate action
9 is urgent.

10 Given my five years in the
11 legislature, I have seen no bills moved forward to
12 address this serious issue. Instead, I have seen
13 efforts by the majority party to block all
14 climate-related bills, including recent aggressive
15 and unconstitutional efforts to derail RGGI. The
16 majority committee chairman who gets to decide which
17 environmental bills advance out of committee has
18 repeatedly denied that climate change even exists.

19 For this reason, it is incumbent on
20 the Governor and the EQB to act. Pennsylvania's
21 effort to join RGGI is the biggest positive climate
22 action we've seen in decades. RGGI is a climate
23 solution that has already been proven to work in ten
24 other states, where it has created new jobs, reduced
25 electricity prices, and generated billions of

1 dollars of revenue for investment in clean energy
2 projects. RGGI also gives us an opportunity to
3 direct crucial investment to the rural communities
4 most impacted by job loss due to the energy
5 transition from coal to natural gas and to the
6 black, brown, indigenous, and low-income populations
7 disproportionately burdened by air pollution and
8 climate change. These communities must be at the
9 top of the list when the proceeds generated by RGGI
10 are appropriated.

11 You have the power and authority to
12 move forward with this rulemaking. The Pennsylvania
13 legislature gives clear authority to the Governor
14 through the Pennsylvania Air Pollution Control Act
15 to move forward with an administrative rulemaking
16 that casts pollution from the power sector. That is
17 the rulemaking that appears before you today.

18 In the absence of leadership from the
19 legislature on this issue, I implore you to move
20 quickly and deliberatively on this rule, because our
21 future and the future of our children depends on
22 your action.

23 Thank you.

24 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you,
25 Representative Krueger.

1 Speaker number 11 today is Mandy
2 Warner.

3 MS. WARNER: Good morning.

4 My name is Mandy Warner, and I'm
5 Director of Climate and Clean Air Policy for
6 Environmental Defense Fund. I'm speaking today in
7 strong support of the draft rule on behalf of EDF
8 and its 141,000 members and activists in
9 Pennsylvania.

10 By moving forward with the draft rule
11 on the CO2 budget trading program, Pennsylvania is
12 showing it's ready to be a leader in the clean
13 energy future and join the ranks of other states
14 across the nation that are moving quickly to take
15 the mantle of leadership on climate, public health,
16 and in deploying clean technologies. The cost of
17 inaction on climate change are grave for public
18 safety, health, prosperity, and economic
19 competitiveness while the benefits of taking action
20 on climate are substantial.

21 The draft rule to link Pennsylvania
22 with the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative is an
23 eminently achievable and cost-effective approach to
24 tackling climate pollution in Pennsylvania. RGGI
25 has a decade long history of success in reducing

1 emissions, saving consumers money, driving clean
2 energy investments, and reducing pollutants that
3 harm human health.

4 Independent analysis shows that
5 without a program like RGGI, Pennsylvania's power
6 sector emissions will start to rise by the middle of
7 this decade as zero emitting electricity resources
8 are retired and replaced by higher emitting electric
9 generation sources. Achieving Governor Wolf's
10 climate goal to significantly reduce climate
11 destabilizing emissions in Pennsylvania is not
12 possible without a limit on carbon pollution such as
13 that facilitated by RGGI.

14 A flexible market-based program like
15 RGGI is a great fit for Pennsylvania's diverse
16 energy portfolio. RGGI doesn't pick winners or
17 losers. It sets a firm declining limit on carbon
18 pollution and lets companies pick how best to comply
19 while maximizing cost-effective reductions, which
20 enables even deeper pollution reductions.

21 Pennsylvania linking with RGGI will
22 ensure climate pollution is reduced in Pennsylvania
23 and across the region. Analysis done by EDF and MJ
24 Bradley and Associates found that Pennsylvania's
25 linkage with a program like RGGI would ensure a net

1 20-million-ton carbon reduction across the entire
2 eastern interconnection in 2030 compared to business
3 as usual. The analysis also shows that Pennsylvania
4 will substantially increase its role as a net energy
5 exporter, as others have noted, even as RGGI-linked
6 carbon pollution limits come into effect.

7 Lastly, our analysis also found that
8 that even deeper pollution reductions than proposed
9 in the rule are possible and can keep Pennsylvania
10 on a steady trajectory to completely decarbonize
11 well before mid-century. A deep decarbonization
12 trajectory that gets close to zero emissions by 2040
13 with a leakage mitigation mechanism in place could
14 reduce annual emissions 111 million tons across the
15 eastern interconnection in 2030. Further, a deep
16 decarbonization trajectory brings even more solar
17 capacity into the region's electricity generation
18 mix and maintains all of the state's existing
19 nuclear fleet.

20 The opportunity presented by
21 Pennsylvania adopting the draft rule is substantial,
22 alongside important investments in energy efficiency
23 and clean energy. The program can be implemented to
24 maximize benefits to all Pennsylvanians, including
25 those in front line communities and for impacted

1 workers.

2 Polling consistently shows that over
3 70 percent of Pennsylvanians strongly support action
4 on climate change, including strong regulations to
5 reduce pollution. The rule also enjoys support from
6 a broad set of stakeholders, spanning the power
7 industry, agriculture, faith, environmental groups,
8 health groups, parent groups, consumer protection
9 groups, and more. In closing, EDF commends the
10 Department of Environmental Protection and the
11 Environmental Quality Board for its work to advance
12 this critical proposal that ensures pollution
13 reductions in Pennsylvania, one of the largest
14 emitters of climate pollution in the nation.

15 EDF strongly supports the draft rule
16 and respectfully asks DEP to finalize it swiftly to
17 ensure the program can launch in January 2022. EDF
18 will also be submitting additional technical
19 comments for consideration.

20 Thank you for the opportunity to
21 testify today.

22 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Mandy.

23 Speaker number 12 today is Elaine
24 Labalme.

25 MS. LABALME: Good morning.

1 Can you hear me all right?

2 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can, Elaine.

3 Please go ahead.

4 MS. LABALME: Great. Thanks.

5 Good morning. My name is Elaine
6 Labalme, and I live in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.
7 Thank you for the opportunity to speak this morning
8 on the issue of Pennsylvania's participation in the
9 Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. I am speaking
10 today as a private citizen.

11 While I am not a native Pittsburgher,
12 my husband, Fen, lived in the city as a boy. Back
13 then, the city was infamously referred to as hell
14 with the lid off due to persistent smoke and haze
15 from the city's industrial output, primarily the
16 production of steel.

17 Fen recalls driving with his dad
18 through the city streets with the lights on at noon.
19 Not just the car lights, but the street lights as
20 well. The unhealthy air that blanketed the region
21 is why my husband believes --- is what my husband
22 believes led to his asthma diagnosis while still in
23 elementary school. And to this day, he is still
24 dealing with the harmful impacts of this disease.
25 Then his family left the region while he was in high

1 school, and he swore he'd never come back.

2 Fast forward to 2007, and Fen and I
3 relocated to Pittsburgh from San Francisco with our
4 then five-year old son, Stephen, as the region had
5 grown to be a hub of culture and technology with
6 affordable real estate and prime school districts.
7 I actually spent a year researching where to live
8 and poured over more than 40 options before finally
9 settling on Pittsburgh. Regrettably, what slipped
10 through the cracks in my research was the city's
11 poor air quality, still dealing with its industrial
12 legacy in the form of coal-fired power plants and
13 now bearing the added burden of oil and gas air
14 pollution.

15 And well, it wasn't but a few years
16 before our only child was diagnosed with asthma as
17 well, despite our family's overarching focus on a
18 healthy lifestyle. Rather than wallow in despair, I
19 committed to working towards solutions that would
20 address the air pollution in the region and beyond,
21 work I do to this day as a consultant for
22 Environmental Defense Fund. It's clear that in
23 order to tackle Pennsylvania's air pollution problem
24 and meaningfully address climate change, we need to
25 substantially cut the over 89 million tons of

1 climate and air pollution generated annually by our
2 electric power sector.

3 Think about that for a moment: 89
4 million tons of pollution spewed into our air every
5 year that is harming lungs young and old as it
6 contributes to a climate crisis. We will saddle our
7 children with if we don't do something now. This is
8 completely unacceptable.

9 Enter the Regional Greenhouse Gas
10 Initiative, or RGGI, a cap-and-invest program that,
11 as others have referenced today, will allow
12 Pennsylvania to achieve significant reductions in
13 its carbon emissions and promote economic
14 development via investment in renewable energy and
15 energy efficiency. This program will also reduce
16 harmful pollution in communities that have been
17 burdened for far too long.

18 With engagement from the legislature,
19 Pennsylvania can also follow the lead of other RGGI
20 states that have invested in infrastructure,
21 customer bill support, and provided assistance to
22 impacted workers and communities. RGGI has a proven
23 track record of success among the ten northeastern
24 states currently participating in the program.
25 Research has shown that it has helped curb climate

1 and air pollution across these states. Plus, it has
2 the support of over 70 percent of Pennsylvanians
3 according to a September 2020 poll.

4 Linking to RGGI is the kind of
5 solution we need to help keep Pennsylvanians
6 healthy, protect our environment, and act on climate
7 change. Will it be enough? Safe to say, it's one
8 of many steps we'll need to take. Unfortunately,
9 it's not enough for my now college freshman son, who
10 is steadfast that he will not return to Pittsburgh
11 post-college, as he is unwilling to consign another
12 generation of the lungs to asthma and associated
13 impacts of air pollution.

14 I urge the Department of Environmental
15 Protection and the Environmental Quality Board to
16 move forward with the RGGI rulemaking quickly. It's
17 the right thing to do for all Pennsylvanians.

18 Thank you for your time.

19 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Elaine.

20 Speaker number 13 is Daniel Swartz.

21 Daniel?

22 RABBI SWARTZ: Yes. Okay.

23 Hi.

24 Can you hear me?

25 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can.

1 Go ahead.

2 RABBI SWARTZ: Okay. Great. Thanks.

3 I'm Rabbi Daniel Swartz, the spiritual
4 leader of the Temple of Hesed of Scranton. And I'm
5 speaking today in my role as the executive director
6 of the Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life.

7 Over the course of these hearings, I'm
8 confident that many people will speak about why
9 Pennsylvania joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas
10 Initiative would be smart. As a rabbi, I want to
11 instead focus on why --- not why it's smart,
12 although I agree that it is, rather why it's the
13 right thing to do.

14 Deuteronomy 16:20 instructs us:
15 "Justice, justice shall you pursue, that you may
16 thrive and live in the land." Our sages understood
17 the repetition of the word justice to mean justice
18 in both ends and means, for the present and the
19 future, for the poor and the oppressed as much as
20 for the rich and powerful. Unfortunately, when it
21 comes to the environment and today's America, that
22 is rarely the case. People of color and
23 lower-income residents in Pennsylvania are routinely
24 exposed to more pollution and greater health
25 hazards.

1 For example, Hispanics, Asian
2 Americans, and, most of all, African Americans are
3 disproportionally exposed to fine particulates,
4 which can exacerbate asthma, lead to chronic
5 pulmonary and heart conditions, and even cause
6 premature death. Greater exposure to fine
7 particulates also increases the risk of death from
8 respiratory illnesses, including COVID 19.

9 Especially given the Trump
10 administration's unscientific refusal to update
11 health standards for fine particulates, we should be
12 looking for every way possible to reduce the undue
13 health burden such particulates cause. RGGI has
14 done wonders for smog and soot production throughout
15 all the states that participated.

16 It would be immoral to pass up the
17 opportunity that joining RGGI affords us to improve
18 the health of all of Pennsylvanians, especially
19 those suffering from racial disparities. After all,
20 Article I, Section 27, of the Pennsylvania
21 Constitution says the people have a right to clean
22 air, pure water, and to the preservation of the
23 natural scenic, historic, and aesthetic values of
24 the environment. The people, not white people or
25 rich people, but all people.

1 Even when actual exposures are not
2 disproportionate, health burdens viewed more broadly
3 often are. In the case of asthma, as many people
4 have mentioned, I have asthma. And even though my
5 daughter was adopted from India and thus is not my
6 biological child, she too has asthma. On poor air
7 quality days, it's not safe for us to be outside.
8 And yet because of my status, because of the kind of
9 job I have, if God forbid my daughter has to be
10 hospitalized because of her asthma, I have health
11 insurance. I can afford the deductibles. And I can
12 take time off from my job to care for her without
13 losing pay or even being fired. The same can't be
14 said for many minority families in Pennsylvania,
15 where childhood asthma can force decisions between
16 money for medicine or for food or between a parent
17 keeping a job or being able to stay with their sick
18 child. The cleaner skies that RGGI would bring
19 Pennsylvania would be such a blessing to these
20 families. For such reasons, joining RGGI is the
21 right decision right now.

22 But when you consider the future, the
23 argument for RGGI gets even stronger. Again, take a
24 look at Section 27. Pennsylvania's public natural
25 resources are the common property of all the people,

1 including generations yet to come. There is no
2 greater threat to those generations yet to come, to
3 the future wellbeing of our environment, indeed to
4 the future of Pennsylvania as a whole, than climate
5 change.

6 Proverbs, perhaps the most practically
7 oriented of all Biblical books, instructs us in the
8 moral way to consider the future. It teaches the
9 prudent foresee danger and take cover, but the
10 simpleton keeps going and pays the penalty. Good
11 people bequeath to their children's children.

12 If we are going to bequeath a healthy
13 future to our children's children, a future with
14 soaring hemlocks and sparkling waterfalls, if we are
15 going to foresee and avoid danger such as deadly
16 heatwaves and prolonged droughts, we need to start
17 taking action right now to reduce our greenhouse gas
18 production. RGGI won't be enough to do that in and
19 of itself, but it's a great place to start. It
20 provides flexible ways to address one of the
21 dirtiest sectors of Pennsylvania's economy as well
22 as additional monetary resources for building a
23 sustainable future, if they are targeted, so as to
24 address environmental injustices by, for example,
25 investing in energy efficiency upgrades for

1 low-income households, for creating well-paying safe
2 clean energy jobs, and help lift communities out of
3 --- out of poverty.

4 For those suffering from pollution
5 today, for all seeking to building a healthier and
6 more sustainable economy, and for the generations
7 yet to come, RGGI is not merely a smart choice, it
8 is the right and moral choice. Thank you.

9 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Rabbi Swartz.
10 Speaker number 14 today is Rich
11 Overmoyer.

12 MR. OVERMOYER: Hello.
13 Can you hear me?

14 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, I can, Rich.
15 Please go ahead.

16 MR. OVERMOYER: Great.
17 Thank you very much.

18 Yeah, hi. My name is Rich Overmoyer,
19 and I'm the CEO for Fourth Economy Consulting based
20 in Pittsburgh. I appreciate the opportunity to
21 testify before you today regarding the proposed
22 rulemaking regarding the CO2 budget trading program,
23 otherwise known as RGGI. I'm here in full support
24 of Pennsylvania joining the RGGI and will explain my
25 position in the following testimony.

1 First is context for my opinions. I
2 share my background. For the past 15 years, I've
3 been a nationally recognized community and economic
4 development practitioner whose business is located
5 in the City of Pittsburgh and I reside in the
6 community of Mt. Lebanon. Prior to that, I was the
7 deputy secretary of the Department of Community and
8 Economic Development, responsible for investments in
9 our Commonwealth's technology industries. This is
10 to say that I'm well qualified to comment on matters
11 of economic opportunity, the impacts of energy
12 policies on communities, and what opportunities
13 exist by embracing innovation in our communities and
14 small businesses.

15 I've provided three arguments in
16 support of RGGI:

17 First, RGGI is a smart economic
18 development policy. The notion that improved
19 environmental policies and the adoption of renewable
20 energy and energy efficiency efforts somehow are the
21 cause of harm to legacy industries in the state such
22 as coal and foundries. I have personally spoken
23 with energy developers around the country that know
24 that the market opportunity provided by renewable
25 energy and efficiency is critical to their future.

1 It's allowing them to invest in their home
2 communities in unprecedented ways.

3 RGGI allows Pennsylvania to
4 proactively invest in its future and support job
5 creation through strategic investments and energy
6 efficiency upgrades to low to moderate income
7 households, improving energy efficiency for small
8 business, and more.

9 These actions will benefit those
10 individuals and business owners in our community
11 that have so significantly impacted by the COVID-19
12 pandemic. We'll also create jobs throughout our
13 Commonwealth that will provide good wages and career
14 opportunities for so many.

15 Second, RGGI can help us proactively
16 transition. RGGI is a cap-and-investment program
17 that allows regulated companies to make the best
18 business decisions for their own company on how to
19 meet the pollution limits. This can include
20 investments in energy efficiency, which --- for us.

21 We're more competitive in both the short and long
22 terms. Existing law allows RGGI to provide targeted
23 investments to support at-risk and vulnerable
24 communities. This would expand the opportunities
25 for companies to avail themselves of a new funding

1 support stream at a time when economic development
2 related investments in Pennsylvania have not kept
3 pace with other states.

4 It's time for our lawmakers to get
5 ahead of the economic development curve and support
6 sound investments, especially efforts like RGGI that
7 have demonstrated a ten-year track record. DEP's
8 own modeling estimates that participation in RGGI
9 would lead to a significant growth in the gross feed
10 product increase of over 27,000 jobs. Political
11 leaders in the Commonwealth have offered and
12 provided millions of dollars in tax breaks to react
13 to the fossil fuel industry and e-commerce
14 provider's demands. I would hope that we can do
15 better, take a more proactive approach such as RGGI
16 as we work to recover our economy.

17 My third argument, joining RGGI can
18 send the right signal to people looking at
19 Pennsylvania to work or live. Pennsylvania's air
20 quality, and especially the air quality in
21 southwestern Pennsylvania, are a detriment to our
22 future. The work of my team has noted that
23 Pennsylvania is barely maintaining, if not losing,
24 population, a recipe for economic collapse.

25 Recent reports based on survey data

1 note that as many as 24 million people will move
2 next year as a result of COVID-19 and remote work
3 experiences. Pennsylvania, though, will most likely
4 be low on many lists due to what is seen as a
5 concerning environmental stance and reliance on old
6 policies for community enhancing. I have personally
7 had a team member leave our company and move to
8 another state as a result of the experiences with
9 air quality issues. And as I have recruited for new
10 talent over the years, air quality and if our
11 community is serious about improving it is often a
12 pause at a candidate's decision-making process.

13 These experiences, of course, expose
14 our privilege that we can make choices about where
15 to live and work. But many in our community, often
16 minority and/or poor, are often trapped near
17 pollution-producing power generators that erode
18 their life expectancy and overall livelihood. We
19 must do better.

20 In closing, I'd urge you to support
21 Pennsylvania's inclusion in the Regional Greenhouse
22 Gas Initiative and to do so with haste, as we have
23 no time to lose in improving the conditions for our
24 residents and businesses.

25 Thank you.

1 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Rich.
2 Speaker number 15 today is Sandy
3 Strauss.

4 REV. STRAUSS: Can you hear me all
5 right?

6 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can, Sandy.
7 Please go ahead.

8 REV. STRAUSS: Okay. Thank you.
9 My name is the Reverend Sandra Stauss.
10 I'm a resident of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and the
11 director of advocacy and ecumenical outreach for the
12 Pennsylvania Council of Churches. Thank you for
13 this opportunity to speak today in support of the
14 Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, one of the most
15 important and effective programs for reducing
16 emissions and creating jobs for so much of this
17 northeast region.

18 Pennsylvania's participation in RGGI
19 is long overdue. We called for it for more --- more
20 than ten years ago. And the need to join is only
21 growing more urgent as we move ever closer from
22 climate crisis to climate catastrophe.

23 There are numerous reasons for our
24 entry into RGGI. As people of faith, we take to
25 heart God's command to Adam and Eve in the Garden of

1 Eden to till it and keep it. This was a command not
2 just for them, but for all generations. This
3 fragile planet is not ours to despoil. As the psalm
4 has said, the earth is the Lord's and all that is in
5 it. We are called to hold it in trust to protect
6 and preserve.

7 But beyond these faith imperatives,
8 substantial reductions in global warming emissions
9 can provide innumerable benefits for the residents
10 of the Commonwealth as it is already doing in the
11 states that have long been part of RGGI.

12 Savings from health benefits alone are
13 already estimated to be well in the millions. But
14 let's put a face on it. For the millions of our
15 neighbors who suffer from asthma and other
16 respiratory conditions, heart disease, and who live
17 in areas where they cannot avoid exposure to health
18 endangering emissions from power plants and other
19 large emitters, the benefit is priceless.

20 We know that exposure can cause
21 problems for mothers leading to pre-term and
22 low-weight births, which can mean a lifetime of
23 health problems for the children.

24 However, on a more personal level, I
25 must share that my husband has been a cancer

1 patient. Chemotherapy and other cancer-addressing
2 drugs have made him more susceptible to the effects
3 of pollution. Like many cancer patients, the drugs
4 have caused damage to his lungs, leading to early
5 stage emphysema.

6 Reduced levels of the kinds of
7 admissions that RGGI will curb and help to preserve
8 his health --- will help to preserve his health and
9 extend his life, just as it will for thousands like
10 him. It will mean generations of healthier children
11 who grow into healthier adults, which will reduce
12 the strain on our healthcare system and will reduce
13 stress on families that must deal with ongoing
14 health impacts.

15 Jobs, of course, are always a concern.
16 We know that fossil fuels have depended --- that
17 we've depended on are finite. So even if dangerous
18 emissions were not an issue, we must undergo a
19 transition to renewable energy resources. We also
20 have a responsibility to ensure that workers in
21 these industries are treated fairly. Our
22 Commonwealth estimates that new clean energy jobs
23 will more than replace the fossil fuel jobs that
24 will eventually end. In addition, we will all
25 benefit when pH emissions from gas wells, pipelines,

1 and transport of fossil fuels is dramatically
2 reduced or eliminated.

3 Before I conclude, I want to come back
4 to the environment. For years, I've been a
5 gardener, a composter, recycler, and bee keeper. I
6 know that my small actions alone don't have a
7 dramatic effect on the environment. However, let me
8 speak on behalf of the bees. I started keeping bees
9 about 12 years ago when I began to understand the
10 threat they were under. And on the selfish level,
11 as a gardener, I believed they would be beneficial
12 as pollinators. We were successful in sharing the
13 survival of our bees until around five years ago,
14 when we could see that colony strength was declining
15 despite our best efforts. Reduced colony strength
16 means that survival through the winter months is
17 more difficult. And for the last years, they have
18 not survived. Of course, we know there are many
19 things that may be contributing to honey bee
20 declines, as well as that of other pollinators, but
21 the stresses are exacerbated by pollution and
22 changes in our climate. Pollinators like our bees
23 are essential to maintaining our food supplies and
24 therefore our very survival.

25 The positive impacts of RGGI can help

1 to turn around much of the destruction we have
2 wrought on our environment.

3 I cannot share the kinds of statistics
4 and estimates that many who are testifying today
5 will share with you, but I do believe in science and
6 the solid evidence of damage we have done to our
7 world. I speak as a concerned human being and a
8 person of faith who believes I am called to love my
9 neighbor and to care for the earth. I pray that you
10 will listen to the experts with your heads and to
11 people like me with your hearts, because it will
12 take both their expertise and our passion, combined
13 with tools like RGGI, to make our Commonwealth a
14 more livable place for us and generations to come.

15 Thank you.

16 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Sandra.

17 Speaker 16 today is Dave Jenkins.

18 MR. JENKINS: Yes, thank you.

19 Am I going through okay?

20 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes. We can hear you,
21 Dave.

22 Please go ahead.

23 MR. JENKINS: Great.

24 Thank you for the opportunity to speak
25 here today.

1 I am president of an organization
2 called Conservatives for Responsible Stewardship.
3 It's a national grassroots organization of
4 stewardship-minded conservatives, just like the name
5 says. We have 20,000 members nationwide, several
6 hundred of which reside right here in Pennsylvania.
7 And on behalf of those members, I want to express
8 our strong support for Pennsylvania joining the
9 Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, or RGGI, not
10 only because it's a smart and effective way to
11 safeguard our life-sustaining atmosphere, but also
12 because it is an equally smart and effective way to
13 lower electricity costs for Pennsylvanians.

14 In recent years, the energy market has
15 changed dramatically. Pennsylvanian's aging costly
16 to maintain coal plants have become as much an
17 economic burden as an environmental one.
18 Electricity generated from these plants is now more
19 expensive than power produced from natural gas and
20 renewables. And that disparity just keeps growing.
21 While the cost of coal generated electricity rises
22 as the coal plants age, the cost of renewables keeps
23 getting cheaper. There's no independent energy
24 analyst anywhere in the world that sees this trend
25 ever changing.

1 That means that coal plants in this
2 region, most of which are well beyond their 40-year
3 life expectancy, can no longer compete in a free
4 market. Those that remain are being propped up by
5 utilities at ratepayer expense. Keeping those coal
6 plants running means saddling Pennsylvanians with
7 higher electric bills to go with all the harmful
8 pollution they produce.

9 And that pollution is no small matter.
10 It is about much more than climate change. The
11 pollution coming from this state's remaining coal
12 plants poses a serious health threat. We're living
13 now in a time when more than ever before, every
14 breath matters.

15 The COVID-19 virus is a respiratory
16 illness that exploits lungs, damaged, and made more
17 vulnerable by pollution. Multiple studies have
18 found that even a small increase in exposure to the
19 particulate air pollution produced by coal plants
20 significantly increases one's risk of dying from the
21 virus.

22 And because of market forces alone,
23 electricity generated from coal will eventually lose
24 out to cheaper, cleaner, and more efficient energy
25 choice sources. RGGI, however, can make that

1 transition smoother and quicker by providing
2 utilities with regulatory certainty. Doing the
3 right thing for our planet and our health is no
4 longer a matter of difficult tradeoffs. Far from
5 it. RGGI is a proven market-friendly program that
6 spurs economic activity, creates jobs, and lowers
7 electricity costs. The economics overwhelmingly
8 favor participation in RGGI. And there is
9 absolutely zero benefit in further delay.

10 President Ronald Reagan faced a
11 similar situation in the mid-1980s. The depletion
12 of ozone in our atmosphere was a growing problem.
13 He wisely recognized that the problem could be
14 tackled in a way that was economically beneficial
15 and that addressing that problem was the responsible
16 thing to do. It was the conservative choice. We
17 have that same kind of opportunity today.

18 Pennsylvania joining RGGI is the smart
19 responsible and, yes, the conservative choice.

20 Thank you.

21 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, David.

22 Speaker number 17 today is Barb
23 Jarmoska.

24 MS. JARMOSKA: Good morning.

25 MS. GRIFFIN: Good morning.

1 MS. JARMOSKA: My name is Barb ---
2 Good morning.

3 My name is Barb Jarmoska. I live in
4 rural Lycoming County. I'm speaking today on behalf
5 of myself and the Responsible Drilling Alliance, an
6 organization based in Williamsport, PA, for which I
7 have served on the Board of Directors for the past
8 decade. Thank you for this opportunity.

9 Let me begin by stating that I support
10 DEP's efforts to enroll Pennsylvania in the Regional
11 Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

12 I am 73 years old. In my lifetime, I
13 have not travelled much, but I have had the
14 opportunity to know one place in the world
15 intimately. That special place is 20 acres in rural
16 Lycoming County, adjacent to the Loyalsock State
17 Forest, the property that my grandfather purchased
18 in 1933 stretches for a full mile along the
19 Loyalsock Creek, DCNR's river of the year in 2018.

20 Seventy-two (72) years is a long time
21 to observe the changes to weather, the storms; to
22 watch the death by virus and vector of beloved tree
23 species; to grieve the loss of the once abundant
24 wood turtles and salamanders, bass, and red-striped
25 minnows, toads, and bullfrogs; to watch the invasive

1 annihilate the native species, Japanese knotweed and
2 riparian buffer choking out water fir, sycamore
3 saplings, and wild artichoke; to see the barberry
4 drop live and spread, harboring chicks that make
5 nightly body searches here a necessity and Lyme
6 disease common among family and friends; to see the
7 still grass take over the forest, the fields, and
8 country roadside where wild blackberries once
9 thrived; to recall a childhood when the creek was
10 teeming with native brown trout and citing a eastern
11 hellbender a possibility on every canoe ridge.

12 That giant salamander is now the
13 Pennsylvania state amphibian, but I haven't seen one
14 in this creek for decades.

15 And then there's the severe storms and
16 floods. From 1933 until 2011, the creek never
17 reached the house or flooded the woods in nearly
18 eight decades. On December 8th, 2011, Tropical
19 Storm Lee changed that as a deluge of rain raised
20 the Loyalsock Creek to heights never seen in
21 recorded history. A full year and about \$80,000
22 later, I finally finished cleaning out the mess,
23 mold, and detritus. The storm recovery lasted
24 longer and cost taxpayers far more. The bridge that
25 washed out a couple of miles downstream from me cost

1 \$3 million and took 14 months to replace.

2 Just five years later, another severe
3 weather event caused flash flooding that displaced
4 over a hundred people and caused \$33 million in
5 damage in three counties, including mine. That
6 time, flood waters took out another bridge and also
7 a pipeline that dumped tens of thousands of gallons
8 of gasoline into the Loyalsock Creek. The fumes
9 were so bad during the first few hours after that
10 pipeline ruptured that being outdoors for even a
11 short time gave me a severe headache.

12 Is climate change largely to blame for
13 this drastic alteration of the ecosystem I'm
14 witnessing in my little corner of the world? I
15 believe it is.

16 Some legislators talk about global
17 warming as if it were a religion they profess not to
18 believe in. My senator, Gene Yaw, admits that
19 climate change is real. However, Senator Yaw
20 opposes RGGI, calling the program a tax scheme, yet
21 offering no alternative plan to deal with the
22 existential crisis we are facing, the cost of which
23 will be measured in trillions.

24 What we need is a legislature focused
25 on the big picture of greenhouse gasses, including

1 methane. Absent a majority of forward-thinking
2 lawmakers with the health and welfare of present and
3 future citizens in mind, decisions such as RGGI end
4 up in the hands of regulator agencies like DEP.
5 That's not the way it should be, but it's the way it
6 is.

7 And the second largest natural gas
8 producing state in the nation, Pennsylvania, has a
9 responsibility to step up and be a national leader
10 in reducing harmful methane and air pollution from
11 oil and gas infrastructure, but the fossil fuel
12 industry has a chokehold on any such leadership
13 role.

14 In conclusion, yes, join RGGI. In
15 spite of the fact that market forces have already
16 closed many of PA's coal fired power plants, yes,
17 join RGGI, and use the proceeds to incentivize
18 energy efficiency and clean energy programs that
19 reduce all fossil fuel emissions.

20 Yes, join RGGI, and help to support
21 marginalized communities and the children whose
22 lungs suffer from exposure to CO2's toxic companion
23 pollutants. Yes. Join RGGI. But for God's sake,
24 don't stop there. RGGI is a small step, but it is a
25 step in the right direction.

1 Thank you for listening to my
2 comments.

3 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Barbara.
4 Speaker number 18 today is Allison
5 Bailey.

6 MS. BAILEY: Hello.
7 Can you hear me?

8 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, Allison.
9 Please go ahead.

10 MS. BAILEY: Okay. Great.

11 Well, good morning. My name is
12 Allison Bailey. I'm an Army veteran. I also work
13 with Vet Boys Foundation, which is an organization
14 that empowers veterans to engage in the civic
15 process. I'm testifying today to garnish support
16 for Pennsylvania's interests into the cap invest
17 program known as RGGI.

18 Having worked in the government, I've
19 seen all too often the implementation of
20 short-sighted policy that largely ignores
21 environmental decay and the disadvantaged
22 communities affected most. Short of strict
23 regulatory demands and carbon taxation, RGGI is a
24 way for businesses to capitalize on emissions
25 reductions to create a value ad while reducing air

1 pollution in affected communities and, not to
2 mention, being a part of a global movement to
3 mitigate climate change.

4 As Americans, we have a small window
5 of opportunity to reimagine how we are actually
6 conducting business and be at the forefront of
7 environmental solutions that will bring long-term
8 sustainability and reinvest in our communities with
9 more than just a paycheck, but cleaner, brighter
10 places to live.

11 Time and again, we see veteran
12 employment and hiring initiatives at the forefront
13 of companies. However, I personally can't name a
14 single veteran that doesn't care about the values
15 and sense of purpose that must come from their work.

16 And this includes the values and integrities of the
17 companies they work for.

18 Participating in RGGI is a feasible
19 and flexible way to restore a sense of purpose as
20 well as bring creativity and passion back into our
21 workforce. There's a common goal in protecting our
22 communities and our planet.

23 It's also worth mentioning that
24 veterans, more than most, realize the need to move
25 quickly into a 21st-century economy that prioritizes

1 clean and renewable energy in the interests of
2 greater safety and security. RGGI is a proven
3 market-based approach, being prospectively
4 implemented in neighboring states already. I urge
5 the Department of Environmental Protection to move
6 with all deliberate speed on this critical
7 rulemaking.

8 Thank you for your time.

9 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Allison.
10 Speaker number 19 today is Bernard
11 Goldstein.

12 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Thank you.

13 Can you hear me?

14 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, I can.

15 Please go ahead.

16 DR. GOLDSTEIN: My name is Bernard
17 Goldstein. I am the retired dean at the University
18 of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health. I'm
19 a physician trained in internal medicine who began
20 studying environmental public health more than 50
21 years ago. And I'm also an elected member of the
22 National Academy of Medicine.

23 From 1981 to 1983, I was chair of the
24 EPA's congressionally-mandated clean air scientific
25 advisory committee. And from 1983 to '85, I was

1 President Regan's appointee, confirmed by the US
2 Senate, to serve as EPA's assistant administrator
3 for research and development.

4 This is the time that what we then
5 called global warning --- global warming was just
6 receiving EPA's attention.

7 I tell you this not just because I'm
8 an old guy who likes to talk about what I did in the
9 past. I tell you this because I want to make sure
10 you all understand that trading of pollution is not
11 new. And that Pennsylvania and the northeast were
12 central to its development as an effective policy
13 tool.

14 Pollution trading actually began with
15 acid rain and would not have occurred without
16 Senator John Heinz of Pennsylvania. Acid rain was a
17 very hot issue in the 1980s. We had learned that
18 emissions of sulfur dioxide from burning fossil
19 fuels are transformed in the atmosphere to sulfuric
20 acid and other sulfates.

21 Some early studies predicted that this
22 would acidify lakes with resultant sterility and
23 would kill trees, while other scientists were
24 finding little or no effect. Not surprisingly, New
25 England, the downstream recipient of much of this

1 pollution, wanted something done immediately, so it
2 tended to focus on the adverse findings. But we in
3 Pennsylvania and the Midwest argued that afraid of
4 losing industry, we cannot afford --- afford to do
5 anything, so we --- I was involved because the EPA
6 had relationship role in the interagency task force
7 studying the issue.

8 Once the scientific community
9 sufficiently narrowed the difference between the
10 extremes, the policy makers could take over. And a
11 key person in developing the policy was Senator
12 Heinz, our Republican senator. With colleagues in
13 both parties, he was largely responsible for the
14 provisions of the 1990 Clean Air Act amendments that
15 established cap-and-trade sulfur dioxide. And it's
16 been highly successful.

17 The government program actually met
18 its initial goals of cutting sulfur dioxide
19 emissions in half within 20 years. Now, that's not
20 to say that there weren't problems that still exist
21 and that RGGI itself will go a long way to address
22 these remaining sulfur dioxide problems.

23 The cap-and-trade program for acid
24 rain originally was heavily opposed by parts of the
25 electric power industry, who, as always, were

1 frightened by a new regulatory scheme. But, in
2 fact, they made much money because of it.
3 Typically, those companies effectively dealt with
4 their emissions. Perhaps forgotten, there were many
5 environmental things that were also opposed on the
6 basis that this cap-and-trade program would cause a
7 license to pollute as we hear again.

8 But the outcome of the acid rain
9 program should reassure both industry and
10 environmentalists that regulated market-based
11 approaches can be an effective way of shaping
12 environmental goals, something we desperately need
13 to do with global climate change and carbon dioxide.

14 That policy outcome did not come
15 without some fits and starts and tinkering. And a
16 major advancement to RGGI is the flexibility it
17 provides and what we can learn from the states that
18 already participate.

19 There was another lesson from acid
20 rain. It was visualized initially as a problem
21 affecting ecosystems, lakes, fish, trees. We've
22 later learned that these acid particles have severe
23 health effects. In fact, the controversy about
24 whether EPA did the right thing in not lowering the
25 fine particle something standard, it's something you

1 are reading about in today's papers.

2 The recognition that acid particles
3 could kill humans was a telling example of how
4 humans are part of the ecosystem. The same breadth
5 of impact that occurs due to carbon dioxide
6 emissions.

7 Finally, the devil is in the details.
8 A detail which troubles me is the lack of a firm
9 commitment that the state's income from the RGGI
10 program will be used for air pollution protection
11 efforts rather than just disappearing into the
12 budget. That should be fixed.

13 Thank you.

14 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Bernard.
15 Speaker number 210 today is Hannah
16 Jones.

17 MS. JONES: Hello, can you hear me?

18 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, Hannah.

19 Please go ahead.

20 MS. JONES: Thank you.

21 I will be speaking as a private
22 citizen.

23 My name is Hannah Jones. I'm a
24 19-year-old from Pittsburgh and an undergraduate at
25 Pitt.

1 As you may already be aware, Western
2 Pennsylvania's asthma rates are unusually high
3 because of air pollution. In 2019, the Allegheny
4 County asthma task force report estimated that 11
5 percent of children in the county are diagnosed with
6 the disease. That's three percent higher than the
7 national average.

8 Well, what do stats like this mean?
9 What does it mean for almost 25,000 children to grow
10 up with asthma? I certainly can't speak for
11 everyone, but I have some understanding of what it's
12 like to grow up and be limited by my breathing.

13 I was pre-school aged when I had my
14 first asthma attack. It was scary. I vividly
15 remember the panic in my mother's eyes as she tried
16 to get me to calm down so I wouldn't pass out. I
17 ended up going to the ER.

18 I'm very fortunate that my parents had
19 the resources to treat my asthma throughout my
20 childhood. When I'd get sick, they would get up in
21 the middle of the night to put me on the nebulizer.
22 And throughout grade school, my mom made sure I took
23 my daily preventative inhaler and would remind me to
24 take my emergency inhaler to any sports practice.
25 Even when well-managed, asthma is incredibly

1 frustrating. It can get better, but it never goes
2 away completely.

3 I'm a runner. I did cross country and
4 track and field for all four years of high school,
5 and I still run today. But breathing, not tiredness
6 or injury, has always been the greatest challenge
7 for me, because it doesn't matter if your muscles
8 are not tired and you want to keep --- keep going,
9 you have to stop if you can't breathe.

10 What is infuriating about this is that
11 it doesn't have to be this bad for me and so many
12 others who have difficulty breathing. Pennsylvania
13 is one of the most polluted states in the country.
14 And my living here hasn't helped my condition. I
15 became aware of this problem my junior year of high
16 school when my environmental science teacher handed
17 out packets with data about Western PA's air
18 quality. It had stats about particulate matter,
19 ozone, nitrogen dioxide, everything.

20 I was shocked by how many months we
21 simply failed to pass the EPA standard for
22 particulate matter. It was no wonder I and so many
23 other kids have asthma in this area --- or had
24 asthma. Even though my family is here, and I think
25 Pittsburgh is a wonderful city, I don't want to live

1 here anymore because of the poor air quality. I
2 don't want to raise children here either. I have
3 twin sisters who also have asthma. My grandmother
4 moved here from Florida to help my mom take care of
5 us, and now she has breathing problems.

6 The American Lung Association, in
7 their 2020 State of the Air, gives Pittsburgh an F
8 grade for ozone and particulate pollution. It is
9 the eighth most polluted city in the country.

10 If you act now, you can improve the
11 lives of so many people and those yet to be born
12 here. You can make sure that fewer parents have to
13 watch their children gasp --- gasp for breath or
14 spend sleepless nights making sure they get all of
15 their breathing treatments. You can keep more
16 people healthy and safe and wanting to live here.

17 Needless to say, I support RGGI.

18 Thank you for your time.

19 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Hannah.

20 Speaker number 21 is Sein Lee.

21 MS. LEE: Can you hear me?

22 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes. Excellent. Thank
23 you.

24 Please go ahead.

25 MS. LEE: Thank you so much for the

1 opportunity to speak.

2 My name is Sein Lee. I am a freshman
3 at Yale University and a resident of the Pittsburgh
4 suburbs. I'm speaking on behalf of myself, but also
5 a lot of the high school and college students across
6 Pennsylvania.

7 More than a year ago, when I was still
8 in high school, I joined the global youth climate
9 strikes. I marched alongside fellow teens who
10 understood the state of our environment and were
11 asking for climate action now.

12 I marched for my community. Despite
13 being a middle class suburb, we've experienced power
14 outages and flooding roads as a result of super
15 storms. Sometimes, toxic smog and particulates from
16 city factories makes it dangerous to hold sports
17 practices and outdoor events. Most of all, I
18 marched in the climate strikes for my mother. That
19 summer before I entered high school, she collapsed
20 from a stroke that left her paralyzed, unable to
21 walk, talk, or write, and had permanent respiratory
22 issues. After lapsing into a week-long coma, she
23 recovered against all odds.

24 I remember the joy I felt when she was
25 able to take her first steps outside after weeks of

1 physical therapy. She has since incorporated
2 mile-long walks outside into her daily routine,
3 helping her gain back her strength and endurance.

4 The greenspaces and clean air have
5 been integral to her recovery, whether it's helping
6 yardwork, walking her dog, or enjoying the diversity
7 of plants and trees at home.

8 Because of my mother, my family
9 developed a new-found appreciation for the outdoors.
10 You represent the millions of Pennsylvanians who
11 find mental and emotional solace in nature, who find
12 physical healing and enjoyment in outdoor
13 activities. But even this is threatened by the
14 emissions that poison our air and the pollution that
15 plagues our ecosystems.

16 I'm here today to ask that
17 Pennsylvania join the Regional Greenhouse Gas
18 Initiative, or RGGI, which is supported by a vast
19 majority of Pennsylvania residents based on polling.
20 It's a logical, cost-efficient step that we can take
21 now to slow down the devastating effects of climate
22 change and ensure that the environment remains a
23 space to heal, reflect, and enjoy for future
24 generations.

25 RGGI's greatest strength is the

1 flexibility and practicality of its cap and invest
2 model. After setting the emissions cap, the
3 distribution and exchange of emission allowances
4 incentivizes companies to reduce dirty energy
5 sources and increase efficiency.

6 Review from the program not only
7 supports pollution reduction measures, but it also
8 is invested in fossil fuel workers and their
9 communities to facilitate a fair, sustainable
10 transition.

11 Upon being implemented in ten
12 northeastern states, red, blue, and purple alike,
13 RGGI has led to a fast growth in jobs. It has a
14 potential to add tens of thousands of clean energy
15 jobs and propel Pennsylvania into the clean energy
16 sector, which has experienced an average job growth
17 rate almost twice that of fossil fuels. RGGI
18 harnesses the productivity and power of this rapidly
19 burgeoning sector and positions Pennsylvania as a
20 competitive leader in the modern economy.

21 RGGI also protects public health.
22 Pennsylvania's power sector is the fourth dirtiest
23 in the entire nation. And my city, Pittsburgh,
24 ranks sixth for annual soot pollution. Residents
25 like Hannah or my mother suffer from respiratory

1 problems or pre-existing illnesses that are
2 exacerbated by these air quality issues.

3 At preventing health costs, RGGI has
4 the potential to save the health care system almost
5 \$350,000. But more importantly than money, it can
6 save lives, preventing an estimated 3,639 premature
7 deaths and 30,000 hospital visits linked to air
8 pollution.

9 The current COVID-19 pandemic has made
10 two things very clear: first, the responsibility of
11 adopting policies backed by science; and second, the
12 urgency that we must adopt if we want to stop a
13 global crisis.

14 On behalf of my generation, my
15 community, and my family, I urge you guys to take
16 speedy action. I implore Pennsylvania to
17 participate in the Regional Greenhouse Gas
18 Initiative to begin curtailing emissions as soon as
19 possible.

20 The loss of a whole planet due to
21 climate change is a deadline that we cannot afford
22 to ignore. Now is the time to embrace our
23 responsibility and with unprecedented urgency.

24 Thank you.

25 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you.

1 I have been told that Vanessa Nelson
2 has withdrawn from speaking today. She is number
3 22.

4 So number 23, Laksha Thulasiram. I
5 apologize if I'm mispronouncing your name.

6 Laksha, are you with us?

7 MR. JAGIELA: Okay. Move on.

8 MS. GRIFFIN: Okay.

9 Thank you, Darek.

10 We'll keep an eye out just in case
11 they show up later.

12 So number 24, Sierra Echavarria.

13 Is Sierra with us?

14 MR. JAGIELA: No, she's not.

15 MS. GRIFFIN: Okay. We'll keep an eye
16 out for Sierra then.

17 So Number 25, Sheima Abbas.

18 MS. ABBAS: Hi.

19 Can you hear me all right?

20 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can.

21 Please go ahead.

22 MS. ABBAS: Great.

23 So my name is Sheima Abbas. I'm a
24 resident of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. And I'm
25 speaking on behalf of myself as a private citizen.

1 I really appreciate the opportunity to speak about
2 RGGI here today. I'm currently a student at Temple
3 University, where I major in environmental studies.

4 In getting to know the city,
5 especially north Philadelphia. And diving into my
6 related studies, it's become apparent to me that
7 RGGI is an ideal program for Pennsylvania. And I'm
8 in vocal support of it.

9 We are in the state of climate
10 emergency, and it's important that Pennsylvania acts
11 as such. As we near global tipping points, we must
12 begin making massive changes to our infrastructure
13 and how our economy operates. And RGGI is how this
14 change can begin to occur.

15 Polling data continues to show that
16 citizens want to act on climate, especially young
17 people. They're the ones who will be inheriting the
18 swamp of issues that will come with not adopting
19 programs such as RGGI as soon as possible. But
20 aside from the obvious need to cut down on emissions
21 to combat global climate change, this is also a
22 concern that impacts the daily lives of our very own
23 residents. Atmospheric form genome 2.5 from power
24 plants will have --- or has had an impact on
25 children's health, including asthma, premature

1 births, and low birth weights. This especially
2 affects the black, brown, and lower income
3 communities that fossil fueled power plants are
4 disproportionately present in.

5 Pennsylvania ranks second in the
6 nation in largest differences between races and
7 income levels and exposure to air pollution. The
8 history of systematic violence that pollution has
9 forced upon the marginalized communities of
10 Pennsylvania has no place in a clean energy future.
11 But researchers conservatively estimate avoided
12 health costs of up to \$350 million with the
13 implementation of RGGI. And prevention is the best
14 form of health care.

15 However, though, because overall
16 emissions reductions do not always mean localized
17 reductions, I do think that the implementation of
18 RGGI should also include the essential data
19 collection of where exactly these reactions are
20 happening to ensure that this program is making
21 genuine changes in the air reductions --- and the
22 air quality for these over-burdened communities.
23 And so that further decision making can reflect that
24 information and be held accountable. Additionally,
25 it's no doubt that adjusting our economy to be

1 centered around clean energy will be a large
2 undertaking. But this should be seen as an
3 opportunity for growth, not an obstacle.

4 A program like RGGI can lead to the
5 extension of Pennsylvania's 90,000 plus clean energy
6 jobs and position the state as a leader and
7 inevitably expanding clean energy economy.

8 Because RGGI works as a cap investment
9 cycle, it comes with a unique opportunity to provide
10 support for workers transitioning from fossil fuels
11 into clean energy with the very money accrued by the
12 program.

13 Pennsylvania's people and our well
14 being should be the number one priority of
15 stakeholders. And RGGI is a great vehicle to
16 deliver care and support that residents of the state
17 deserve from its energy production through its work
18 to reduce emissions and its chance to develop our
19 economies and a more sustainable future.

20 So I strongly urge the DEP to deliver
21 and quickly on approving RGGI rule.

22 Thank you so much for your time.

23 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Sheima.

24 Speaker number 26 today is George
25 Snedden.

1 MR. SNEDDEN: Can you guys hear me?

2 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can, George.

3 Please go ahead.

4 MR. SNEDDEN: All right. Thank you.

5 Good morning, everyone. Thank you for
6 allowing me the opportunity to speak at this
7 hearing. My name is George Snedden. I am a student
8 at Temple University majoring in environmental
9 engineering. And I am here both as a representative
10 for Defend Our Future, a non-profit dedicated to
11 empowering young people who are passionate about
12 climate solution, and simply as a concerned citizen.

13 I am here today to testify in support
14 of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, also
15 known as RGGI, which will provide citizens of
16 Pennsylvania and even people around the world with
17 cleaner and safer air.

18 A lot of smarter and more qualified
19 people than me have already talked about the
20 benefits of RGGI, so I'll keep this kind of short.
21 The dangers of greenhouse gas emission are not a
22 mystery. Long-term exposure to air pollution can
23 damage nearly every major organ, including brain,
24 kidneys, liver, and lungs, and even cause nerve
25 damage. It is no coincidence that communities with

1 lower and median incomes and higher African American
2 populations are the ones that are affected the most
3 by greenhouse gas emissions. This is yet another
4 example of how those who contribute the least to
5 climate change can suffer the most from its impacts.

6 Every day that we continue on the path
7 that we are on, we are doing irreversible damage to
8 our planet. As a result, it is crucial that the DEP
9 move deliberately and quickly on the RGGI rule.

10 What is the purpose of government if
11 not to protect the citizens' health and wellbeing?
12 Adopting RGGI would also put Pennsylvania in a
13 position to lead the country in the clean energy
14 movement over the coming decades. Overall, RGGI
15 would benefit millions, if not billions, of people
16 and the policy should be put in place as quickly as
17 possible.

18 Thank you.

19 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, George.

20 Speaker number 27 today is Erin
21 Cosgrove.

22 MS. COSGROVE: Can you hear me now?

23 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can hear you
24 now, Erin. Please go ahead.

25 MS. COSGROVE: Thanks.

1 Hello. My name is Erin Cosgrove. I
2 am from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and I am
3 testifying today on behalf of the Keystone Energy
4 Efficiency Alliance.

5 First, I would like to thank the
6 Department of Environmental Protection for the
7 opportunity to comment on Pennsylvania's joining of
8 the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative or RGGI. And
9 I would like to articulate that KEEA full heartedly
10 supports the proposed regulation.

11 But also a little background. The
12 Keystone Energy Efficiency Alliance is KEEA's --- is
13 Pennsylvania's trade association for the energy
14 efficiency industry. The energy efficiency industry
15 is composed of a diverse range of professions from
16 contractors and manufacturers to engineers,
17 architects, and software developers and a local
18 workforce that cannot be outsourced.

19 Our membership comprising of 75
20 companies ranges from small local firms to large
21 multi-national corporations. While the pandemic and
22 related lockdowns caused enormous job losses, energy
23 efficiency is the largest US energy sector, boasting
24 a growth rate 1.7 times faster than the national
25 workforce from 2016 to 2017.

1 KEEA supports the proposed regulations
2 to allow the state to enter RGGI, as RGGI provides
3 an avenue to combat climate change and grow
4 Pennsylvania's economy. In current, RGGI states
5 investment proceeds have generated over four billion
6 in economic benefits in the form of new jobs,
7 customer/utility bill savings, and pilot --- public
8 private investment.

9 While an action document will come out
10 later, the regulations outlined four key areas for
11 investment proceeds. Worker transition, energy
12 efficiency, clean and renewable energy generation,
13 and GHG abatement initiatives.

14 KEEA applauds the DEP identifying the
15 benefits that energy efficiency investments can
16 bring and would like to expand prioritizing energy
17 efficiency where we can lower energy costs and boost
18 local and state economy through the creation of
19 local long-term jobs. Just as the Commonwealth has
20 transitioned energy in the past to remain an energy
21 leading economy, RGGI will enable Pennsylvania to
22 lead the clean energy workforce transition once
23 again. By investing in energy efficiency programs,
24 energy efficiency workers will be in increasing
25 demand across the state to build, install, monitor,

1 repair, and improve equipment. These jobs are by
2 definition local to their communities and offer a
3 higher than average salary.

4 Per year, RGGI is anticipated to
5 create 27,000 jobs and pour up to \$300 million into
6 Pennsylvania's economy.

7 Energy efficiency jobs can also
8 provide a reliable career path for workers
9 transitioning from other energy sectors. RGGI
10 auction proceeds can provide worker transition
11 funding to help workers join the energy efficiency
12 and clean energy workforce.

13 As coal generation naturally declines,
14 Pennsylvania's leadership should do everything
15 possible to help its current energy workers
16 transition to the new energy sector. And RGGI will
17 provide the push, framework, and funds to transition
18 the workforce to one of clean generation.

19 Finally, investing in energy
20 efficiency can lay the groundwork for a more
21 equitable energy transition by investing in energy
22 efficiency programs that address economic and
23 structural barriers that prevent residents and
24 businesses from participating in state and utility
25 offered energy efficiency programs.

1 A number of states already leverage
2 RGGI auction proceeds to provide a more
3 comprehensive and accessible energy efficiency
4 programs portfolio. Energize Delaware's
5 pre-weatherization program uses RGGI funds directly
6 for weather assisted program deferrals. In addition
7 to directly supporting these programs, RGGI funds
8 can be an avenue to identify additional private
9 funding to improve access to programs.

10 Establishment of a green fund or a green bank
11 attracts private investment that can aid residents
12 and small businesses through streamlining and
13 completing first-of-their-kind transactions and
14 providing capital that allows for investments in
15 clean energy improvements that can have a higher
16 up-front cost but a lower operating cost.

17 Overall, the effects of energy
18 efficiency investment for RGGI will ripple out
19 across communities. Family with lower - families
20 with lower utility bills can spend more on local
21 goods and services. And businesses that spend less
22 on energy can spend more on payroll or capital
23 investment.

24 In this way, energy efficiency
25 investments are a win/win/win that will ensure that

1 RGGI delivers not only less pollution, but more
2 jobs, more savings, and a stronger economy for
3 Pennsylvania.

4 Thank you for the opportunity to
5 provide comments on this important regulation.

6 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Erin.

7 Speaker number 28 today is Patrice
8 Tomcik.

9 MS. TOMCIK: Good morning.

10 MS. GRIFFIN: Good morning.

11 Please go ahead, Patrice.

12 MS. TOMCIK: Thank you for the
13 opportunity to give comments today.

14 My name is Patrice Tomcik. That is
15 T-O-M-C-I-K. And I am the mother of two school-aged
16 children living in Gibsonia, Pennsylvania. I'm the
17 project manager for State Campaigns for Moms Clean
18 Air Force, a national non-profit organization of
19 over one million moms and dads united to protect our
20 children's health from air pollution and climate
21 change. Today I give my comments on my own behalf
22 as a resident of Pennsylvania in support of the
23 draft CO2 Budget Trading Program and linking to the
24 Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

25 As the third largest greenhouse gas

1 emitting state and home to the fifth dirtiest power
2 sector, Pennsylvania has a responsibility to cut
3 climate warming carbon emissions. In Pennsylvania,
4 we're experiencing climate change with increased
5 flooding, causing landslides, extreme weather, and
6 ticks that carry Lyme's Disease. Pennsylvania has
7 the most cases of Lyme's Disease in the nation. And
8 I personally know a number of people who have been
9 treated for Lyme's Disease, including my husband.

10 By having Pennsylvania participate in
11 the RGGI program, it will cut climate warming carbon
12 emissions and also have the benefit of reductions in
13 harmful pollutants such as particulate matter,
14 sulfur dioxide, and heavy metals.

15 Scientists have known for decades that
16 air pollution is harmful to health. And this is
17 especially true for vulnerable populations such as
18 older adults, people with underlying health
19 conditions, communities of color, pregnant women,
20 and children.

21 As a mother, I'm concerned about what
22 my children are breathing into their lungs every
23 day, especially my youngest, who battled cancer for
24 three-and-a-half years and has a compromised immune
25 system.

1 I've tried to make his home
2 environment as healthy as possible, but I can't
3 control the air my son breathes. And I depend on my
4 elected officials, state agencies, and committees to
5 do their jobs and protect him with comprehensive and
6 meaningful pollution protections.

7 Reductions in carbon and the
8 associated harmful air pollution from power sector
9 can improve public health by reducing asthma
10 attacks, heart disease, respiratory disease,
11 pre-term births, low birth weights, cancer, and
12 premature death.

13 Because power plants are often located
14 near communities of color and low-income
15 communities, it is imperative to put in place
16 meaningful safeguards to ensure environmental
17 justice communities benefit from the rule that
18 reduces carbon pollution from the power sector.

19 Another group that is vulnerable ---
20 vulnerable to air pollution are the elderly. My
21 father, who died just two weeks ago, at the age of
22 73 years old lived 1.5 miles downwind from the
23 coal-fired Cheswick Generating Station.

24 The front of my father's house and
25 every house on the block is covered with a layer of

1 soot. My father lived most of his adult life in
2 this house and developed diabetes, COPD, and heart
3 disease, which caused a heart attack that required
4 quintuple bypass surgery. My father was often
5 gasping for a breath of fresh air, and just last
6 spring, was put on portable oxygen.

7 The importance of clean air
8 protections for our families and communities have
9 never been clearer. Moms like me won't accept
10 continuing on the same polluting path we had before.
11 The cost of inaction has already put our family's
12 health at risk.

13 I urge the EQB and the DEP to move
14 deliberately and quickly on linking Pennsylvania to
15 RGGI in order to address the climate crisis and
16 improve public health.

17 Thank you for your time and continued
18 work supporting environmental and public health
19 protections in Pennsylvania. Thank you.

20 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Patrice.

21 And speaker number 29 this morning is
22 Emily Petrucci.

23 MS. PETRUCCI: Good morning.

24 MS. GRIFFIN: Good morning.

25 MS. PETRUCCI: Thank you for the

1 opportunity to speak today.

2 My name is Emily Petrucci. I'm a
3 resident of Media, Pennsylvania, about 13 miles west
4 of Philadelphia. I am speaking today to urgently
5 support our state's commitment to the Regional
6 Greenhouse Gas Initiative, RGGI. When I explained
7 what RGGI is to my 13-year-old daughter recently,
8 she was aghast to learn that there are currently no
9 limits on the amount of carbon dioxide, coal, and
10 natural gas power plants are permitted to dump into
11 our air.

12 To her, RGGI is a no-brainer. Our
13 children see solutions clearly to the problems we've
14 made too complicated. As parents, while we wished
15 we could promise clean air for our kids to breathe,
16 we are all dependent on our elected officials to do
17 their jobs to swiftly find meaningful pollution
18 protections. RGGI is one such solution and we need
19 to act fast.

20 Thankfully, a recent poll found that
21 79 percent of Pennsylvanians, including 66 percent
22 of Republicans, support placing a limit on carbon
23 pollution from power plants. Pennsylvanians prefer
24 lawmakers who support strong climate action. And
25 Pennsylvanians are already experiencing the effects

1 of climate change today with increased flooding,
2 landslides, extreme weather, and disease-carrying
3 pests like ticks.

4 Record summer heat has been
5 threatening the ability of our children to safely
6 attend outdoor camps, play sports, and enjoy the
7 typical climate I was accustomed to growing up.

8 Pennsylvania has the fifth dirtiest
9 power sector in the nation. The American Lung
10 Association's most recent State of the Air report
11 has once again issued failing grades to the
12 Philadelphia region for poor air quality. Unhealthy
13 ozone dates have become commonplace as part of our
14 local weather forecast.

15 I'm a healthy 42-year-old with no
16 history of chronic illness. And over the past two
17 years, I have been experiencing asthma for the first
18 time in my life. States that participate in RGGI
19 have reduced their power sector carbon dioxide
20 pollution by 45 percent since 2005. Pennsylvania
21 needs to take similar action now. We need to set
22 clear, declining limits on carbon pollution from the
23 power sector and at a rate consistent with what the
24 climate science demands to avoid the worst impacts
25 of climate change.

1 Decades from now, our children and
2 grandchildren will look to the decisions we make
3 today. They will ask us what we did in this
4 critical moment to help safeguard their health and
5 their future. And I am speaking today to fight for
6 them.

7 I implore you to use your positions of
8 power for good and allow your decisions to be guided
9 by the science that is available to us.

10 Thank you.

11 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Emily.

12 Speaker number 30 today is Rick Bauer.

13 REV. BAUER: Good morning.

14 MS. GRIFFIN: Good morning.

15 Please go ahead, Rick.

16 REV. BAUER: I'm the Reverend Doctor
17 Rick Bauer, a resident of Lancaster, Pennsylvania,
18 and the Rector of St. Edwards Episcopal Church,
19 situated on the cusp of an urban/rural divide. To
20 the east of our church's campus, I can see every day
21 thick gray industrial pollution from Lancaster City
22 making its way into the atmosphere. And to the
23 west, I enjoy the open visage or rolling fields and
24 farmland making their way toward the Susquehanna
25 River.

1 My physical location gives rise to
2 theological contemplation, because as a faith
3 leader, I comprehend something of the divine
4 presence being made known to us in the created order
5 when we have the eyes to see. It seems to me that
6 reverence for God is inextricably linked to
7 reverence for nature. And I cannot, in good
8 conscious, maintain silence as I witness and
9 experience firsthand the human-made degradation of
10 the environment that poisons the air that we
11 breathe, the water that we drink, and threatens the
12 complex web of life that has evolved and adapted to
13 convey the glory of God's handiwork in our midst.

14 We've made our planet sick. And
15 without action, we may very well destroy our earthly
16 home. So I speak today in strong support of the
17 Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. As the facts
18 and the figures clearly indicate, this cap-and-
19 invest program has the potential for helping
20 Pennsylvania to liberate itself from the bane of
21 being the third largest greenhouse gas polluting
22 state and the fifth dirtiest power plant sector in
23 the nation.

24 Adopting RGGI in fellowship with ten
25 other states in our region who have already done so

1 will make our citizens healthier and will help our
2 state to live into the constitutional obligations
3 that our government and our industries have to the
4 people of this Commonwealth as expressed in Article
5 I Section 27 of our State Constitution.

6 But I also recognize in RGGI an
7 opportunity to address other social and economic
8 goods that speak convincingly to those who are
9 reticent about joining the initiative. RGGI is
10 projected to create 27,000 new sustainable jobs in
11 the renewable energy sector and generate funds for
12 building an infrastructure for renewable energy.
13 But if we miss this opportunity to put a price on
14 the consequences of pollution, these externalities
15 will likely compromise our ability to live and
16 flourish in this state in the years to come.

17 Moving to this area three years ago,
18 after more than 40 years as a resident of costal
19 southeast Florida, I have witnessed firsthand the
20 destructive reality of climate change. The
21 beautiful beaches that I grew up on have largely
22 eroded. The sea levels rise. And the increased
23 frequency and strength of hurricanes destroyed my
24 wife's childhood home and profoundly impacted our
25 decision to leave the place where we both grew up.

1 Now that we're raising two little
2 boys, neither of us can imagine a quality future for
3 them if something isn't done to alter the course
4 that we are currently on. We've got to save what's
5 left.

6 So as a faith leader, as a father, and
7 as a concerned citizen, I wholeheartedly support
8 RGGI and those involved in implementing
9 environmental regulations in our state that ensure
10 for our shared future.

11 I thank you for affording me this
12 opportunity to speak.

13 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Reverend
14 Bauer.

15 Speaker number 31 today is Richard
16 Cole.

17 MR. COLE: Good morning.

18 Can you hear me?

19 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can, Richard.
20 Please go ahead.

21 MR. COLE: Yes.

22 Thank you for holding this public
23 hearing and for listening to my testimony regarding
24 my support for the Regional Greenhouse Gas
25 Initiative.

1 My name is Richard Cole, and I live in
2 West Norriton in Montgomery County. I'm speaking on
3 my own behalf.

4 I have experienced the devastating
5 effects of climate change. Several years ago I was
6 nearly killed in a tornado, one of seven that struck
7 New Orleans within hours far outside tornado season.

8 This was no outlier, as we are seeing
9 worsening impacts that are attributable to climate
10 change across the country with extended record-
11 setting wildfire and hurricane seasons, increased
12 drought and floods, and rising sea levels that are
13 threatening coastal communities. Often hardest hit
14 are lower income and black and brown communities,
15 otherwise known as environmental justice
16 communities. This is an issue that should not be
17 politicized. Climate change affects us all,
18 regardless of political affiliation.

19 Shortly after Hurricane Katrina
20 devastated the gulf coast in 2005, Republican
21 Governor of California Arnold Schwarzenegger
22 recognized the need to control greenhouse gas
23 emissions, adopting legislation which had support
24 from many Republicans. The legislation has
25 significantly helped cut emissions in that state.

1 Schwarzenegger has touted California as perfect
2 proof that you can protect the environment and also
3 protect the economy at the same time.

4 We are clearly seeing impacts of
5 climate change all across the country, even right
6 here in Pennsylvania with hotter summers, warmer
7 winters, and more frequent and dangerous flash
8 floods.

9 Pennsylvania is one of the highest
10 carbon emitting states in our nation, which makes it
11 even more imperative that we adopt measures that
12 control greenhouse gas emissions. For far too long
13 now, the fossil fuel industry has been expanding its
14 reach, including here in Pennsylvania to the
15 detriment of our citizens and the environment. We
16 must change the status quo and transition away from
17 dirty fossil fuels and make the shift towards a
18 clean energy economy. RGGI represents a tremendous
19 opportunity to do just that. I have read quite a
20 bit about RGGI and I think it's well past time that
21 Pennsylvania joined this program. RGGI has been
22 hugely successful in other new --- Northeast, excuse
23 me, and mid-Atlantic states that have joined in
24 terms of cutting carbon emissions while bolstering
25 the economy and funding renewable energy projects.

1 Schwarzenegger has called climate
2 change the issue of our time. And indeed, it is.
3 We can no longer afford to turn a blind eye or take
4 half measures of controlling our greenhouse gas
5 emissions. Special interests must not be allowed to
6 get in the way of progress in protecting the planet
7 that we so rely on to maintain our way of life.

8 For the sake of future generations,
9 including that of my daughter's, I firmly believe
10 Pennsylvania must join the Regional Greenhouse Gas
11 Initiative.

12 Thank you for this opportunity to
13 speak.

14 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Richard.

15 Speaker number 32 has withdrawn today.
16 So speaker number 33 is Aminata Sandra Calhoun.

17 Are you with us, Aminata?

18 MR. JAGIELA: She's not on the line.

19 MS. GRIFFIN: Okay. Thank you, Darek.
20 We can check back for her later and see if she
21 joins us.

22 So speaker number 34, William Cozzens.

23 MR. COZZENS: Good morning.

24 MS. GRIFFIN: Good morning.

25 MR. COZZENS: Thank you.

1 My name is William Cozzens. I live in
2 Philadelphia and am a member of the Religious
3 Society of Friends, or Quakers. I am speaking today
4 on behalf of Germantown Friends Meeting in
5 Philadelphia in support of the proposed rulemaking.

6 Quakers believe that there is that of
7 God in every human being and, therefore, it is
8 fundamental that people be treated equitably and
9 with justice. How does a concern with justice apply
10 to the Commonwealth's joining RGGI? Scientists have
11 concluded that on a global basis, greenhouse gas
12 emissions must be reduced substantially by 2030 and
13 eliminated completely by 2050 to keep global warming
14 temperatures below two degrees Celsius. Allowing
15 temperatures to go above that level will result in
16 catastrophic consequences for humanity and for the
17 natural world.

18 Three ethical principles lead me to
19 conclude that the Commonwealth has a responsibility
20 to move quickly to reduce greenhouse gas emissions
21 and that RGGI is a good first step in that process.

22 First principle, what is our fair
23 share? Historically the United States has emitted
24 more greenhouse gasses than any other country in the
25 world. Currently we are second only to China, which

1 has four times the population of the United States.
2 So we still emit more greenhouse gasses on a per-
3 person basis than any major country.

4 Since we have been and are the biggest
5 contributor to the problem, fairness dictates that
6 we should bear the greatest responsibility for
7 cleaning it up. Real people are suffering and dying
8 due to our fossil fuel use, people who have made
9 virtually no contribution to the atmospheres,
10 skyrocketing greenhouse gas concentrations.

11 So principle number one, fairness
12 demands that the US and Pennsylvania reduce our
13 greenhouse gasses proportionally to our contribution
14 to the problem.

15 Second, consider climate justice at
16 home. The burdens of fossil fuel use and climate
17 change hit some people in Pennsylvania much more
18 heavily than others. Asthma and other respiratory
19 ailments are made much worse by burning fossil
20 fuels. Higher summer temperatures and heat waves
21 threaten populations least able to afford air
22 conditioning. Droughts and storms impact
23 agricultural production and increase the cost of
24 food.

25 Climate change, in other words, is an

1 inequality multiplier, making worse the challenges
2 facing the poor in our society. So a second
3 principle is whatever we do must include a just
4 transition that benefits those at the bottom of our
5 economy and those likely to be displaced by changes
6 in the energy economy.

7 Third, consider intergenerational
8 justice. What about our children and grandchildren?
9 American society has benefited from economic growth
10 and general prosperity in major part due to abundant
11 and reasonably priced energy. That energy has been
12 inexpensive because energy producers have not had to
13 cover the cost of the bad effects that burning that
14 fuel is having on our environment, including the
15 concentrations of CO2. Our grandchildren and their
16 children will pay the price for our energy
17 profligacy and our failure to pay the true cost by
18 the energy that we consumed. So principle number
19 three is we should make the effort now to avoid
20 saddling future generations with much higher costs
21 and severe environmental degradation.

22 In conclusion, the Commonwealth has
23 been a major contributor to the energy economy of
24 the US, coal, oil, natural gas. We have contributed
25 more than our share to climate change. Remember the

1 parents' admonition to their child, you made a mess
2 so you need to clean it up.

3 While the Regional Greenhouse Gas
4 Initiative does not address the entire problem of
5 greenhouse gases, our participation would be a
6 significant step in addressing Pennsylvania's
7 responsibility to reduce its greenhouse gas output,
8 addressing fairness, climate justice at home, and
9 justice for generations of Pennsylvanians yet to
10 come. Thank you.

11 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, William.
12 Speaker number 35 today is Rob
13 Altenberg.

14 MR. ALTENBERG: Hello.
15 My name is Rob Altenberg. And I'll
16 just speak in support of the proposed CO2 budget
17 trading program on behalf of Citizens for
18 Pennsylvania's Future or PennFuture. We're a
19 statewide environmental advocacy organization
20 committed to addressing the global climate crisis.
21 And I'd like to thank the Department for providing
22 this time to speak and for going far beyond the
23 minimum public participation requirements under the
24 Air Pollution Control Act.

25 With more than a third of

1 Pennsylvania's energy related carbon pollution
2 coming from the electric generation sector, it's
3 critical that we do our part to address these
4 emissions if we are going to achieve carbon
5 reductions the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate
6 Change has determined are necessary to avoid the
7 worst effects of climate change.

8 The retirement of a large number of
9 conventional steam coal plants over the last 20
10 years has reduced some pollution. But replacing
11 coal generation with frack gas isn't a sustainable
12 path to reach our climate goals. While it took more
13 than a dozen coal plants retiring over the last 20
14 years to create the apparent progress that gas
15 advocates claim, there are only five large coal
16 plants left in Pennsylvania. They're all near
17 retirement. And if we don't take action to limit
18 emissions and encourage clean alternatives, we risk
19 steadily increasing emissions as new gas generations
20 fail to replace it.

21 The proposed CO2 Budget Trading
22 Program is the kind of action we need to tap
23 emissions and create a framework for real emissions
24 reductions.

25 While the Air Pollution Control Act

1 specifically authorizes DEP to spend money from the
2 Clean Air Fund to reduce air pollution, it has
3 significant flexibility in targeting what projects
4 are funded. Now, we recognize that DEP did not
5 specify time expenditures in its rulemaking, but we
6 encourage the Department to prioritize programs that
7 reduce carbon emissions from transportation and
8 industrial sources. And in particular, give
9 attention to projects that benefit environmental
10 justice communities, workers in communities impacted
11 by the failure of the fossil fuel industry and
12 low-income ratepayers.

13 While we support this rule, we know -
14 we recognize that there is room for improvement.
15 For example, while the purpose of the CO2 Budget
16 Trading Program is to reduce carbon pollution, the
17 program takes the unprecedented and unwarranted step
18 to further subsidize one particular category of
19 fossil fuel generation that is waste coal. This
20 highly polluting source already benefits from
21 preferential treatment and tax breaks. And as a
22 result of recent legislation, we'll see additional
23 subsidies under the Alternative Energy Portfolio
24 Standards Act.

25 While the industry claims they are

1 providing a service in remediating waste coal piles,
2 the rule does not prioritize addressing the most
3 polluting sources, or make a determination that
4 burning waste coal is the best alternative in any
5 case. The Department should eliminate that subsidy.

6 Now, the Air Pollution Control Act
7 does provide the Department with ample authority to
8 create the emission limits that have been proposed.
9 We strongly support working with other Regional
10 Greenhouse Gas Initiative states in doing so.

11 While Pennsylvania ultimately
12 determines their own program design, opting to use a
13 multi-state approach will be more cost effective and
14 will help them limit dangerous carbon pollution
15 throughout the region.

16 But even without the Air Pollution
17 Control Act, Article I, Section 27 of the
18 Pennsylvania Constitution specifies that citizens of
19 Pennsylvania have a right to clean air and a healthy
20 environment. It specifies that the Commonwealth has
21 a trust responsibility to conserve and maintain
22 those public natural resources for the benefit of
23 all the people.

24 Ignoring the devastating effects of
25 these pollutants is simply not an option. Climate

1 change is one of the greatest threats that we face
2 as a nation and society, and here in Pennsylvania
3 we're already seeing stronger storms, more frequent
4 flooding, and severe weather is expected to get
5 worse. In proposing this program, Governor Wolf and
6 the Department of Environmental Protection have
7 begun to address this responsibility.

8 The proposed CO2 Budget Trading
9 Program provides a clear path for Pennsylvania to
10 begin to address its carbon pollution problem.

11 Taking the steps necessary to address
12 the climate crisis isn't just a good idea, though.
13 It's what people want. A recent survey showed about
14 70 percent of Pennsylvanians want more climate
15 change action.

16 Unfortunately, fossil fuel polluters
17 and their allies in the legislature continue to
18 ignore this Constitutional mandate, spread
19 misinformation, and attempt to block or delay this
20 important program. We ask that the Department
21 resist these cynical attempts by fossil fuel
22 interests to block progress and proceed with the
23 proposed rule. And we thank the Department for
24 hosting these virtual hearings and for giving the
25 residents a chance to voice support for such a

1 critical and needed program in Pennsylvania.

2 Thank you very much

3 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Rob.

4 Speaker number 36 has withdrawn for
5 today. Speaker number 37 will be assisted by an
6 interpreter.

7 Monica Luna Urban, are you with us and
8 is the interpreter with us?

9 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Si, Senora. Yes,
10 interpreter is here. And Ms. Luna Urban is also
11 here.

12 MS. GRIFFIN: Great.

13 Go ahead and start, please.

14 MS. LUNA URBAN: My name is Monica
15 Luna Urban, active member of CASA of Columbian
16 nationality. And for a little more than two years,
17 I have lived in a rural area of Coatesville,
18 Pennsylvania, a wonderful state full of landscapes
19 and natural resources that worry me on a daily basis
20 about its preservation and how to best improve the
21 quality of life of our community and all of us who
22 reside here.

23 I currently live with my husband in
24 the country and I see more and more how climate
25 change effects are affecting rural areas, causing

1 floods and electricity deficits continuously,
2 affecting the state of our home in such a way that
3 humidity and mold production has increased
4 exponentially. And it has generated some
5 respiratory health issues for our family.

6 However, there is a great opportunity
7 in joining the RGGI initiative as other states have
8 already done, such as Maine and Massachusetts, and
9 thus, in this way achieve the implementation of
10 strategies that allow generating awareness in large
11 industries and in the community in general about the
12 importance of conserving natural resources and thus
13 mitigating the effects of climate change and the
14 greenhouse effects that we --- that is affecting
15 different areas such as health, housing, work, among
16 others.

17 As a resident of the State of
18 Pennsylvania and an active part of the community, I
19 consider RGGI to be a good step forward. However,
20 as a Latina, an immigrant woman, I have the
21 responsibility to use my voice to ensure that the
22 funds that will be received from RGGI be --- must be
23 invested in projects where the priority should be
24 the communities most affected by climate change due
25 to gas emissions and greenhouse effect. And the

1 implementation of solar panels and improvement of
2 electrical infrastructure should be a priority for
3 those of us who live in rural areas.

4 Climate change is imminent and it is a
5 reality that affects all of us. Although we know
6 that Latino and colored communities are the most
7 affected. For this reason, it is the responsibility
8 of all sectors, public, private organizations and
9 the government to join forces to develop and support
10 initiatives that seek to improve the quality of life
11 --- improve the quality of life in assisting of a
12 way in our communities for our generation and future
13 generations.

14 To finish, as a Latin Hispanic
15 immigrant, I want to talk about my commitment to
16 RGGI. And I want you to know that I'm not here to
17 demand but to be part of the solution. Our
18 community is ready and prepared to be part of this
19 project. And we want to be participants of the
20 strategies that could be created by RGGI. Change
21 starts with us.

22 Thank you.

23 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Monica and
24 Pam.

25 Speaker number 38 today is Andreas

1 Maihofer.

2 MR. MAIHOEFER: Thank you.

3 Good morning and thank you for hearing
4 my statement today. My name is Andreas Maihofer. I
5 live in Indiana Township, which is a small community
6 in Allegheny County, just north of Pittsburgh. I'm
7 not representing any organization, but speak for
8 myself and my family. The reason I participated
9 today is to express my full support for Governor
10 Wolf's plan to join the RGGI, the Regional
11 Greenhouse Gas Initiative and also to support the
12 Pennsylvania Climate Action Plan.

13 Climate and our impact on it do not
14 start or stop at county, state, or country border
15 lines. It is therefore, mightily, important that we
16 join forces across these artificial borders and put
17 forward a concerted effort to address the factors
18 that contribute to climate change.

19 Of course, the biggest governing
20 factors of climate and climate change are the levels
21 of greenhouse gasses in the atmosphere. Obviously,
22 there are natural sources and fluctuations of
23 greenhouse gasses. But by now it's undisputable
24 that human use of fossil fuels has led to
25 unprecedented increase of greenhouse gasses in the

1 atmosphere and specifically of CO2 and methane.

2 And the DEP itself has determined that
3 energy production contributes more than 30 percent
4 greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, it is high
5 time to take steps that will reduce those emissions.

6 I perceive climate change as an
7 existential threat that we humans face today. But
8 because it's a concept that is hard to grasp, I
9 think it is important to consider how it can be
10 effective as individuals.

11 Elevated levels of CO2 in the air that
12 we breathe directly impact our health. And it's not
13 just the health of those with respiratory issues,
14 but all of us. Relatively mild and temporary
15 symptoms can be headaches and dizziness. And I can
16 directly correlate suffering from frequent headaches
17 when air quality action days are called in Allegheny
18 County.

19 There can also be long-term effects
20 that are more dangerous such as elevated blood
21 pressure with all the problems that come along with
22 it. Luckily, I don't have to deal with those.

23 What brings it home for me may sound
24 silly to some, but I assure you it's no joke for me.
25 Higher CO2 levels increase the toxicity of plants,

1 like poison ivy and poison oak, and accelerate the
2 spread of those plants.

3 Over the last couple of years, I ended
4 up in the emergency room eight times to treat severe
5 burns and infections caused by poison ivy. This
6 effect is not just my perception. There are several
7 scientific studies that have demonstrated that
8 increased CO2 levels increase the potency of those
9 plants.

10 But let's look at what it's like and
11 give a picture again. It is no secret that
12 Pittsburgh and Allegheny County have bad air. Last
13 year was the second year in a row that the county
14 received all F's in the American Lung Association's
15 National Air Quality Report Card. It was the only
16 US County outside of California to get this infamous
17 rating. And this year, it's not much better.
18 Allegheny County slightly improved, but still
19 received an overall F grade.

20 In looking beyond the county and state
21 lines, it is clear that fumes are the biggest
22 culprits when it comes to greenhouse gas emissions.

23 Therefore, I believe it is also our responsibility
24 to do something about it.

25 And joining the Regional Greenhouse

1 Gas Initiative is one of the steps that we can and
2 must take. As some of the previous speakers have
3 noted before, RGGI is by no means perfect. But
4 let's not make perfect the enemy of the good. Let's
5 join RGGI now and later work on improvements. Some
6 have been mentioned before, but let me just
7 reiterate four of them.

8 One would be including small power
9 plants in the regulations. Two, ensure that the
10 revenues gained by the state are actually allocated
11 to improve air quality. Three, better regulating
12 waste coal use. And lastly, ensure more equitable
13 application and distribution of benefits.

14 That's my statement. Thank you for
15 the opportunity to provide comments today.

16 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Andres.

17 Speaker number 39 has withdrawn from
18 speaking today.

19 So speaker number 40, Angela
20 Brown-Vann.

21 REV. BROWN-VANN: Thanks to everyone
22 concerned.

23 I am Reverend Angela Brown-Vann, and
24 I'm a lifelong resident of Philadelphia,
25 Pennsylvania. I attended public schools here and

1 graduated from a private university in Philadelphia.
2 I'm an associate minister of St. Mark AME Zion
3 Church in Newtown, PA. I work as an ambassador for
4 social justice for Power Interfaith in Philadelphia.
5 And I am an entrepreneur.

6 I am speaking today as a private
7 citizen on behalf of my family and myself. I am
8 testifying because I believe it is time to reinvent
9 our government and Pennsylvania by implementing
10 RGGI. When I was growing up, I always heard an
11 ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Now
12 it seems instead of speaking of prevention, we hear
13 more about treating problems. As capitalism became
14 more important, humanitarianism seems to have gone
15 wanting.

16 Fire suppression versus fire
17 prevention. Criminal prosecution versus crime
18 prevention. And pollution cleanup versus
19 environmental protection. As we've heard from
20 previous speakers today, and as we all know, we now
21 have a crisis in environmental pollution. We've
22 dealt with environmental pollution before. And we
23 can continue the work we've done.

24 We started with product pollution and
25 gained great strides in that area with recycling

1 here in Pennsylvania as we continue to keep persons
2 aware of the need to recycle many things in order to
3 protect our environment.

4 Then we found a way to make recycling
5 a revenue center and bring jobs in the area of
6 recycling. The goal with RGGI is to reduce
7 greenhouse gas emissions while generating economic
8 growth. Well, we've done it before. We can do it
9 again. We can clean up the environment and make it
10 a revenue center at the same time.

11 Greenhouse gasses have been found to
12 cause health issues like asthma, neurological
13 issues, and other issues known and unknown.

14 I mentioned that I'm a lifelong
15 resident of Philadelphia. I live near a power plant
16 and I have a neurological condition. Why didn't I
17 move? Where would I go? There's so much pollution
18 in our environment, it's impossible to know where to
19 go to protect my health from everything. So to
20 reinvent our government, we need government to work
21 for us. Work means actually coming up with and
22 implementing things like RGGI that are effective
23 strategies to change the environment for our
24 families and next generations.

25 Let's do the same thing with

1 greenhouse gasses that we did with plastics, paper,
2 aluminum, and other environmental pollutants. Let's
3 get to work. Clean up the environment, make it a
4 revenue center and reinvest in our communities.
5 What can we use the money for? Jobs. We need them
6 in Pennsylvania. Education, public schools are
7 closing in Philadelphia because they have asbestos.
8 So the students often live in homes in communities
9 with air pollution and go to schools with asbestos.
10 And we wonder why they're behind in education. They
11 have health issues --- health-related issues, and we
12 aren't helping them.

13 Finally, medical studies are
14 predicting COVID-19 will leave millions with chronic
15 respiratory illnesses. We need to clean up the
16 environment quickly to make breathing easier for
17 these persons. And we should use RGGI funds to make
18 it possible to care for them.

19 I support RGGI and I hope you do, too.

20 Thank you for listening and God bless you.

21 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Rev.

22 Brown-Vann.

23 Speakers 41 and 42 have withdrawn from
24 speaking today.

25 So that brings us to speaker number

1 43, Kelly Ogan.

2 MS. OGAN: Hi. Thank you.

3 Can you hear me?

4 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can, Kelly. Go
5 ahead.

6 MS. OGAN: Thank you.

7 Thanks for allowing me to share my
8 comments today. My name is Kelly Organ and my
9 comments are just me as a private citizen and a
10 resident of East Lansdowne in Delaware County, in
11 Pennsylvania.

12 I too want to join the chorus of
13 voices supporting the proposed standard to join the
14 bipartisan Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.
15 There are three main reasons why I personally
16 believe we should join RGGI. First, it's
17 commonsense financially. Second, it's good for the
18 future of our state. And third, it's the right
19 thing to do ethically.

20 So one by one, first, joining RGGI
21 makes good financial sense. It has been a
22 considerable success in the states where it's
23 already in place. It brings in nearly \$3 billion to
24 invest in energy efficiency and clean energy
25 projects. It's estimated that joining RGGI will

1 create more than 27,000 net jobs and add \$1.9
2 billion to Pennsylvania's economy.

3 And particularly important right now,
4 the health benefits of joining RGGI and improving
5 the air quality of our state are enormous. And it's
6 estimated that this joining will give us \$6.3
7 billion in healthcare savings and cause 30,000 fewer
8 hospital visits for respiratory illnesses like
9 asthma among both children and adults. To me, this
10 combination of revenue generation and cost reduction
11 makes excellent financial sense and is an important
12 step forward.

13 Second, joining RGGI is good for the
14 future of our state. Speaking personally, I love
15 Pennsylvania. My husband and I recently bought our
16 first house here, excited to build a life in the
17 state blessed with such beautiful natural lands. We
18 spent our summers as young people at summer camps in
19 the Laurel Highlands. Now we spend our weekends and
20 our vacations in Allegheny National Forest, rafting
21 down the Youghiogheny River. Pennsylvania is a
22 beautiful state. And I am really grateful to live
23 here as I think all of us on this call are.

24 But Pennsylvania is also the third
25 largest greenhouse gas polluting state and has the

1 fifth dirtiest power plant industry in the nation.
2 Smog levels are increasing in this state. And
3 increased temperatures are a leading factor behind
4 the growing incidents of insect borne disease like
5 West Nile Virus and Lyme's Disease. 120,000 cases
6 of Lyme's disease are diagnosed in Pennsylvania each
7 year.

8 My husband works in outdoor education
9 and he and his colleagues are constantly checking
10 themselves for ticks and affected by these increased
11 risks.

12 In addition, research has shown that
13 over 2,700 Pennsylvanians died prematurely in 2018
14 alone because of our air pollution problem. And we
15 are the state with the third-most air pollution
16 related deaths in the United States.

17 This is really scary to me. It's
18 scary to imagine the air becoming less and less safe
19 to breathe, it's scary to imagine our wild lands
20 disappearing. It's scary to imagine new diseases,
21 more extreme storms, more frequent flooding, all of
22 which we're already seeing.

23 I am young. My husband and I are just
24 starting our lives together and dream of raising our
25 children in Pennsylvania in a Pennsylvania that

1 feels familiar to us, where we can experience the
2 joy of the natural world with our children, just
3 like we got to as children.

4 So RGGI is certainly not enough, but
5 it is a start. And I think it's a hopeful start for
6 the future of this great state.

7 Third and finally and most
8 importantly, joining RGGI is the right thing to do.
9 Taking care of the environment and reducing carbon
10 emissions is not just good economic sense, it is a
11 moral obligation. I'm a Christian. And so I
12 believe it is our responsibility to care for
13 creation and fight for the causes of the oppressed.
14 We all know that environmental justice has not been
15 granted equally to everyone. The Pennsylvanians who
16 live in the areas of the highest pollution are not
17 the rich, they are the poor, whose lives we often
18 discount as less important. And it is wrong to not
19 consider their health and well being. It is wrong
20 to do nothing as Pennsylvanians with asthma and
21 other respiratory conditions struggle to breathe in
22 our worsening air. It is wrong to continue to prop
23 up the fossil fuel industry, which is unsustainable,
24 unsafe, and destroys the health of both those who
25 work in it and those who live nearby. It is wrong

1 to sacrifice the long-term sustainability and health
2 of our state for short-term economic gain. And it
3 is wrong to not do our part in this global work to
4 minimize the harmful effects of climate change on
5 our own citizens and on those around the world.

6 Joining RGGI is commonsense, future
7 oriented, and the right thing to do. Thank you for
8 your time today.

9 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Kelly.

10 Speaker number 44 is Nola Barton.

11 Is Nola with us?

12 MR. JAGIELA: She's not on the line.

13 MS. GRIFFIN: Okay.

14 We will check back for Nola then a
15 little bit later. I do want to say that before we
16 continue, it is 11:41 a.m. And we do still have 11
17 people left who have signed up to testify at this
18 hearing. We're definitely going to run afternoon.
19 However, the EQB and DEP want to provide an
20 opportunity for everyone to be heard, so we're going
21 to continue on past twelve o'clock in order to make
22 sure everyone can speak.

23 I do recognize that some of the
24 commenters who are, you know, here at the end of the
25 three hours may not be able to stay on past the

1 scheduled hearing time of noon. If that is the case
2 and you cannot stay on until we get to you, to
3 provide your testimony, Jennifer Swan will contact
4 those remaining commenters within the next business
5 day with instructions on how to provide your
6 comments.

7 But I think we're on schedule, should
8 be able to get this done by one o'clock, if not
9 sooner.

10 So with that said, next is --- speaker
11 number 45 withdrew.

12 So speaker number 46, Sabrina Fedel or
13 Fedel (changes pronunciation).

14 Are you with us, Sabrina?

15 MR. JAGIELA: Sabrina is not on the
16 line.

17 MS. GRIFFIN: Okay.

18 We will try again a little bit later
19 and see if Sabrina joins us.

20 How about speaker number 47, Zig
21 Herzog?

22 MR. HERZOG: Yes. Can you hear me?

23 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can.

24 Please start. Thank you.

25 MR. HERZOG: Okay. Thank you very

1 much.

2 Good morning to everybody. My name is
3 Zig Herzog. I'm a resident of Chambersburg, PA in
4 rural Pennsylvania. I'm here to testify as a
5 private citizen.

6 Flags of cautions have been waived for
7 almost exactly 200 years that we cannot emit CO2
8 into the atmosphere without serious impact on the
9 health of this, our only planet. In 1981, James
10 Hansen made several key predictions about the
11 climate if we continued with our CO2 emissions.

12 Meaning temperatures rise more at
13 night than the daytime, more on the land than water,
14 and more at high latitudes than the equator. All of
15 these predictions have come true. Fast forward to
16 today. Computer models from all over the world are
17 in basic agreement. Over 90 percent of all
18 scientists, of all genders, sexual orientation,
19 ages, and religious race, and political affiliations
20 are in agreement that our situation will become dire
21 in the decades to come unless we take action.

22 And finally, even nature waves its
23 flags. Rising sea levels impacting coastal
24 communities, vanishing land-based - warming of
25 waters, ossification, on its extended routes,

1 extended storm, and now the latest that past winter
2 had been the hottest on record - on record. And
3 then 2020 would probably the hottest year ever since
4 recording took place.

5 I'm fortunate, I'm 76-year-old, but
6 I'm very healthy. But today's stories I heard from
7 so many contributors about their health problems
8 brought me to tears.

9 What are we doing to ourselves when so
10 many suffer from health problems related to
11 pollution? Inaction is not an option any more.

12 There are those who say that RGGI is
13 picking favorites among various energy producing
14 methods and claims that governments should not
15 interfere with the free market. Excuse me. We have
16 done that in the past quite successfully. First and
17 second-hand smoke, ozone layer depletion, removal of
18 lead from gasoline and paint, reducing pollution by
19 coal fired power plants to protect us and nature
20 from acid rain.

21 Everybody has to pay for their trash
22 to be picked up and properly discarded. But the
23 fossil fuel industry does not have to pay for
24 putting CO2 into the atmosphere. And we the people
25 and the peoples of the future will have to pay for

1 them. That is called picking the wrong favorite.

2 Results obtained by RGGI so far have
3 been absolutely impressive and profess to continue
4 to do so in the future. The generated revenues are
5 to support energy efficiency and renewable energy
6 programs are in the billions. GDP of the
7 participating states have been increased while
8 electricity prices have fallen.

9 CO2 emissions have fallen by 47
10 percent, which is absolutely fantastic and almost
11 double that of the rest of the country.

12 And finally, the reduction in co-
13 pollutants have brought about significant
14 improvement in health and productivity benefit.

15 In summary, all of the above convinces
16 me to support RGGI, although it might not be enough
17 to reach carbon neutrality by 2050.

18 The plant emission reduction of 30
19 percent by 2030 is a very good start. But in the
20 past, emission reductions have been achieved by way
21 of energy efficiency and transition from coal to
22 gas. We have some seven major coal fired power
23 plants in Pennsylvania, the majority are 50 years
24 old. Can we convert them or replace them with newly
25 built gas-fired power plant? No. Because gas fired

1 power plants built today will be still with us for
2 20 or 30 years to come. And then the CO2 from which
3 falls that we can't --- shouldn't build them
4 anymore. But it also means that we need clean energy
5 power plants. And we need detailed plans for that,
6 identifying an area suitable for large solar farm.

7 Penn State --- The 70 mega solar farm
8 here at Franklin County, if we were to convert all
9 of our power plants, coal-fired power plants to a
10 solar one would need about a fourth of the size of
11 the county I'm living in.

12 So I'm supporting very much the RGGI
13 activities. And for those who oppose, I tell they
14 better come up with a better solution.

15 Thank you. And thank you very much
16 for giving me the opportunity to testify.

17 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Zig.

18 MR. HERZOG: Yeah.

19 MS. GRIFFIN: Speaker number 48 is
20 Matt Lockhart.

21 MR. LOCKHART: Yes. Hello.

22 Can you hear me?

23 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can, Matt.

24 Please go ahead.

25 MR. LOCKHART: My name is Matt

1 Lockhart. And I'm a lifelong resident of Indiana
2 County. I felt compelled to speak today to voice my
3 strong opposition to Governor Wolf's CO2 Budget
4 Trading Program and urge its rejection.

5 If Pennsylvania were to adopt this
6 regulation, it would result in the devastation of my
7 community's local economy, cause irreparable damage
8 to our local school districts due to the loss of tax
9 revenue, and result in negligible impacts on
10 regional CO2 emissions.

11 When Governor Wolf announced his
12 intention to enter into RGGI, he promised robust
13 public outreach and DEP's EQB rules as stated in
14 their proposed rulemaking require that public
15 hearings be held in the impacted areas in accordance
16 with the Air Pollution Control Act. These public
17 hearings should be taking place in Indiana County,
18 where according to our County Commissioners, this
19 regulation will directly affect \$1.3 billion of
20 economic impact and 1,225 jobs related to the coal
21 mining and power generation.

22 These virtual hearings are a
23 disservice to our community. In the middle of this
24 devastating pandemic, I understand the problem with
25 in-person hearings. However, this is not an excuse

1 to ignore the rules already set forth in the
2 regulation, but rather an argument that now is just
3 not the time to push forward with this program, or
4 at the very least, the time frame for public comment
5 should be extended until in-person hearings can be
6 held.

7 The people who will feel the brunt of
8 the impact of this regulation deserve to have their
9 - have these discussions face to face. Indiana
10 County is owed at least this much.

11 This regulation is being force fed to
12 Pennsylvanians without any concrete plans to how
13 these funds will be spent, especially in the areas
14 of the state whose economy relies on revenue from
15 the industry DEP is determined to kill.

16 Holding these virtual hearings have
17 allowed this regulation to fly under the radar and
18 does not truly give those in the most affected
19 communities a chance to hear firsthand the damage
20 this will inflict on their community.

21 I'm very concerned that this
22 regulation will have negligible impact on our
23 regional CO2 emissions, which is the stated purpose
24 of this regulation. As part of the PJM Grid, if
25 these PA coal-fired power plants and some natural

1 gas power plants are forced to close, the lost
2 generation could be picked up by other coal power
3 plants just across the border into Ohio and West
4 Virginia.

5 These states have made it clear they
6 have no intention of joining RGGI, because they know
7 their generation will become even more profitable
8 when this heavy tax burden is placed on Pennsylvania
9 generation.

10 Why would Pennsylvania want to give up
11 the great economic benefits of being an electricity
12 exporter only to inflict irreparable damage to these
13 small communities and send the economic benefits out
14 of the state?

15 Entering into RGGI or any CO2
16 regulation program is a decision too large for one
17 person to make. It is a decision that should be
18 made by our elected legislature who are most in
19 touch with their respective districts. I believe
20 this is something that every state currently in RGGI
21 would agree with as they entered into RGGI through
22 legislative action, not executive action.

23 While our state is still struggling to
24 recover from the economic hardships of COVID-19, now
25 is not the time to destroy these communities built

1 around these power plants and the coal industry and
2 further burden every Pennsylvanian with higher
3 electricity costs.

4 DEP's own modeling confirms that this
5 regulation will result in the immediate increase in
6 Pennsylvania electricity costs, but that they hope
7 this will be temporary. The hope that this will be
8 a temporary increase doesn't add up considering that
9 RGGI states currently pay on average 50 percent more
10 for electricity than Pennsylvanians do.

11 Now more than ever, this is not the
12 time to burden Pennsylvanians with this new tax,
13 which at the end of the day will only export the
14 positive economic impact of power generation to
15 other states while shifting CO2 emissions to
16 neighboring states rather than truly lowering them.

17 Thank you for the opportunity to speak
18 today. I hope you will take my comments into
19 consideration and I ask that you reject this
20 proposed RGGI regulation.

21 Thank you.

22 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you for your
23 comments, Matt. Speaker number 49 is Diana Dakey or
24 Dakey (changes pronunciation).

25 Is Diana with us? Good morning.

1 MS. DAKEY: Good morning. My name is
2 Diana Dakey, a resident of Dalton, Pennsylvania in
3 Lackawanna County. I am speaking as a private
4 citizen, although I have been actively engaged with
5 environmental organizations and issues for decades.
6 Over these decades I have observed the changes
7 caused by our warming planet, even in my own
8 backyard. I am alarmed by the trajectory of these
9 changes.

10 As a recent United Nations report
11 stated, we are in the middle of a climate emergency.
12 We cannot dither about action to reduce carbon
13 dioxide. We cannot let the perfect be the enemy of
14 the good when it comes to taking actions.

15 I urge the Environmental Quality Board
16 to adopt the regulations to bring Pennsylvania into
17 the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.
18 Pennsylvania is a significant emitter of carbon
19 pollution both nationally and globally.
20 Pennsylvania exports much electric power. Why not
21 reduce the carbon footprint of Pennsylvania's power
22 sector?

23 We must not wait to reduce emissions
24 through the power sector. A warming climate already
25 has and will continue to impair water quality with

1 algae blooms, harm recreational industries such as
2 winter sports and fishing, increase disease vectors
3 such as mosquitoes and ticks, increase disease
4 vectors of forests, destabilize agriculture and
5 subject many areas of the state to increased
6 flooding, ground de-stabilization and wind damage,
7 such as that I experience in my backyard.

8 The human and financial costs of
9 climate change are growing. RGGI puts a reasonable
10 and stepwise achievable limit on collective carbon
11 emissions. It allows power producers to assess how
12 much they can reduce emissions and determine their
13 own approaches to carbon reductions. Each year the
14 carbon limit will be lowered and less pollution will
15 be emitted.

16 RGGI is a cap and invest program. It
17 is not a tax. The experience that other states that
18 have already implemented RGGI have been - has been
19 positive, generating auction proceeds to invest in
20 efforts to improve residential energy efficiency,
21 thereby saving money for power consumers.

22 Various uses of RGGI funds by
23 participating states have been promotion of
24 renewable energy projects, job training and electric
25 bill payment assistance for lower income consumers.

1 All of this sounds good for Pennsylvania.

2 RGGI works. Since RGGI was launched
3 more than a decade ago, participating states have
4 cut their carbon pollution in half. And they have
5 done this while saving hundreds of millions of
6 dollars on energy bills and creating thousands of
7 new jobs in the clean energy sector.

8 RGGI detractors argue that RGGI will
9 cause the loss of jobs at coal-fired power plants.
10 This has already happened and will continue, RGGI or
11 not. The mix of jobs in Pennsylvania and the United
12 States has regularly changed. We call it progress.

13 With RGGI being a cap and invest
14 approach, we can expect investment in new
15 technologies, bringing new jobs. DEP's model
16 estimates that by 2030, participating in RGGI could
17 lead to an increase in over 27,000 jobs in the
18 Commonwealth. And RGGI will have positive effects
19 on air quality and health as so many speakers have
20 already stated. There are already 10, and soon to
21 be 11 states in RGGI. Those states made the
22 decision to join RGGI because it was in their
23 interests to do so.

24 There's broad support for RGGI among
25 Pennsylvanians. A survey in March of likely 2020

1 voters found - in Pennsylvania found 79 percent
2 support for a proposal to zero out carbon pollution
3 from power plants. I urge the EQB to adopt the
4 regulations to bring Pennsylvania into RGGI and
5 thank you for hearing my comments today.

6 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Diana.

7 Speaker number 50 today is Jane Klein.

8 MS. KLEIN: Hi. My name is Jane
9 Klein. I'm getting a lot of reverb.

10 MS. GRIFFIN: Are you on your phone or
11 are you just -?

12 MS. KLEIN: It's just my computer.
13 And try it again? No, still a lot of reverb.
14 Hello?

15 MS. GRIFFIN: Darek, is there any
16 suggestion how we can address this?

17 MS. KLEIN: Can you hear it?

18 MS. GRIFFIN: Yeah, I can hear you.
19 It's just very echoie.

20 MS. KLEIN: Yeah.

21 MR. JAGIELA: She's got two instances
22 of WebEx running. And it's reverbing back and
23 forth. I may need to troubleshoot this so we can
24 get back to her in a moment.

25 MS. GRIFFIN: Okay.

1 Jane, we will come right back to you
2 then.

3 MS. KLEIN: Okay.

4 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you.

5 So Number 51, Fred Kraybill, are you
6 available right now?

7 MR. KRAYBILL: Can you hear me, Laura?

8 MS. GRIFFIN: I can hear you, Fred.

9 Please go ahead and start.

10 MR. KRAYBILL: Okay.

11 My name is Fred Kraybill,
12 K-R-A-Y-B-I-L-L. 7211 Thomas Boulevard, Pittsburgh,
13 PA. My e-mail is fredkraybill@yahoo.com. And I am
14 a manager at Thomas Boulevard Group.

15 As I said, my name is Fred Kraybill. I
16 live in the Point Breeze section of Pittsburgh. I'm
17 a manager and part owner of Thomas Boulevard Group,
18 a small business which rents six apartments. We are
19 also a solar-powered business with solar arrays on
20 the roof and in the yard beside our property. Thank
21 you for this opportunity to express my concerns
22 about climate change at this virtual hearing.

23 I am here to express my strong support
24 for Pennsylvania to join the Regional Greenhouse Gas
25 Initiative. I want to thank Governor Wolf for

1 taking this bold initiative to address climate
2 change. I also ask the state legislature to take
3 action and pass legislation that appropriates funds
4 from RGGI to be used for clean energy and energy
5 efficiency projects in this state, so that we can
6 reduce our carbon impact and save ratepayers money
7 on their electric bills.

8 My foremost reason for commenting
9 today is that climate change is real. It is already
10 having devastating impacts and we must act quickly
11 or risk more devastating economic impacts. We must
12 listen to scientists and we must stop externalizing
13 the costs of coal, oil, and gas. Around the world
14 we are seeing more severe weather events, such as
15 heat waves, drought, forest fires, rain with flash
16 flooding events, et cetera.

17 While we know that there have been
18 climate changes in the past, because science has
19 informed us of this, we also know that we are
20 currently pumping too much CO2 into the atmosphere
21 and that CO2 is starting to overwhelm the climate
22 system.

23 This is a clear consensus of
24 scientific research. Any scientists that - 350
25 parts per million of CO2 in the atmosphere is the

1 limit that we should allow. And we have already
2 gone over 400 parts per million. For too long the
3 marketplace for energy has been blind to the reality
4 of climate change. We burn coal, oil, and gas to
5 make energy. But the cost of the pollution and the
6 damage to the climate have been externalized and
7 paid by the public. This must stop.

8 The cost of climate change and
9 pollution must be factored into the price of energy.
10 We must put a price on carbon pollution and
11 gradually raise that price to reflect the cost of
12 carbon pollution to society. That price on carbon
13 pollution will remove the blinders from the
14 marketplace and accelerate the transition to clean
15 energy.

16 RGGI is currently working well in ten
17 states in the northeast. And Pennsylvania needs to
18 do --- needs to join to do its part to address
19 climate change.

20 Lastly, I would like to address the
21 myth that we have to chose between jobs and a
22 healthy economy and having a clean environment. I
23 firmly believe that switching to clean energy
24 sources will not only create a clean environment and
25 a stable climate, it will also create jobs and a

1 strong economy. If we don't take these necessary
2 steps, we will not only wreck our environment, we
3 will also wreck our economy as worsening weather
4 events destroys our infrastructure.

5 Pennsylvania is far behind many other
6 states in deploying renewable energy. It is hard
7 for solar and wind projects to get built here
8 because of cheap natural gas. Implementing RGGI in
9 Pennsylvania will help renewable energy compete.
10 Homeowners and businesses will be able to install
11 solar because of an improved return on investment
12 and utility scale solar farms and wind farms will be
13 able to expand across the state because they will be
14 more competitive in the market.

15 Our state must take this bold action
16 to cut carbon pollution. The solution to pollution
17 is renewable. It's doable. Thank you for your
18 time.

19 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Fred.

20 Darek, are we ready for Jane or should
21 we move to the next person for the moment?

22 MR. JAGIELA: I would say move to the
23 next person. I'm not able to get a hold of her
24 through the chat.

25 MS. GRIFFIN: Okay.

1 So speaker number 52, Steve Milloy.

2 MR. MILLOY: Can you hear me?

3 MS. GRIFFIN: I can hear you, Steve.

4 Go ahead.

5 MR. MILLOY: Good afternoon.

6 I'm Steve Milloy from Potomac,
7 Maryland. I publish junkscience.com. Governor Wolf
8 wants to enlist Pennsylvania in a futile battle to
9 change the weather. He's proposed that Pennsylvania
10 join something called the Regional Greenhouse Gas
11 Initiative or RGGI. RGGI is an agreement between
12 Northeast states to reduce greenhouse gas emissions
13 via a cap-and-trade system.

14 If Pennsylvania joins RGGI, power
15 plants in the state will have to purchase permits to
16 emit carbon dioxide. The scheme is for the price of
17 the permits to increase and their availability to
18 decrease every year so that it becomes more and more
19 expensive for power plants to emit CO2.

20 So what could go wrong with a plan to
21 make electricity cost more every year? Well, if you
22 listen to Governor Wolf, the answer is nothing. He
23 claims that emissions will decline by a cumulative
24 188 million tons by 2030. He says electricity
25 prices will be three percent lower than they

1 otherwise would be by 2030. He says personal income
2 will only be slightly lower by 2030, but state
3 revenue will be slightly higher.

4 Governor Wolf also claims that there
5 will be public health benefits worth an estimated
6 \$6.3 billion by 2030. What's not to like?

7 So the whole idea of this scheme is to
8 combat climate change. Will it?

9 Well, regardless of whether you
10 believe United Nations science on climate, an
11 indisputable reality is that human activities
12 produce about 55 billion tons of emissions every
13 year. The UN says those emissions are increasing
14 with no end in sight. So by 2030, when
15 Pennsylvania's RGGI membership supposedly will have
16 reduced state CO2 emissions by 188 million tons, the
17 world will have emitted more than 550 billion tons.
18 So RGGI in Pennsylvania will reduce global emissions
19 by a measly 0.034 percent at most. The
20 insignificance to the global climate and weather of
21 that level of emissions cut is obvious. So RGGI
22 will accomplish nothing for the climate or
23 environment.

24 But electricity prices will be three
25 percent lower, says Governor Wolf. Well, how will

1 electricity prices be lower if the cost to produce
2 electricity is going to increase every year?

3 Well, that's easy. Pennsylvanians will be paying
4 slightly less for electricity in total because they
5 will be using a lot less electricity.

6 Governor Wolf wants to reduce
7 cumulative electricity use in Pennsylvania by a
8 whopping 27,822 gigawatt-hours by 2030. The other
9 term for this so-called demand reduction policy is
10 rationing.

11 Though the world is awash in cheap
12 energy, Governor Wolf intends to ration electricity
13 in Pennsylvania and Pennsylvanians will be paying
14 more for less electricity.

15 Don't forget that compared with states
16 without excessive CO2 emissions regulations, the
17 other states in RGGI have already seen their
18 electricity prices rise 64 percent faster, according
19 to the Commonwealth Foundation.

20 What about Governor Wolf's projections
21 about personal income and state revenue? Well, I
22 know of no state government that can successfully
23 predict you, your or its income ten years in the
24 future. But if you work in, or depend on the coal
25 or fracking industries, like hundreds of thousands

1 in Pennsylvania, RGGI is not designed to be a job
2 security program for you. Such high-paying jobs are
3 earmarked to be redistributed to much lower wage
4 wind and solar workers.

5 Although Governor Wolf projects the
6 state to come out ever so slightly financially ahead
7 by 2030 because of RGGI's cap-and-tax design, this
8 is nonsense. There will be offsetting and lost tax
9 revenues from reduced coal mining and fracking.
10 Also, it's hard to imagine how making people
11 pointlessly poorer will boost state tax revenues.

12 Finally, there is the claim that
13 RGGI's emissions cuts will bring public health
14 benefits that, if hypothetically monetized, are
15 worth billions of dollars. This is more total
16 nonsense. Pennsylvania's air quality is already
17 clean and safe. Air pollution in Pennsylvania is at
18 historically low levels. Claims to the contrary are
19 based on statistical shenanigans and other junk
20 science outside the scope of this five-minute
21 testimony.

22 Air quality is not killing or
23 sickening anyone. Not a cough or a wheeze is caused
24 by anything coming out of any power plant. There is
25 simply no scientific or medical evidence indicating

1 that anyone's health is being harmed by Pennsylvania
2 air quality.

3 But if you doubt me, let's debate it
4 at a special hearing convened by the Pennsylvania
5 Department of Environment Protection. You will
6 lose, but learn a great deal.

7 In contrast, we know that unemploying
8 people and making them poorer hurts their health.
9 That is certain to happen as Governor Wolf's RGGI
10 membership kills coals mining, fracking, power
11 plants and their support industries.

12 What's the bottom line?
13 Pennsylvania's participation in RGGI will accomplish
14 nothing for the environment, climate or public
15 health. Instead, energy prices will increase,
16 making Pennsylvania and Pennsylvanians poorer.
17 Governor Wolf's electricity rationing will only hurt
18 the standard of living in Pennsylvania.

19 The cap-and-tax wolf is at the door,
20 Pennsylvania. Don't open it.

21 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Steve.

22 Speaker number 53, Chase Macpherson?

23 MS. MACPHERSON: Hi, can you hear me?

24 MS. GRIFFIN: Are you with us, Chase?

25 MS. C. MACPHERSON: Hello?

1 MS. GRIFFIN: Oh, we have Jane.

2 Okay.

3 So this is Jane Klein.

4 Right?

5 MS. C. MACPHERSON: No, this is Chase.

6 MS. GRIFFIN: Oh, sorry, Chase. I'm
7 so sorry.

8 MS. C. MACPHERSON: That's okay.

9 MS. GRIFFIN: I'm sorry. Please go
10 ahead, Chase.

11 MS. C. MACPHERSON: Thanks.

12 My name is Chase Macpherson. And I'm
13 from Doylestown, Pennsylvania. I'm testifying as a
14 private citizen. Thank you for having these
15 hearings. I'm strongly in support of Pennsylvania's
16 entering into RGGI.

17 I have lived in Pennsylvania with my
18 family for eight years now. And for all of that
19 time, I've known I want to spend my life working for
20 climate advocacy. With Hurricane Sandy, my family
21 lost power and water for a week. We have seen a 75-
22 degree Christmas. And over the years, I've meet so
23 many people inspired to spend their free time
24 working on behalf of the climate and the climate
25 crisis victims.

1 I was 14 when I decided this would be
2 my career path. I love my school's environmental
3 club. I volunteered with Penn Environment and now
4 the Climate Reality Project. I recently graduated
5 from Smith College with a degree in biology. And
6 now I'm here urging you to do this to Pennsylvania
7 and join RGGI.

8 My generation and those after me will
9 be the ones most affected by climate change if we do
10 not solve this crisis. RGGI is a big piece of the
11 puzzle to help mitigate the effects of the climate
12 crisis. RGGI will help the environment, the
13 economy, and the health of Pennsylvanians. It also
14 presents a critical opportunity to advance
15 environmental justice for our people.

16 I want to focus on how we can reinvest
17 in our state's communities that have been hurt and
18 left behind by the fossil fuel industry. In current
19 RGGI states, revenue is being returned to consumers
20 as rate assistance, low-income weatherization
21 projects, energy-efficiency retrofitting, clean
22 transportation, and more. While Pennsylvania will
23 have to operate within the bounds of the Clean Air
24 Act, there is so much room to be creative and give
25 back to the people that the fossil fuel industry

1 have harmed the most.

2 Many of these people are black and
3 brown and/or low income Pennsylvanians. And it is
4 time for Pennsylvania to move away from fossil fuels
5 and help these people move forward.

6 The towns that are most reliant on
7 fossil fuels also need justice. Coal plants are
8 shutting down across the country. And fracking is
9 devastating the surrounding environment. We need to
10 be proactive about helping these communities
11 transition to a more sustainable future. RGGI can
12 help us do that.

13 Other states have seen the benefits of
14 RGGI and now it is time for Pennsylvania to join the
15 successful market-based solution, invest in
16 sustainable jobs in our transitioning energy sector,
17 rip out environmental injustice in our state, and
18 reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.

19 Joining RGGI is the right decision for
20 Pennsylvania. Thank you.

21 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Chase. I
22 apologize for the confusion. We do have Jane Klein
23 back on the WebEx. Number --- Speaker number 50.
24 So go ahead.

25 MS. KLEIN: Yes. Hi.

1 I'm Jane Klein. I'm from Berwyn,
2 Pennsylvania, speaking as a private citizen. I
3 believe that Pennsylvania should join RGGI and I say
4 this because we are all in the midst of a climate
5 crisis. And our kids' future, their ability to live
6 in a world that is livable, is on the line.

7 I'd like to tell you a story of a
8 young friend of mine named Dylan. He's now 12 years
9 old. He's in 7th grade. I've known him for 10
10 years, which means I met him when he was 2. And I
11 got to know him doing children's programming at our
12 local library.

13 So I've had the pleasure of watching
14 him grow up. Dylan has always been interested in
15 nature. He and his brother, Gavin, and I have done
16 nature projects together. I taught them how to pot
17 tomato plants, how to make pesto from garlic mustard
18 that grows here every spring. And we've even
19 dissected owl pellets together.

20 Through the years, I've always been
21 impressed by his curiosity, his intelligence, and
22 his caring for the natural world.

23 Recently Dylan agreed to talk to me
24 about this RGGI testimony. I told him I wanted you
25 to hear the thoughts of someone who has his whole

1 life ahead of him. Here's what we said.

2 I asked him what would you like them
3 to hear? And Dylan answered if we're not careful,
4 we could destroy our own habitat and the places
5 where all the plants and animals live, too.

6 And I said why is it that this is
7 important to you and when did you know it was?
8 Dylan answered when I was in third or fourth grade,
9 I became interested in protecting the earth. I read
10 that humans are the only animals that have a
11 capacity to destroy the earth. And we also have the
12 ability to save it.

13 Dylan speaks for all of our kids.
14 They know what's happening. In the 12 years that
15 he's been alive, Pennsylvania has become wetter and
16 warmer, our farmers have gotten slammed, we've had
17 stronger storms that have cost millions of dollars
18 in damage. And the list goes on.

19 Science tells us that these changes
20 are the result of too much carbon pollution in the
21 atmosphere. Scientists and economists agree we have
22 to reduce the amount of carbon in the atmosphere
23 that comes from burning fossil fuels. We're seeing
24 the effects of climate change more clearly, but we
25 haven't done enough to fight it.

1 What about jobs?

2 As so many speakers have noted today,
3 coal power in Pennsylvania has been declining due to
4 market forces. But happily a program like RGGI can
5 lead to the expansion of Pennsylvania's 90,000 plus
6 clean energy jobs which have grown to outnumber jobs
7 in the fossil fuel industry and position the state
8 as a leader in the clean energy economy.

9 Clean energy can get the most people
10 back to work in the most occupations in the least
11 amount of time. Why wouldn't we do that?

12 I believe that Pennsylvania should
13 join RGGI. It will help fight the most existential
14 threat in our world today, climate change.

15 We have the opportunity to write a
16 bright future for Pennsylvania. Let's join RGGI.
17 Let's think about ourselves, but more importantly
18 let's think about our kids.

19 Thank you.

20 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Jane.

21 Speaker number 54, Sumner Macpherson.

22 MS. S. MACPHERSON: Hi. Can you hear
23 me?

24 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can. Please go
25 ahead.

1 MS. S. MACPHERSON: My name is Sumner
2 MacPherson. I'm from Doylestown, Pennsylvania. I'd
3 like to thank you for holding these hearings. I am
4 a private citizen testifying as a strong proponent
5 of Pennsylvania joining RGGI.

6 Here in Pennsylvania, we are already
7 seeing the impacts of global warming, including the
8 record breaking number of days without snow, more
9 intense heat, more frequent and intense storms and
10 droughts. RGGI is a significant piece of the puzzle
11 to help mitigate the effects of climate change.
12 RGGI will help the environment, economy, and the
13 health of Pennsylvanians.

14 I want to focus on the public health
15 of Pennsylvanians. About ten percent of
16 Pennsylvanians have asthma according to 2018 data
17 from the CDC. And the children, the elderly, and
18 low-income citizens are the most affected. The
19 pandemic has made us all more aware of the
20 devastating results of health disparities and risk
21 factors making pollution reduction an even more
22 pressing matter.

23 Joining RGGI could help prevent
24 hundreds of premature deaths and around 30,000
25 hospital visits for respiratory related illness a

1 year.

2 Air pollution reductions from RGGI
3 will particularly benefit our children, the elderly,
4 and those who live and work in areas the most - with
5 the poorest air quality. Other states have already
6 seen the benefits of RGGI. And now is the time for
7 Pennsylvania to join the successful solution.

8 It's time to invest in sustainable
9 jobs in our transitioning energy sector, to reduce
10 greenhouse gasses and pollution, and to keep our
11 citizens healthier. Joining RGGI is the right thing
12 to do and the right decision for Pennsylvania.

13 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Sumner.

14 Speaker number 55, William Vitale.

15 MR. VITALE: Hello.

16 MS. GRIFFIN: Hello, William. Please
17 go ahead.

18 MR. VITALE: Okay.

19 There's no echo, is there? We're
20 okay?

21 MR. JAGIELA: Yeah.

22 MS. GRIFFIN: You're all set. Go
23 ahead, please.

24 MR. VITALE: Thought I might have been
25 signed on twice. Okay.

1 Okay. Thank you.

2 I guess it's a good afternoon to
3 everyone. My name is Bill Vitale. I live in
4 Reading, which has been my home since 1985. I'm
5 testifying in support of Pennsylvania joining the
6 Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. I'm testifying
7 on behalf of my family, my community, and myself,
8 not the local organizations that I'm involved with.

9 I'm a LEED accredited architect.
10 Prior to retiring with my own practice --- private
11 practice in 2016, I designed sustainable green
12 buildings for over 40 years, including several LEED
13 certified projects in Reading.

14 I think it's relevant that as happened
15 with measures to combat acid rain mentioned in
16 earlier testimony, I saw initial skepticism and
17 resistance to green building measures give way to
18 acceptance and embrace as client contractors ---
19 clients, contractors, beneficiaries and users
20 understood and then experienced the economic and
21 environmental, social and aesthetic benefits of
22 green building. I think this is applicable --- or
23 applicable to today's discussion.

24 My understanding and perspective
25 regarding climate change from carbon emissions was

1 shaped by my work in built environment. I have no
2 doubt that we are in the midst of a climate crisis
3 that needs and immediate and bold response.

4 More personally, a year ago I became a
5 grandfather. I'm concerned about the world that my
6 one-year-old grandson will grow up in. Will it be a
7 healthy and sustainable one or will it be a planet
8 with extreme temperatures, catastrophic flooding,
9 severe and frequent storms, crop devastation and
10 food shortages, and with massive unmanageable
11 migrations, both into and within our own country?

12 These are problems we've already -
13 we're already beginning to face. And they will most
14 certainly dramatically worsen if we don't address
15 carbon emissions now.

16 I'm a member of the Reading
17 Environmental Advisory Council and a member of a
18 citizens organization, Reading for 100, which is
19 advocating for 100 percent clean energy in Reading.

20 Working with the Sierra Club, Reading
21 for 100 was successful in getting the Reading City
22 Council to unanimously pass a resolution in 2019
23 committing the city to a hundred percent clean and
24 renewable energy by 2050.

25 The Reading EAC and groups like

1 Reading for 100 are doing what they can at the local
2 level. But that will not be enough. RGGI is a
3 great opportunity to tackle this at the state and
4 regional level.

5 Ten states have signed on to RGGI.
6 And Virginia is about to make it 11. These states
7 have been reducing carbon emissions while growing
8 their economies. Since the program began in 2009,
9 power plant emissions in RGGI states have fallen by
10 45 percent.

11 We can do this in Pennsylvania, too.
12 Solar and wind-based generation of electricity are
13 now economically competitive with fossil fuel plants
14 and their widespread application is technically
15 feasible. Reading has a substantial low-income
16 population with the public health and economic
17 challenges that result from that.

18 Places like Reading can benefit
19 greatly from clean energy investment that RGGI would
20 generate, estimated to be \$300 million statewide
21 over the next ten years if RGGI is implemented as
22 envisioned.

23 Investment that can address the
24 population's health issues and provide good-paying
25 sustainable jobs. Investment in clean and efficient

1 energy will benefit Reading's low income residents
2 in particular, and would be a big boost to the
3 city's overall revitalization efforts.

4 So I'm imploring you to sign on to
5 RGGI without major revisions to the rules as
6 proposed. Furthermore, investing of the auction
7 proceeds must be targeted to those communities
8 historically overburdened by air pollution and to
9 those that may experience job losses in the fossil
10 fuel sector. These investments will enhance and
11 incentivize the shift to clean and renewable
12 electricity production.

13 I think that in 2020, it's an
14 embarrassment to live in the only northeastern or
15 mid-Atlantic state that is not part of this regional
16 accord. It's time Pennsylvania enters the 21st
17 century and joins its neighboring states in curbing
18 carbon emissions.

19 Thank you. Thank you for providing
20 this opportunity.

21 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you for your
22 comments, Bill.

23 And our last speaker for --- signed up
24 for today is number 56. Thank you for your patience
25 and taking the time and waiting. Zachary Lehman.

1 MR. LEHMAN: Yes. Can you hear me?

2 MS. GRIFFIN: I can, Zachary. Please
3 go ahead.

4 MR. LEHMAN: Okay.

5 Thank you for giving me the
6 opportunity to talk today. I speak as a private
7 citizen on behalf of myself, my family, my
8 community.

9 I am in opposition to Governor Wolf's
10 proposed legislation to apply the CO2 budget trading
11 program and I urge the Environmental Quality Control
12 Board and the PA DEP to reject Governor Wolf's
13 proposal.

14 I'm going to point out a couple things
15 in this testimony. And I'm going to show how RGGI
16 will severely impact and impair Pennsylvania's
17 economy by loss of jobs. But also question its
18 effectiveness.

19 It's no wonder that some of the
20 existing RGGI members have cut their CO2 emissions.
21 It's simply because they've been importing power and
22 at a cost of high energy prices to their citizens.

23 So first, I'd like to kind of comment
24 on the loss of jobs here. I am actually a senior
25 engineer. I work at Conemaugh Station in New

1 Florence, PA. And I'll most likely be impacted if
2 this proposal goes into effect. In fact, it may
3 lead to a job loss for me, which might even help me
4 - or force me to seek employment over state lines.

5 I currently reside in Somerset County
6 and live in the Johnstown area. My extended family
7 has a long history in this community. And it's a
8 place where I'd like to continue to raise my
9 children. Engineering jobs are very difficult to
10 find in communities like this one. And this
11 legislation harms industries such as power
12 generation. And it would have a devastating impact
13 on both my family, but the Johnstown community and
14 western Pennsylvania in general.

15 I fully support environmental
16 legislations. I have a great love for the outdoors.
17 I like to hunt, fish, camp, hike, so I am extremely
18 engaged and interested to protect our beautiful
19 earth and our beautiful state. However, this RGGI
20 proposal accomplishes very little on the
21 environmental front and really only results in
22 economic harm.

23 The Governor's own models admit that
24 most of the carbon dioxide reductions from plant
25 closures or reduced generation in Pennsylvania will

1 simply shift to neighboring non-RGGI states like
2 Ohio, Kentucky, West Virginia. Those states will
3 take the jobs and the capital expenditures while
4 producing similar emissions as Pennsylvania plants.

5 Joining RGGI will impair
6 Pennsylvania's economy and will in the end reduce
7 income tax revenue along with local property and
8 sales tax collected. Since over half of the power
9 plants in Pennsylvania will no longer be
10 competitive, it will either close or shift operating
11 models with drastically reduced budgets.

12 Ironically, one would suspect an
13 executive order to join RGGI to generate a revenue
14 stream for carbon taxes. So what should be asked is
15 does this carbon revenue tax offset the tax losses
16 by hurting major industry in Pennsylvania and all
17 the while, while inflicting serious damages to
18 family, communities, and businesses.

19 I find it very unsettling that a
20 Governor can issue an executive order like this that
21 inflicts so much economic damage without the
22 approval or support of the general assembly, and in
23 return, offers very little benefit if any.

24 It is no wonder it doesn't have the
25 support of PADEP's own small business advisory

1 committee, along with two other PADEP's advisory
2 committees, the Air Quality Technical Advisory
3 Committee and the Citizens Advisory Council. These
4 groups rejected the draft RGGI legislation. Why?
5 Because RGGI, while entirely lacking in identifiable
6 environmental health or safety benefits, will
7 devastate the Pennsylvania economy.

8 The implementation of RGGI won't only
9 hurt power generation, but also shave services such
10 as fuel supply, material and hardware sales,
11 consulting engineering services, transportation
12 services, machine fabrication shops, and many other
13 small business that support power generation.

14 Over the 13 years I've worked at
15 Conemaugh Station, I have interfaced with dozens of
16 small businesses that rely on Western Pennsylvania
17 plants for a significant amount of their business.
18 The loss of these facilities would lead to a large
19 reduction in these companies' bottom lines and put
20 their sustainability in jeopardy.

21 The trickle down effect of RGGI won't
22 only hurt small businesses. It will also impact
23 local communities. Our plants and local industries
24 support many community outreach efforts, donate to
25 charities, and support local businesses such as

1 restaurants, gas stations, retail stores, et cetera.
2 The loss of this support will hurt local
3 communities.

4 Local school districts will be also
5 impacted with significant loss of tax revenue. This
6 could affect support services offered at these
7 school districts, as well as educational resources
8 they all depend on. This could be an impact on
9 children in Pennsylvania, especially those with
10 special needs.

11 With these thoughts in mind, what is
12 RGGI actually accomplishing? Why not let the
13 general assembly consider options to this rule that
14 will soften the immediate economic impact or spread
15 it out to future years? This could give plants a
16 phased plan for retirement or give them time to
17 consider new technologies.

18 Coal generation, for example, has
19 already been reduced significantly over the past ten
20 years, not necessarily through regulation, but by
21 natural migration of the electric industry. So why
22 not let that progress naturally?

23 So as demonstrated, this executive
24 order from Harrisburg to join RGGI will hurt
25 Pennsylvania. RGGI will hurt the economy, will have

1 a negative impact on small business, will devastate
2 communities, will affect families with children in
3 Pennsylvania. And for what benefit?

4 I thank you again for considering my
5 comments. Please reject the RGGI tax regulation and
6 protect the jobs of thousands of Pennsylvanians
7 struggling to make ends meet during this very
8 difficult pandemic recession.

9 Thank you.

10 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you for your
11 comments, Zachary.

12 This is our last person who was signed
13 up. I want to say thank you to everyone who has
14 participated, for your patience, and taking the time
15 to present or provide testimony today.

16 Before we sign off, I just want to
17 make a quick double check if any of the people who
18 we went past and you were not on earlier have since
19 joined.

20 Has number 23, Laksha Thulasiram
21 joined us? Or number 24, Sierra Echavarria? Number
22 33, Aminata Sandra Calhoun? Forty-four (44), Nola
23 Barton or 46, Sabrina Fedel? Do we have any of them
24 with us, Darek?

25 MR. JAGIELA: Not from what I can see.

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MS. GRIFFIN: Okay.

Well, again, thank you, everyone.

With no other commenters present, on behalf of the EQB, I hereby adjourn this hearing at 12:28 p.m.

* * * * *

HEARING CONCLUDED AT 12:28 P.M.

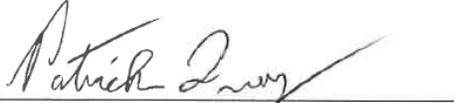
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CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing proceeding was reported by me on 12/08/2020 and that I, Patrick Troy, read this transcript and that I attest that this transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceeding.

Dated the 15th day of January, 2021


Patrick Troy,

Court Reporter