



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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IN RE: CO2 BUDGET TRADING PROGRAM

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BEFORE: JESSICA SHIRLEY, Chair
SARAH PINTER, Member
DAREK JAGIELA, Member
LAURA GRIFFIN, Member
JENNIFER SWAN, Member

HEARING: Friday, December 11, 2020
9:00 a.m.

LOCATION: VIDEO CONFERENCE

WITNESSES: Amy Nassif, Nora Johnson, Mary Grace Antonich, Jo Resiniti, Tim Resiniti, Rajani Vaidyanathan, Emma Horst-Martz, Nancy Boxer, Pat Lupo, Anne McCarthy, Annette Marshall, Dian Christin Esser, John Vanco, Joan Vondra, Eloise Chevrier, Phyllis Blumberg, Amy Scanlon, Valerie Viscusi, Heidi Shiver, Gaye Fifer, Anne Wooten, Elizabeth Lowenthal, Emma Sabin, April Clisura, Jacqueline Palmer, Shelley Ross, Juliet Birch, Alex Lola, Amanda Lapham, Olivia Perfetti, Gloria Lee, Terri Supowicz, Meredith Bennett, Marla Guadalupe Almanza

WITNESSES cont.: Julia Nakhelh, Molly Rearden,
Michael DiMonte, Joseph Hedden, Dave McCullough,
Seth Bush, LaNita Desire, Karen Knutson, Cathy
Cullen, Sarah Crothers, Lois Bower Bjornson, Shawn
Hogan

Reporter: Alex Riegel

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CHAIR: I would like to welcome you to the Environmental Quality Board's or EQB's public hearing for the proposed rulemaking for the Pennsylvania CO2 budget trading program. My name is Jessica Shirley and I am the policy director for the Department of Environmental Protection. I am facilitating this hearing on behalf of the Environmental Quality Board.

Assisting me today is Darek Jagiela, our host, Lauren Griffin, our regulatory coordinator and Jennifer Swan, who most of you corresponded with to register for this hearing. We also have Alan Landis, who is the director of the Pennsylvania Energy Development Board. I officially call this hearing to order at 9:00 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 or CO2 emissions from fossil fuel

1 fired power plants located in Pennsylvania, with an
2 electricity generation capacity equal to or greater
3 than 25 megawatts.

4 The purpose of this proposed
5 rulemaking is to reduce CO2 emissions, which is a
6 greenhouse gas and major contributor to climate
7 change impact in a manner than protects public
8 health, welfare and the environment. Under the
9 authority of Pennsylvania's Air Pollution Control
10 Act, the proposed rulemaking would establish
11 Pennsylvania's participation in the regional
12 greenhouse gas initiative, or RGGI, a CO2 budget
13 trading program.

14 In addition to reducing CO2 emissions,
15 Pennsylvania will also see a decrease in harmful
16 NOX, SO2 and particulate matter emissions as well as
17 ground level ozone pollution. Human exposure to
18 these air pollutants contributes to respiratory and
19 cardiovascular health problems, including asthma,
20 bronchitis, heart attacks and strokes.

21 By participating in RGGI, DEP
22 estimates that Pennsylvania will see CO2 emission
23 reductions of around 188 million tons by 2030. This
24 concludes the summary of the rulemaking. If you
25 would like to access a more detailed explanation of

1 regulatory amendments included in this rulemaking,
2 you can visit ECOMMENT on DEP's webpage and select
3 regulation.

4 In order to give everyone an equal
5 opportunity to comment on this proposal, I would
6 like to establish the following ground rules. Alan
7 or Laura are going to provide some of this
8 information in the Q and A or chat box, so you don't
9 need to write everything down.

10 I will call upon the witness who -
11 witnesses who have signed up to testify at this
12 hearing. All who signed up were assigned a number
13 indicating the order in which witnesses will be
14 called to speak. Only those who signed up by
15 contacting Jennifer Swan as indicated on the EQB
16 webpage will be called upon to provide testimony.
17 When you are called, your line will be un-muted.

18 Testimony is limited to five minutes
19 for each witness. And I will have a timer on the
20 screen. Please note that written and spoken
21 testimony carry the same weight. If you should run
22 out of time for your spoken testimony, we will read
23 the rest of your comments from your written
24 testimony. As advised in registration
25 correspondence, please provide a copy of your

1 written testimony to reqcomments@PA.gov.

2 Your email must note that you are
3 submitting testimony for a proposed rulemaking, CO2
4 budget trading program, along with the following
5 information. You first and last name, your mailing
6 address, email address, and if you are commenting on
7 behalf of an organization.

8 Testimony is not required to be five
9 minutes long. If others who provide testimony
10 before you are making similar statements to yours,
11 you are free to shorten or summarize your verbal
12 testimony at this time and still provide your full
13 testimony by email. This will allow us to hear from
14 more commenter's at this hearing.

15 Through the sign-up process
16 prospective commenter's were requested to designate
17 one witness to present testimony on behalf of an
18 organization. Please state your name, address, the
19 city and state are sufficient, and affiliation if
20 you have one, for the record prior to presenting
21 your testimony. The EQB would appreciate your help
22 by spelling out your name and terms that may not be
23 generally familiar so that the transcript can be as
24 accurate as possible.

25 Because the purpose of this hearing is

1 to receive comments on the proposal, EQB members or
2 DEP staff cannot address questions about the
3 proposed rulemaking during the duration of the
4 hearing. In addition to or in place of verbal
5 testimony presented at today's hearing, interested
6 persons may also submit written comments on this
7 proposal. Again, written and verbal comments hold
8 the same weight when considered in the finalization
9 of this proposed rulemaking.

10 All testimony and written comments
11 provided become a part of the official public
12 record. All comments must be received by the EQB on
13 or before January 14th, 2021. There are a few
14 different ways to submit written comments. Comments
15 may be submitted through ECOMMENT, accessible from
16 DEP's website. Just click the ECOMMENT icon near
17 the top of DEP's homepage, www.DEP.PA.gov. Or
18 comments may be submitted by email at
19 reqcomments@PA.gov.

20 All comments are entered into ECOMMENT
21 and are accessible to the public. A subject heading
22 of the proposed rulemaking and a return name and
23 address must be included in each email. Comments
24 may also be sent through the U.S. Postal Mail
25 addressed to the environmental quality board, PO box

1 8477, Harrisburg, PA, 17105-8477.

2 All testimony received at this
3 hearing, as well as written comments received by
4 January 14th, 2021, will be considered by the EQB
5 will be included in a comment and response document,
6 which will be prepared by DEP and reviewed by the
7 EQB, prior to the Board taking its final action on
8 this regulation.

9 I will now share my screen and call
10 the first commenter. Okay. First up we have number
11 one, Amy Nassif. Do we have Amy on the line?

12 MS. NASSIF: Yes. Good morning.

13 CHAIR: Good morning, Amy.

14 MS. NASSIF: My name is Amy Nassif, N-
15 A-S-S-I-F. I am in Mars, Pennsylvania. And I am
16 testifying as a private citizen. Good morning. My
17 name, again, is Amy Nassif and I live just north of
18 Pittsburgh in Mars, Butler County. I grew up in
19 western Pennsylvania and returned here after college
20 to settle and raise my children close to my extended
21 family. I am a mother of two school age daughters
22 and I've been in the healthcare profession as a
23 geriatric physical therapist for over 25 years.

24 I've been an advocate for my children,
25 my family and my community and my clients over the

1 years. And I am compelled to speak to you this
2 morning in support of the CO2 budget trading program
3 under the regional greenhouse gas initiative.
4 Living here in Pennsylvania, we are fortunate to
5 have our right to clean air established in our state
6 constitution. The Governor and the Department of
7 Environmental Protection are all environmental
8 stewards. And they are responsible for taking quick
9 action on behalf of our residents. Especially our
10 most vulnerable to ensure that right.

11 I have vulnerable family members that
12 suffer with respiratory and cardiac disease. And
13 the quality of air that they breathe has a direct
14 impact on daily life, frequency of medical needs and
15 ultimately their longevity. Adding Pennsylvania to
16 the regional greenhouse gas initiative is taking a
17 fiscally responsible, and more importantly,
18 community protected step towards decreasing
19 pollution in our state, thus creating a cleaner and
20 safer environment for everyone.

21 Working with a geriatric population
22 and understanding the detrimental effects of
23 pollution, I have been on the frontline assisting
24 our most valued community members navigate how the
25 environment impacts their health. For example, my

1 clients with health co-morbidities may have physical
2 limitations. Our goal may be to increase outdoor
3 activity when appropriate to build strength and
4 endurance and promote community access. We must pay
5 close attention to the air quality and our ozone
6 action days to decide if they can safely participate
7 in outdoor activities.

8 The same is true of children, pregnant
9 women and anyone with respiratory or heart disease.

10 Unfortunately, the prevalence of such disease and
11 co-morbidities is high in our region and more needs
12 to be done to curb pollution and provide a healthier
13 environment. Because I cannot control the air that
14 my patients breathe, I depend on my elected
15 officials and our state agencies to do their job and
16 protect us with comprehensive and meaningful
17 pollution protections.

18 By participating in RGGI, Pennsylvania
19 can improve the air quality resulting in 500,000
20 less restricted activity days. Nearly avoid over
21 700 premature deaths and approximately 31,000 less
22 people with respiratory disease. As I continue to
23 help and encourage others in the community to help
24 our environment, I would encourage you as our
25 community stewards to quickly move forward with the

1 RGGI initiative.

2 Pennsylvania needs to join our ten
3 neighboring states and commit to reducing CO2
4 emissions. You now have the science and research to
5 support this decision. You have the ability to
6 quickly help my family, my friends, our children and
7 our dearest senior clients enjoy a safer and cleaner
8 environment.

9 I have - I do appreciate having the
10 opportunity to provide testimony today. My best
11 regards to all that are present and listening.
12 Thank you.

13 CHAIR: Thank you, Amy. Next, we have
14 number two, Nora Johnson.

15 MS. JOHNSON: My name is Nora Johnson
16 and I live in Pittsburgh. Thank you for the
17 opportunity to speak to the proposed regional
18 greenhouse gas initiative, or RGGI. I am speaking
19 in favor of the CO2 budget trading program and the
20 Pennsylvania join in with this multi-state
21 agreement. I am taking a broad view this morning.
22 And would like to speak to three aspects of our
23 situation, as we decide whether to enter this
24 agreement with other states in our region.

25 These three aspects are the strength

1 of government, the power of markets and the force of
2 nature. Looking through the government, we see that
3 our governments here in Pennsylvania from borough
4 and township councils all the way through the state
5 government to the federal government are together a
6 source of strength created by the public, for the
7 good of the public.

8 Now I grant you, this is often hard to
9 comprehend as follow current events, and the noise
10 of conflict, of decision making at all levels. It
11 is easy to lose sight of the fact that it is through
12 our publically elected governmental bodies that we
13 shape our history as a nation. A vital part of our
14 decision making is made up of rules we use to
15 promote peace and to steer productivity as we seek
16 prosperity.

17 Markets are probably as old as
18 humanity itself. And it is through markets that we
19 have always secluded ourselves, trading, selling and
20 buying what we need to prosper. Saying that markets
21 are powerful is just another way to recognize that
22 people experience freedom, which is obviously a
23 concept vital to our system of government, through
24 the ability to trade, sell and buy.

25 Nor is it a paradox that through the

1 ages we have not only created a vast array of
2 markets, but also the rules and laws that govern
3 them. These rules and laws allow markets to
4 function. And so they are vital to freedom and
5 people's sense of wellbeing.

6 RGGI, the regional greenhouse gas
7 initiative uses the strength of government and the
8 power of market, in this case the market for energy,
9 to harness the force of nature productively. The
10 regulatory framework that is RGGI creates a market
11 for decreases in greenhouse gas pollution. We need
12 this decrease to improve our climate. The
13 improvement in our climate will improve our health.

14 Better health will improve our economy and jobs
15 will be created.

16 And the RGGI system itself will return
17 revenue, increasing our ability to fight climate
18 change, putting Pennsylvania on a path to a cleaner
19 and healthier economy. Now it's a good thing that
20 my time to speak this morning is limited. Dealing
21 in broad generalities as I have done here makes it
22 easy to ramble, and I don't want to do that.

23 I will close by saying that I will
24 look forward to a cleaner Pennsylvania. In
25 Pittsburgh we suffer from poor air, which I

1 experienced frequently when I opened my door in the
2 morning, as I did this morning, and got a blast of
3 air pollution in my face. My friends and their
4 children who have asthma need cleaner air. Many,
5 many people need jobs. RGGI will be a big help in
6 so many ways. Thank you for giving me the ability
7 to speak.

8 CHAIR: Thank you, Nora. Next we have
9 number three, Mary Grace Antonich.

10 MS. ANTONICH: Hi.

11 My name is Mary Grace Antonich.
12 Antonich is spelled A-N-T-O-N-I-C-H. I am from the
13 north hills of Pittsburgh and I am talking on behalf
14 of Duquesne University's Center for Environmental
15 Research and Education. So hello, my name is Mary
16 Grace Antonich. I am 21 years old and in my final
17 year of my undergraduate degree at Duquesne
18 University for Environmental Science.

19 When I think about the earth at large
20 I picture it coughing. I picture it so tired and
21 stressed from having to deal with everything we're
22 putting into it. I so deeply want that to be
23 reversed. Sometimes I will walk from Duquesne's
24 campus down in Point State Park. The Point is only
25 about a 20 minute, mile and a half walk through

1 Pittsburgh's downtown area.

2 I walk slowly once I get to the
3 physical park because I can feel how much better and
4 easier it is to breathe once I get there. All of
5 the grasses, shrubs and trees filter the carbon and
6 intensely polluted surrounding air and then release
7 oxygen. My walk through the city, I feel how much
8 harder it is for my lungs to fully expand. It feels
9 like I need one minute of breathing in the city to
10 equate to five seconds of breathing while I'm in the
11 park.

12 But I feel like they cannot even be
13 compared because the air purity is just so
14 strikingly different. I know that the city doesn't
15 have to be like this. I know that it's the air
16 pollution from big industries and manufacturers
17 along the rivers. It should change. It can be
18 changed. I should not have to dream about the
19 relief of taking a more pure breath.

20 The excessive carbon in the air is so
21 damaging to the quality of health and life in
22 Pennsylvania. To address climate change in
23 Pennsylvania, a good start is participating in the
24 regional greenhouse gas initiative or RGGI. RGGI's
25 cap and invest mechanism is part of a market based

1 program that facilitates reductions in carbon
2 emissions from the electric power sector.

3 Pennsylvania's polluting power sector,
4 it's the fifth dirtiest in the nation. It can
5 achieve significant emissions reductions over time.

6 And by doing so it creates revenues that can be
7 used towards energy efficiency and renewable energy,
8 such as solar and wind, that will power our future.

9 Pennsylvania's electric power sector emits over 89
10 billion tons of carbon pollution annually. Action
11 is critical and linking to a program like RGGI can
12 help put our state on track to reach net zero
13 emissions by the middle of the century.

14 RGGI states have reduced their overall
15 carbon emissions by 36 percent within the past
16 decade. Companies have an incentive to lower their
17 emissions as the markets drive the need to remain
18 competitive with low and no emission power sources.

19 RGGI states have reduced their carbon emissions and
20 returned over two billion dollars in proceeds to
21 those participating states.

22 These revenue will power clean energy
23 and all the important jobs that come with them.
24 Additionally, the projected bills in RGGI states are
25 projected to be 35 percent lower in a decade than

1 they are today. Those are real dollars in consumer
2 pockets. Already states participating in RGGI have
3 decreased their electricity prices by 5.7 percent,
4 outperforming non-participating states. RGGI is a
5 real, tangible way to achieve the objective of
6 protecting public health now and ensuring a cleaner,
7 safer environment for future generations.

8 I sincerely want the Department of
9 Environmental Protection to proceed with the RGGI
10 rulemaking rather swiftly. Pennsylvania is such an
11 amazing state to call home. It should only get
12 better for each generation. This is a pivotal
13 moment in Pennsylvania's history. I want us to be
14 on the right side of it. Thank you.

15 CHAIR: Thank you, Mary Grace.

16 Next up, we have number four, Joan
17 Vondra. Darek, do we have Joan on the line? We did
18 a couple minutes ago.

19 MR. JAGIELA: We still don't have her
20 on the line.

21 CHAIR: Okay.

22 What about number five, Jo Resciniti?
23 Oh, I'm so sorry. It's too early. Resciniti
24 (corrects pronunciation).

25 MS. RESCINITI: I'm here.

1 CHAIR: Hi. I'm sorry for butchering
2 your name.

3 MS. RESCINITI: It's not a problem.
4 You have to ignore the way it's spelled. My name is
5 Jo Resciniti, R-E-S as in Sam, C-I-N-I-T-I. I live
6 in Gibsonia, Pennsylvania, Allegheny County. I am
7 speaking today in support of Pennsylvania joining
8 the regional greenhouse gas initiative as soon as
9 possible.

10 My daughter was instrumental in
11 helping me write this statement. She'll be 16 in a
12 couple of months. And most days when she's done
13 with school we talk a walk in our neighborhood. On
14 a number of recent walks I told her I signed up to
15 testify today and explained RGGI to her. I said I
16 didn't know what I was going to say about it. And
17 she told me you could talk about how the air
18 pollution makes you feel terrible. And that is why
19 I support RGGI.

20 For the past 11 years we've lived in
21 Vassar Township (phonetic). I saw a real, live
22 eagle in the wild here. A sure sign of an improving
23 environment for the first time in my life. But I
24 also noticed less clear blue sky days. Sometimes
25 there's a brown haze. Last Christmas Eve there was

1 a temperature inversion with fog so thick it was a
2 scary drive home from our family's holiday dinner.

3 And knowing this area's history with
4 the Donora Death Fog, I worried about what was in
5 the air that night. My home isn't particularly
6 close to any major pollution source. The Springdale
7 power plant is about seven miles away. But
8 pollution is impacting my life. My seasonal
9 allergies aren't seasonal anymore. I end most days
10 with a sinus headache and itchy, watery eyes. I
11 stopped looking at the air quality reports because I
12 thought maybe I have a touch of hypochondria. I
13 always feel worse on air quality action days.

14 But it doesn't matter if I see the
15 numbers. My sinuses can tell. Air pollution is
16 known to worsen allergies and act as an irritant
17 that causes the symptoms that I experience
18 regularly. This is why I've started to lust after
19 clean air. I have been researching other places in
20 the country where my family could live. Places that
21 aren't consistently listed as having the worst air
22 in the country like Allegheny County.

23 When this hearing about RGGI was
24 announced I did some research on the initiative and
25 found that all of the states I've been daydreaming

1 about, Vermont and Maine and New York, are RGGI
2 states. These places have better renewable energy
3 auctions, rebates for home solar panels. RGGI
4 states prioritize clean air and climate action. I
5 look at Pennsylvania joining RGGI not as a solution
6 to our air quality problems, but as an important
7 first step.

8 It is a way to show residents that the
9 Commonwealth is going to prioritize healthy clean
10 air so my family can plan for a future life here.
11 RGGI is a path forward to clean air and reduced
12 climate impact that Pennsylvanians should take as
13 soon as possible.

14 CHAIR: Thank you, Jo.

15 Next up, we have number six, Tim. Are
16 you on the line?

17 MR. RESCINITI: Yes, this is Tim. Can
18 you hear me?

19 CHAIR: I can. You can begin.

20 MR. RESCINITI: Hi.

21 My name is Tim Resciniti, R-E-S-C-I-N-
22 I-T-I. I live in Gibsonia, Pennsylvania. My name
23 is Tim Resciniti. I live in northern Allegheny
24 County. And I am speaking today in support of
25 Pennsylvania joining the regional greenhouse gas

1 initiative. In my family we have a joke that has
2 come to explain the weather around the Pittsburgh
3 area. We say there is a protective smell, a play on
4 the phrase protective spell, around the city and it
5 keeps the rain away.

6 I am what is known as a trained
7 weather observer, after having taken many aviation
8 weather classes while training to be a professional
9 pilot as a young man some 20 years ago. I still
10 enjoy being an amateur meteorologist today and I've
11 come to be relied upon when my family and others
12 require a hyper-local forecast.

13 As a church softball coach, I watch
14 the radar as massive storms move across Ohio, only
15 to disappear when they get close to Pittsburgh. The
16 game was played without ever a drop of rain falling.

17 I know the reason for this phenomenon. It's
18 because the air mass over the city and the
19 surrounding area is consistently hotter and drier
20 than areas further away. When a system powerful
21 enough to break through the protective smell finally
22 comes our way the end result is flash flooding,
23 microbursts and widespread damage.

24 This also means less good rain for the
25 local farms I shop at. Winters that are more like

1 what you would have expected somewhere far south of
2 here 20 years ago, and an unpredictability to our
3 weather that has caused injury and death in the
4 worst of circumstances. This is the definition of
5 climate change as it relates to where I live today.

6 I believe, and there is evidence to support, that a
7 large part of the reason of why this happens is the
8 fossil fuel burning power plants in the area and the
9 effect their carbon emissions have on our climate.

10 I strongly support Pennsylvania
11 joining RGGI as an important first step in reducing
12 the impact that manmade climate change is having on
13 Pennsylvanians. Thank you.

14 CHAIR: Thank you, sir.

15 Next up we have number seven, Rajani
16 Vaidyanathan. I'm sorry. Are you there, Rajani?

17 MS. VAIDYANATHAN: Yes. Can you hear
18 me?

19 CHAIR: Yes.

20 MS. VAIDYANATHAN: Okay.

21 Thank you for hosting this virtual
22 commenting period. Thank you, Jennifer and
23 everybody who is here. We appreciate your time. I
24 am Rajani Vaidyanathan, V-A-I-D-Y-A-N-A-T-H-A-N.
25 And I live in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. I am here

1 to speak in support of RGGI as a resident of
2 Pennsylvania. We have one planet to live in.
3 Pennsylvania is the third largest greenhouse gas
4 polluting state, owing to our coal and natural gas
5 powered electricity generation. We need to do our
6 part. And RGGI is a baby step on that part we need
7 to do.

8 What we do here in Pennsylvania on
9 this region affects the whole earth. We might not
10 be the only earth-like planet that can support life.

11 But earth is the only planet we have now. I had a
12 child - I had a child in 2003 and started to pay
13 attention to CDC's Lyme disease map in about 2005.
14 For the next ten years I saw that map get denser and
15 denser. When my child was about eight she got
16 crippling joint pain and I found a completely
17 swollen tick on my dog multiple times.

18 This is very personal and very scary
19 as a mother. Climate change is a big reason for the
20 Lyme population explosion. My teenager nowadays
21 doesn't go out much and I don't have a dog anymore.

22 But I still see the tick map and it gets scarier
23 and scarier for all of our children. And speaking
24 for moms, we are looking to Pennsylvania's leaders,
25 agencies and committees to take action on climate

1 change by reducing carbon pollution and increasing
2 clean and renewable energy. So all these side
3 effects can be reduced.

4 This action is a proven cap and invest
5 program. It has a ten year history. We are not
6 blazing a trail here. We are just following what
7 these other ten states have already done. This can
8 help boost investment in our community. We bear a
9 heavy burden in terms of carbon, sulfur and nitrogen
10 emissions compared with these other ten states in
11 RGGI.

12 The RGGI states have reduced their
13 carbon emission and have gotten over two billion
14 dollars to these participating states. Revenue
15 generating by participated in RGGI can be invested
16 into state funding that reduce pollution, including
17 the communities that live near power plants.
18 Programs for energy efficiency, renewable energy,
19 and other greenhouse gas reduction strategies. And
20 can create local, family sustaining jobs.

21 We here in Pennsylvania can surely use
22 the investment and the jobs. As a mother and a
23 resident of Pennsylvania, I urge you to limit carbon
24 pollution from electric power plants and link the
25 state to the regional greenhouse gas initiative,

1 RGGI, to help clean up air and protect our families
2 from climate change. Thank you for giving me an
3 opportunity to speak. Thank you, Jennifer Swan and
4 everybody else in front and behind the scenes of EQB
5 and DEP for making this happen. Thank you.

6 CHAIR: Thank you, Rajani. I agree,
7 Jennifer Swan is pretty great. Next is number nine,
8 Emma Horst-Martz. Do we have Emma on the line?

9 MS. HORST-MARTZ: Yes, I'm here.

10 CHAIR: All right. You can begin.

11 MS. HORST-MARTZ: Thank you.

12 My name is Horst-Martz, spelled H-O-R-
13 S-T, hyphen, M-A-R-T-Z. I am based in Philadelphia
14 and I am speaking on behalf of the Pennsylvania
15 public interest research group. I am an advocate
16 for Penn Purge. We are a statewide non-profit
17 organization working to protect Pennsylvanians from
18 special interests when they threaten our health,
19 safety and wellbeing.

20 I am personally from Philadelphia and
21 in my official role and speaking on behalf of our
22 Penn Purge members across every party of the state.

23 We are, of course, concerned about the impact of
24 climate change on the environment and public health.

25 But as a consumer organization, we are most excited

1 about the benefits that RGGI will bring to
2 Pennsylvanians in their homes.

3 We support Pennsylvania joining RGGI,
4 as it would generate much needed revenue for energy
5 efficiency programs. These improvements will help
6 consumers and businesses save on their monthly
7 bills. To date, RGGI has raised over \$2.5 billion
8 dollars in participating states for energy
9 efficiency and direct bill assistance.

10 Our neighbors in New Jersey and
11 Maryland have already joined RGGI and are emerging
12 as leaders in energy efficiency. It is time for
13 Pennsylvania to join them. The results speak for
14 themselves. The benefits of one year in RGGI in
15 2018, include two billion dollars in lifetime energy
16 bill savings and 14 megawatt hours of electricity
17 use avoided. This is equivalent of the greenhouse
18 gas emissions produced over 2.1 million vehicles on
19 average every year.

20 Pennsylvania is the fourth largest
21 emitter of greenhouse gasses in the country. So our
22 addition to these energy savings would have an even
23 greater impact. Since the program began,
24 electricity prices have fallen by 5.7 percent in
25 states that joined RGGI. While prices increased by

1 8.6 percent in the rest of the country.

2 These savings would make a real
3 difference for the people of Pennsylvania. And any
4 relief will help in the coming years as we recover
5 from the devastation of COVID-19. The revenue from
6 RGGI will allow more households and businesses to
7 upgrade their appliances and lighting, weatherize
8 and insulate and upgrade systems.

9 These improvements do not just benefit
10 those who make them, but the entire community.
11 Decreased demand on the electricity grid results in
12 lower electricity prices for everyone. It is time
13 for Pennsylvania to join the regional greenhouse gas
14 initiative for the benefit of consumers across the
15 state. Energy efficiency has numerous benefits to
16 communities, but most directly it keeps money in the
17 pockets of families every month.

18 The energy efficiency savings
19 generated by RGGI funded programs in existing states
20 are expected to reach billions. From 2014 to 2018,
21 RGGI has provided \$3.5 million dollars in direct
22 utility assistance to households and businesses.
23 Joining RGGI is an imperative for the environment,
24 public health and our wallets. Thank you.

25 CHAIR: Thank you, Emma.

1 Next, we have number ten, Nancy Boxer.

2 MS. BOXER: Good morning.

3 I am Nancy Boxer, N-A-N-C-Y, B-O-X-E-R
4 at 2414 Hurst Terrace, Havertown, PA, 19083.

5 Speaking for the Association of Climate Health,
6 nboxer@a4ch.org. Many are speaking on the benefits
7 of joining RGGI. Instead, I will discuss objections
8 and whether they are valid.

9 CO2 emissions from RGGI covered power
10 plants fell nearly 50 percent since 2008, almost
11 twice as fast as in non-member states. Some
12 question how much of that decline was from RGGI.
13 Would it have happened anyways and without RGGI's
14 cost? The definitive economic analysis concluded
15 that only one percent of the decline was due to the
16 recession of 2009, more from switching to natural
17 gas. But overall emissions would have been 24
18 percent higher in regions without RGGI.

19 Some claim reductions were due to loss
20 of industry or to energy efficiency programs. Loss
21 of industry we address below. But efficiency
22 programs are partly funded by RGGI proceeds. So any
23 success from them should be partly credited to RGGI.

24 Some argue that non-RGGI states added more
25 renewable than RGGI states. True, because of more

1 sun in southern and western states, stronger winds
2 on the west coast and Great Plains, and plus tax
3 incentives boosting solar in California.

4 To imply this is a RGGI failure is
5 misleading. When coal plants shut down and their
6 owners replace that power with renewables, whether
7 local or transmitted from Kansas and Texas, this is
8 what RGGI works to accomplish. Some question if the
9 RGGI cap actually forces cutbacks, given that the
10 cap has mostly been higher than actual emissions.
11 Even so, the cap has impact.

12 New investments and power plants
13 require advanced planning, from design to approval
14 to completion is a many year timeframe. Once they
15 know the cap will tighten every year, they start
16 along the process for adjusting for a lower carbon
17 future.

18 Health impacts, reducing carbon
19 improves public health by reducing global warming
20 and by cutting pollution from fossil fuels. One
21 critic points out that PA already has lower asthma
22 rates than RGGI states. This does not prove that
23 RGGI are unnecessary. No matter what our asthma
24 rates, they will go down further by reducing
25 emissions. That reduces deaths and human suffering.

1 Job and economic growth. Critics are
2 arguing that RGGI price increases will shift energy
3 intensive businesses and jobs to other states. This
4 may be true. Large energy users cannot compete when
5 peers pay less for power or adopt more efficient
6 technology. Yet PA can use RGGI revenues to help
7 manufacturers identify better technologies.

8 The state already provides grants and
9 low cost loans to subsidize efficiency through
10 several small business and green energy programs.
11 And we can expand these if needed. Additionally,
12 jobs and economic growth from investing in
13 renewables and efficiency may result in a net
14 economic gain.

15 Affordability, some argue that other
16 states had smaller electric price increases than
17 RGGI states. Initially, this was true. But only a
18 tiny fraction of a percent a year. Then where
19 states invest in energy efficiency, the reduction in
20 demand more than offsets RGGI costs. Net result?
21 Lower electric bills for consumers.

22 Additionally, increases can be
23 tempered by programs to support residents.
24 Pennsylvania already has some programs in place and
25 can add more if needed. Conclusion? RGGI has

1 succeeded on several fronts. Is it perfect? No.
2 The cap may be overly generous and RGGI may lose
3 some business jobs and tax revenues. Yet these
4 impacts can be mitigated, as discussed.

5 RGGI is a successful mechanism to
6 reduce greenhouse gasses. Over ten years it helped
7 reduce emissions and provide funds for climate,
8 environmental and social justice. These
9 accomplishments are no small thing. Its health
10 benefits are undeniable. Where states used the
11 proceeds to invest in efficiency and equity, there
12 are even more social gains.

13 Overall we believe that RGGI is a
14 success and Pennsylvania should join. I thank you
15 for this opportunity to speak.

16 CHAIR: Thank you, Nancy. Next, we
17 have number 11, Sister Pat Lupo.

18 MS. LUPO: Good morning.

19 CHAIR: Good morning.

20 MS. LUPO: I am Pat Lupo, L-U-P-O, an
21 environmental educator and advocate for the
22 Benedictine Sisters of Erie. I am providing
23 testimony on their behalf. I am in Erie,
24 Pennsylvania. I teach at the Inner City
25 Neighborhood Art House, an after school program. I

1 come here to as part of the Pennsylvania Lake Erie
2 Watershed Association and HECA, to hold Erie Coke
3 accountable. And I am a member of other
4 environmental and civic groups.

5 I am testifying because of my work
6 with youth. Four young women approached me. They
7 wanted to do something more about the issues
8 impacting our earth. They have participated in
9 climate strikes, following in the footsteps of Greta
10 Thunberg. This part of my testimony is in their
11 words, and I quote. You are our leaders and you
12 need to do something. We are dealing with a system
13 change, not a climate change. As our leaders you
14 need to unite behind the science. Our scientists
15 have told you for decades that the earth is in
16 trouble. In fact, our house is on fire.

17 We are here today because as young
18 people all over the world, we deserve a future. Do
19 you understand? We deserve a future. We are the
20 firefighters. Do firefighters let the fire keep
21 going or do they put it out? We need to save our
22 home. We don't have decades. There are already
23 people homeless because of climate change and our
24 turn is coming.

25 Let's save our home together. We are

1 asking all our leaders, are you with us? We are
2 asking all citizens in our community, our state, the
3 nation and the world, are you with us. We deserve a
4 future. We have joined all the young people who are
5 marching. We are marching for our lives. And yes,
6 we are marching for your lives. End of quote.

7 These four young women called
8 themselves Gaia Youth United. They are social
9 justice advocates and we would do well to join them.

10 I am so proud to be part of the group that is
11 mentoring them. And in turn, they impassion us.
12 The science is clear on this. Climate change is an
13 imminent threat. Pennsylvania is the third largest
14 greenhouse gas polluting state in the country. We
15 rank second in the nation in fracked gas production
16 and third in coal production.

17 In 2015, Pennsylvania emitted more
18 energy related carbon pollution than all but 23
19 nations. We have a responsibility, in fact, a moral
20 mandate to cut climate warming pollution. We can do
21 that if Pennsylvania joins RGGI. RGGI is a proven
22 solution to limit carbon pollution from power
23 plants. Ten states currently participate in RGGI
24 and the northeast. It is time for Pennsylvania to
25 join them.

1 Since the Program began, RGGI has
2 helped cut carbon pollution from power plants in
3 half. Even as the regional economy grew by nearly
4 ten percent. RGGI provides the framework for
5 Pennsylvania to invest in clean energy and energy
6 efficiency programs to save people money and create
7 jobs while addressing a changing climate by cutting
8 carbon pollution. The ultimate design and
9 implementation of RGGI must also address the
10 following equity principles.

11 This power carbon reduction program
12 must authentically and inclusively gather public
13 input, especially in the environmental justice
14 community, since they are the ones that have
15 suffered the greatest disadvantaged. Stakeholder
16 engagement must be robust. RGGI must avoid and
17 mitigate any adverse impacts on human health,
18 especially in low income communities and communities
19 of color. RGGI must equitably distribute
20 environmental and economic benefits to each
21 community that has faced historic injustice, severe
22 economic harm or demonstrate a cumulative impact of
23 environmental risk.

24 Cumulative impacts must be a core
25 principle in the permitting process. RGGI works -

1 for the most vulnerable Pennsylvania - already do
2 and will continue to shoulder the greatest burden
3 for climate impacts. Therefore, the funds generated
4 by RGGI should be invested in EJ communities in an
5 equitable way. RGGI works. Our neighboring states
6 have shown that RGGI will create jobs, save electric
7 companies money and protect Pennsylvania's health
8 and environment.

9 We have a responsibility, in fact, a
10 moral mandate to cut climate warming pollution. We
11 can do that if Pennsylvania joins RGGI. Let's
12 become the firefighters. Let's join the Gaia Youth
13 and the youth of the world who are fighting for
14 their lives, for our lives, and the lives of future
15 generations. Thank you.

16 CHAIR: Thank you, Pat.

17 Next we have number 12, Anne McCarthy.
18 Is Anne on the line?

19 MS. MCCARTHY: Yes, I am. Thank you.

20 This is Anne McCarthy, M-C-C-A-R-T-H-
21 Y, Erie, Pennsylvania. I am speaking for Erie
22 Benedictines for Peace. Good morning and thank you
23 for holding this public hearing on such an important
24 topic. I am a Benedictine Sister speaking on behalf
25 of Benedictines for Peace in Erie and speaking in

1 support of RGGI and its implementation as soon as
2 possible.

3 As Benedictines and as Christians we
4 believe deeply that all of us, globally, are
5 connected, are united, are one. The reasons to
6 support RGGI extend beyond our state's borders to
7 the globe. And from our present to the future. And
8 from the environment, to its intersection with other
9 issues, sexism, racism and poverty. Pope Francis'
10 landmark in encyclical fratelli highlighted the
11 intersection of issues. Quote, the human
12 environment and the natural environment deteriorate
13 together.

14 We cannot adequately combat
15 environmental degradation unless we attend to causes
16 related to human and social degradation. In fact,
17 the deterioration of the environment and of society
18 affects the most vulnerable people of the planet.
19 Both everyday experience and scientific research
20 show that the gravest effects of all attacks on the
21 environment are suffered by the poorest.

22 We know that climate crisis is seen
23 starkly around the globe. Climate catastrophe
24 causes poverty, disease and leads to political chaos
25 and war and to massive movements of refugees.

1 Indeed, we are in the midst of the largest refugee
2 crisis in history.

3 I want us to look more deeply at the
4 events this fall in Guatemala particularly. Already
5 crippled by the coronavirus pandemic and the
6 resulting economic crisis, central America is now
7 confronting another catastrophe, monster hurricanes.

8 The Benedictine Sisters in Guatemala sent us a
9 message. In our era - area of Alta Verapaz we are
10 suffering the consequences of two hurricanes, Ida
11 and Iota, that have flooded entire villages.

12 There are landslides. People have
13 lost all their belongings. There is no travel by
14 road. If you can help with aid for food, for people
15 who do not have anything to eat and also with your
16 prayers, thank you. Sister Suzanna in the Lorena De
17 La Paz community in Coban, Guatemala.

18 Having sisters in Guatemala suffering
19 from climate catastrophe while we live in a state
20 which is a large emitter of greenhouse gasses
21 reminds us that we are all connected. We aren't
22 just connected, we are sisters and brothers with
23 others on the planet. And we are in relationship
24 with all other species.

25 RGGI is a proven, effective program

1 for reducing greenhouse emissions in our state. So
2 we contribute less to the catastrophe around the
3 globe. It is a moral imperative. As Pope Francis
4 writes, these situations have caused sister Earth,
5 along with all the abandoned of our world to cry
6 out, pleading that we take another course.

7 At Benedictines for Peace we join our
8 voices, pleading that we take another course. And
9 RGGI sets a direction that could - that is proven
10 and effective. Thank you.

11 CHAIR: Thank you, Anne. Next we have
12 number 13, Freda Tepfer.

13 MS. TEPFER: Can you hear me?

14 CHAIR: Yes, we can hear you.

15 MS. TEPFER: This is Freda Tepfer, T
16 as in Tom, E, P as in Peter, F as in Frank, E-R. I
17 think in Erie, Pennsylvania. I am speaking for the
18 Erie County Democratic Party Environmental Caucus.
19 Thank you for the opportunity - I do want to say
20 that I am prepared to say that I would definitely
21 agree with the outstanding comments made by Sister
22 Pat Lupo concerning the improvements that could be
23 made with the - the additions to the RGGI program as
24 presented.

25 Thank you for the opportunity to speak

1 today about the regional greenhouse gas initiative,
2 representing the Erie County Democratic Party
3 Environmental Caucus. My education included
4 training as a scientist. My work in forestry and
5 county government included watershed and water
6 quality protection and restoration, land use and
7 seven years providing pollution prevention
8 assistance to businesses that generated hazardous
9 waste.

10 My work and travel as an orientation
11 and mobility specialist included a year in Alaska.
12 While in Alaska in 2010, my second visit, I was
13 saddened to see the significant retreat of the
14 mountainous area. I saw polar bears facing
15 increased pressure due to the lack of and steady
16 retreat of the seal. And if I were to review my
17 1981 visit to the Glacier Bay, I hazard to think
18 about how the ice there may have retreated.

19 As a native gardener and an avid
20 walker, I am aware that our current climate is
21 impacted by a high density of snow and rain events
22 and destruction due to the winter and disruption to
23 normal winter and summer climate. These can be in
24 part attributed to climate change.

25 In Erie County we are deeply concerned

1 about environmental justice and the long term impact
2 that pollution from coke production and other
3 sources has had on our poorest residents. People -
4 people are - people of color are overrepresented in
5 the communities most impacted by air pollution.

6 We fully support Pennsylvania's
7 participation in the RGGI program. Capping the
8 production of CO2 and requiring CO2 producing power
9 plants to purchase allowances will generate revenue
10 to support more renewable fuel production and
11 distribution, incentivize the purchase of clean
12 power by lowering its produce and encourage dis-
13 investment in coal and other more polluting power
14 generation methods. And provide public health
15 benefits due to the expected reduction in carbon
16 dioxide emissions and the co-benefit reductions of
17 sulfur dioxide and oxides and nitrogen emissions.

18 Most critically, RGGI will help our
19 region do its part to meet the goals of the
20 international efforts to reduce climate change.
21 Regional efforts are more effective due to scale.
22 They impact some markets and will also ensure a more
23 cooperative approach to combating climate change.
24 RGGI participation can be expected to increase jobs,
25 particularly in the sustainable fuel sector,

1 decrease pollution provide greenhouse gas abatement,
2 direct bill assistance and energy renovation
3 assistance.

4 I recommend limiting the use of the
5 RGGI program for coal waste used in power
6 generation. Program managers should direct a share
7 of the auction proceeds for supporting mass transit.

8 As I was well aware during my residency in
9 Washington State, to be truly effective a public
10 transportation systems needs a dedicated funding
11 source, which is lacking in Pennsylvania. Mass
12 transit is a part of the solution to climate change.

13 Thank you.

14 CHAIR: Thank you, Freda.

15 Next, we have number 14, Annette
16 Marshall.

17 MS. MARSHALL: I am Sister Annette
18 Marshall of Erie. My last name is M-A-R-S-H-A-L-L.

19 I am a member of the Benedictine Sisters of Erie
20 and the executive director of the Inner City
21 Neighborhood Art House in Erie. The art house
22 offers progress for inner city children who would
23 not otherwise have access to them. It is in the
24 name of the children at the inner city neighborhood
25 art house, and for children around the world that I

1 am speaking to you today.

2 During the course of this hearing many
3 reasons for our concern about global warming or
4 climate change will be voiced. People will identify
5 with particular aspects of the dangers involved.
6 The devastation that comes with the earth's
7 unprecedented warming will have many aspects and
8 many faces. Some are direct results. Some are
9 results that are the results of the results.

10 The problem is not that the earth's
11 atmosphere is warming. It has been doing this over
12 a very long time. Rather the problem is that the
13 warming is accelerating so rapidly that the earth
14 and its various life communities will not have the
15 ability to adapt. Extinction is one result.
16 Migration is another.

17 Throughout the 1990s I had the
18 opportunity to assist Salvadoran and Guatemalan
19 refugees who left their homelands to escape the
20 unspeakable atrocities that accompanied the civil
21 wars within their countries. When the conditions
22 become too much to bear and the future held no hope,
23 these families with sadness and great desperation
24 left home for an unknown future.

25 The drastic condition that caused

1 these migrations was political in nature. Much more
2 universal and existing for millennia is the
3 migration caused by changes in climate. The annual
4 migration of animals in central Africa is one
5 example of how when conditions become unlivable, the
6 animals move. The recent surge of Guatemalan and
7 Honduran migration toward the United States was in
8 very large part a result of the long periods of
9 drought, followed by enormous flooding that made it
10 impossible for poor farmers to harvest enough
11 produce or coffee to make a living, meager as it
12 was.

13 The changes in weather patterns that
14 caused their home to become unlivable is directly
15 linked to climate changes over the years. The earth
16 has always had drought, flooding, hurricanes,
17 tornadoes and forest fires. Now, however, they are
18 more widespread, more severe and more often. As a
19 warming atmosphere results in continued climatic
20 change, some areas of the earth are already becoming
21 uninhabitable.

22 The life communities, including the
23 human communities, will need to adopt - to adapt,
24 die out or migrate. In 2018 the World Bank
25 estimated that certain regions of Latin American,

1 Sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia will generate
2 143,000,000 more climate migrants by 2050. Of
3 these, half are under 18 years of age.

4 Where will they go? Who will accept
5 them? What will happen to them? What future awaits
6 these children? As gradually worsening climate
7 patterns and even more so severe weather events
8 prompted an increase in human mobility. People who
9 choose to move will do so with legal protection that
10 is very little. The current level of international
11 law is not equipped to protect climate migrants. It
12 is up to us to make a difference. It is up to us to
13 at least slow the devastation occurring now.

14 This program, RGGI, is one step among
15 many to help to promote deep changes in the way we
16 live in Pennsylvania and in the world. Thank you.

17 CHAIR: Thank you.

18 Okay. Next up, we have number 15,
19 Diane Christin Esser.

20 MS. ESSER: Good morning.

21 I am Diane Esser, D-I-A-N-E, E-S-S-E-
22 R, Erie, Pennsylvania. And I am speaking as a
23 support coordinator for the Pennsylvania Parks and
24 Streets Climate Preservation and Justice Act. And
25 the producer of the Green Connection Documentary,

1 which is about making a change for climate change.
2 And all of this work supports our climate, clean air
3 and clean water, to green infrastructure and carbon
4 sequestration practices and education. And RGGI is
5 needed for its success.

6 I have been working for decades for
7 clean air and water side by side with our region's
8 partners. We promote these solutions for climate
9 change that align with the goals of RGGI. Our work
10 exists because of the serious and tragic lack of
11 regulation. This is regulation that is anywhere
12 from green infrastructure to the toxic, filthy
13 fracking that is definitively affecting the quality
14 of our air and water in Pennsylvania.

15 One reason I am excited about RGGI is
16 that the revenue can be used to invest in green
17 infrastructure best practices that we so desperately
18 need for a safer and cleaner environment for our
19 children. Climate change we know is a crisis. And
20 we need this serious action that will decrease our
21 carbon emissions, which is why we need RGGI.

22 Because of these lack of regulations
23 on fracking activities in our state and the slate of
24 dirty power plants, Pennsylvania has played a large
25 role in contributing to climate crisis. And the

1 serious problem that we have with our clean air and
2 clean water, that we need to keep our watersheds
3 pure for our children's future.

4 Our power plants across the state have
5 polluted our air and water. And it threatens our
6 health, destroys our environment and has fueled
7 worsening climate change. We need to be committed to
8 climate action and environmental protection through
9 the regulations of RGGI. And deeply invest in the
10 success of RGGI to lower these - to lower the
11 harmful carbon pollution and invest in green - green
12 solutions that we so desperately need.

13 While some states have it right, every
14 state from Maine to Virginia already has actions
15 like RGGI. Others, like Pennsylvania, do not. RGGI
16 will help make it right. In fact, if we join RGGI,
17 Pennsylvania's carbon emissions could be reduced by
18 188 million tons by 2030. We are all connected to a
19 common address of our planet Earth. And those
20 connections need to become strong and consistent.
21 RGGI is that critical commitment for our children's
22 future.

23 So I encourage the state to join RGGI
24 and make sure that the current and future
25 generations have a livable climate to go home. I am

1 also attaching to this my documentary, which
2 addresses all the reasons why we need to be attached
3 to RGGI. Thank you for this opportunity to speak.

4 CHAIR: Thank you, Diane.

5 Next we have number 16, John Vanco.

6 MR. VANCO: Good morning.

7 CHAIR: Good morning.

8 MR. VANCO: My name is John Vanco.

9 That's V-A-N-C-O. I live in the Commonwealth's only
10 Great Lakes city, the beautiful Erie, PA. I am
11 speaking on behalf of RELIEF, a large scale tree
12 planting program sponsored by the Lake Erie
13 Arboreta, a volunteer park in Erie.

14 For several years I've been very moved
15 by comments from teachers about their students'
16 fears of the future. And I hear the same fears
17 talking to young people who fully understand that
18 the climate is changing rapidly, that we are causing
19 it. But despite the frantic warnings of science,
20 society is definitely not doing enough about it.

21 It has inspired me to advocate for
22 RELIEF, which aims to engage as many people as
23 possible in planting trees, one for every resident
24 of Erie County, at least. Some 275,000 people.
25 Because planting trees is something that everyone,

1 young and old, can participate in, even in the
2 pandemic, to directly address the impacts of climate
3 change.

4 But planting trees alone is not going
5 to save the earth as we know it. We must stop
6 pumping carbon into the atmosphere. We have to end
7 the extraction and combustion of fossil fuels.
8 Critics claim that it's impossible, it's too fast,
9 it's going to cause social disruption. As if the
10 wildfires, hurricanes, floods and heat waves aren't
11 disruptive.

12 Well, sure, it's a big change. But
13 it's by no means unprecedented or uniquely
14 difficult. Compare a situation to that in the large
15 cities across America and Europe at the end of the
16 19th century. These electrified and increasingly
17 modernized urban areas depended for their
18 transportation on horses. Horses that
19 indiscriminately distributed thousands of tons of
20 manure in city streets. A threat to both public
21 health and civilized living standards.

22 And New York City alone had well over
23 100,000 horses on the street every day. A horse had
24 a working life of three years. When the horse died
25 the carcass was abandoned on the street because it

1 was easier to cut up after it had rotted. Workers
2 in the coal, oil and gas businesses today are in the
3 same difficult position as thousands of crossing
4 sweepers, stable hands, buggy whip makers, manure
5 and carcass collectors and the farmers who grew
6 literally millions of acres of hay and oats to
7 support the transportation system.

8 This crisis was widely acknowledged in
9 1895 and it seemed hopeless. But by 1912 the
10 problem was essentially resolved by a massive
11 changeover to electric trolleys and gas powered
12 automobile. And they effected this huge change in
13 less than two decades. And while all those workers
14 lost their jobs there was no social collapse.
15 Because even more, new, jobs are created.

16 Today we are changing our
17 transportation system again. And again it's
18 happening very quickly. We must address climate
19 change just as aggressively as the cities addressed
20 the horse manure crisis. Approaches like the
21 regional greenhouse gas initiative are already
22 proven to work. RGGI provides many more jobs than
23 it displaces.

24 Anybody concerned about employment in
25 the Commonwealth should look to statistics for

1 states that are already participating in RGGI. In
2 fact, anyone concerned about employment should look
3 to current numbers. According to DEP statistics for
4 2019 there are just over 5,000 people employed in
5 energy production from coal, oil and natural gas in
6 Pennsylvania. At the same time, there are almost
7 10,000 employed in solar, wind and other renewable
8 forms of energy.

9 That's twice as many people employed
10 in alternatives as in fossils today. Estimates are
11 over the next decade RGGI will create over 27,000
12 jobs in Pennsylvania. That's five times the current
13 employment in fossil fuel extraction. The
14 Commonwealth already suffers from a terrible legacy
15 of fossil fuel pollution. Thousands of abandoned
16 gas and oil wells, acres devastated by mining and
17 coal ash dumps. Our air and our water and gummed up
18 with pollution from fossil fuel combustion. Our
19 forests and waterways are still afflicted by acid
20 rain.

21 Improvements to the public health
22 alone will save millions of dollars, as well as
23 relieving untold suffering. RGGI is not perfect.
24 And I urge you to consider the many probable
25 comments for its improvement. But it is a proven,

1 non-partisan, practical, common sense means of
2 bringing about the change in power generation that
3 we so desperately need.

4 If they could do it in 1895, we can do
5 it today. Thank you.

6 CHAIR: Thank you, John.

7 Next, we have number 17. Oh, wait,
8 I'm sorry. I am being told that Joan Vondra is on
9 the line now. Do we have Joan, Darek?

10 MS. VONDRA: Yes. I'm here.

11 CHAIR: Hi, Joan.

12 MS. VONDRA: Hi. Thank you so much.
13 I'm sorry about the mix up.

14 CHAIR: That's all right.

15 MS. VONDRA: My name is Joan Vondra.
16 V as in Victor, O-N-D as in Delta, R-A. And I have
17 lived in Pittsburgh for 32 years. Back in 1987,
18 when I was living in Rochester, New York, on the job
19 market I saw a job posting in Pittsburgh. I asked
20 my fiancé, who lived in Philly at the time, whether
21 he thought I should apply. Pittsburgh, he
22 responded. That's America's most livable city. You
23 should definitely apply.

24 And that is how we came to be married,
25 buy a home and raise a family in Pittsburgh. If I

1 had known at that time how polluted Pittsburgh and
2 all of western Pennsylvania was, is and continues to
3 be, I would never have applied for that job. I
4 would never have had to apologize to my daughters
5 for raising them in an environment that places their
6 health at risk.

7 I would never have sworn to my friends
8 that I would leave Pittsburgh to retire with my
9 husband in a state with less pollution. I wouldn't
10 have needed to, because I would never have moved
11 here to begin with. Pennsylvania's current
12 pollution is a dirty secret that no one wants its
13 present and potential citizenry to know about. And
14 yet I care enough about the future of this city and
15 state to take the time and trouble to testify to you
16 today how important it is that Pennsylvania join the
17 regional greenhouse gas initiative.

18 Pennsylvania should have been part of
19 RGGI when it was first undertaken. It is not too
20 late to join now. My goodness, almost 80 percent of
21 Pennsylvania's citizens support placing a limit on
22 carbon pollution. This includes citizens who vote
23 Democrat, Republican and Independent. Is that or is
24 that not a mandate from your voting public?

25 I personally know of three different

1 families that have separately moved out of western
2 Pennsylvania in whole or in part because of the
3 state's willingness to sell our air and water
4 quality, in short its own citizen's health, to power
5 companies. Some of us will simply leave. Some of
6 us will make sure our friends and neighbors know how
7 our state government has failed to protect us. Some
8 of us will join the fight to bring the most basic
9 pollution restrictions into state regulation.

10 RGGI has been successful in the ten
11 states already participating, cutting climate
12 pollution nearly in half over the last decade and
13 raising over \$3.6 billion to invest in clean energy
14 and other related purposes. Pennsylvania power
15 plants emit more carbon pollution than those in the
16 other ten RGGI states combined. This is your
17 opportunity to take responsibility for your
18 citizens' health, their concerns, their mandate and
19 their future. Please be responsible and vote to
20 join RGGI. Thank you.

21 CHAIR: Thank you, Joan.

22 Next up, we have number 17, Eloise
23 Chevrier.

24 MS. CHEVRIER: Yes. Eloise Chevrier.
25 It's C-H-E-V as in Victory, R-I-E-R. I am speaking

1 on behalf of Tabernacle United Church. I've lived
2 in Philadelphia for the last six years. However, I
3 was born and raised in a Midwest city on a Great
4 Lake, Chicago. As in Philly, Chicago has some
5 wonderful museums. The most awesome one from me was
6 the Planetarium where mind expanding presentation of
7 the stars and planets gave me an inner feeling for
8 the universe, of which we are but a small dot.

9 My early experiences at the
10 planetarium probably led many years later to my
11 being overwhelmed at wondering how lucky we are to
12 live on such an incredibly beautiful, green, planet
13 that gives and supports life. When so much of our
14 universe is dark, incredibly cold or hot and
15 foreboding to life. How precious is our earth?

16 Wise woman Joanna Macy asks, how do we
17 live with the fact that we are destroying our world?

18 What will we make of the loss of glaciers, the
19 melting Arctic and Antarctica, island nations
20 swamped by the sea, widening deserts and drying
21 farmlands?

22 One might respond, well, yes, climate
23 change is only one of our layered problems. We have
24 to deal with a raging pandemic, economic collapse, a
25 bitterly divided U.S., social inequality and on and

1 on. But has it ever hit you that working to solve
2 all these problems presupposes a place for the
3 problems and the problem solvers to exist? If we go
4 narrowly forwarded, ignoring the amounts of carbon
5 we are pouring into our atmosphere, our planet home
6 will be well on its way to being uninhabitable in a
7 dozen years. We are time limited in the working to
8 solve this climate crisis. Change is happening much
9 faster than science has foresaw it would.

10 As the fourth largest emitter of
11 greenhouse gasses in the nation, Pennsylvania has a
12 great chance to change course and fight climate
13 change by joining the regional greenhouse gas
14 initiative, RGGI. The most successful state level
15 program in the nation for addressing greenhouse gas
16 emissions. Pennsylvania, let's get with the times.

17 The huge New York state pension fund has just
18 announced that it is divesting from oil and gas.

19 This is the biggest fossil fuel
20 divestment by a pension fund in the world. The auto
21 manufacturing industry, including ford, BMW, and
22 Volvo, have committed to producing only electric
23 cars within the next 20 years. By joining RGGI we
24 too can be pace setters. Carbon emissions in our
25 state will be reduced by 188,000,000 million tons by

1 2030. The equivalent of taking more than 36,000,000
2 cars off the road.

3 Adelaide Stevenson, a beloved Governor
4 and son of Illinois was ahead of his times in the
5 early 1960s during his last speech, he said these
6 words. We travel together, passengers on a little
7 spaceship, dependent on its vulnerable supplies of
8 air and soil. Preserved from annihilation only by
9 the care, the work and the love we give our fragile
10 craft. It is now time for Pennsylvania to take a
11 stand with our ten neighboring states and join the
12 regional greenhouse gas initiative, that we might
13 heal, support and love our fragile craft.

14 CHAIR: Thank you, Eloise. Next, we
15 have number 18, Phyllis Blumberg.

16 MS. BLUMBERG: Good morning.

17 CHAIR: Good morning.

18 MS. BLUMBERG: I am Phyllis Blumberg,
19 B-L-U-M-B-E-R-G of Bala Cynwyd, Montgomery County.
20 I am speaking as a concerned citizen and as a Jew,
21 which compels me to act. I want to thank the DEP
22 for allowing me to speak and to testify in support
23 of the regional greenhouse gas initiative. I care
24 deeply about combating climate change and the
25 evidence of other states indicates that RGGI will

1 help us do that in Pennsylvania also.

2 I am speaking as a concerned citizen
3 who has seen the effects of severe weather and
4 increasing respiratory problems in my family and in
5 my neighborhood. As a concerned citizen who wants
6 to have a clean and healthy environment, not only
7 for my children and my grandchild, but for all
8 people who are living now and not yet born.

9 I prioritize protecting the
10 environment and averting the effects of climate
11 change over my own personal comfort and a desire to
12 pay less money. Here are some examples. I
13 personally invested in clean energy in my own
14 lifestyle. Over ten years ago I retrofitted my 90
15 year old house that had natural gas heat to have
16 geothermal HV/AC, just at the time when fracking
17 came into Pennsylvania and caused the price of
18 natural gas to sink.

19 Two years ago I had solar panels
20 installed on my roof and last year I bought a
21 totally electric car. I did not make these changes
22 to save money, but rather to save the environment in
23 my own small way and to protect the health for
24 future generations. Yet I know that even if every
25 American were to invest in clean energy, and I know

1 that many of them cannot afford to do so or are not
2 in the position to be able to do so, that would not
3 be enough.

4 We need strong leadership from the
5 Pennsylvania government to move us to transition to
6 a renewable and healthy future. Pennsylvania, as
7 many of us has said, is one of the dirtiest power
8 sectors in the nation. We must change that course
9 and start reducing our carbon pollution. Joining
10 RGGI will make our commonwealth cleaner, more
11 prosperous and will offer a better future for all.

12 In addition to climate and public
13 health benefits, estimates will show that RGGI will
14 generate a net increase of many clean energy jobs
15 and will add billions to the state's economy by
16 2030. These funds can be used to improve the living
17 conditions in underserved communities and
18 communities of people of color in Pennsylvania. And
19 these are the people that need it most.

20 By putting a price tag on pollution,
21 RGGI incentivizes energy producers to turn away from
22 fossil fuels, cut carbon and create incentives in
23 clean energy. It is concerned citizens like me and
24 the 90 percent of the citizens of Pennsylvania who
25 want clean energy and to protect the environment.

1 Only hungry, polluting industry
2 insiders want to keep things as they are now,
3 because they stand to benefit from doing so. But it
4 is at a cost to all of us. Ten other states have
5 already been reaping the benefits of joining RGGI.
6 And Pennsylvania cannot continue to be left behind.
7 It's time for Pennsylvania to tap into this record
8 of success, invest in sustainable jobs in our
9 flourishing clean energy sector and reduce our
10 carbon pollution.

11 In conclusion I am testifying to
12 explicitly state my support for Pennsylvania in
13 joining the regional gas - greenhouse gas
14 initiative. All of the benefits I am advocating for
15 are the direct result of Pennsylvania joining RGGI.

16 Thank you.

17 CHAIR: Thank you, Phyllis. Next we
18 have number 19, Amy Scanlon.

19 MS. SCANLON: Good morning. My name
20 is Amy Scanlon, A-M-Y, S-C-A-N-L-O-N. And I live in
21 Pittsburgh, PA, and I am testifying as an individual
22 this morning. Thank you for the opportunity and for
23 your attention. While Landslide is a beautiful song
24 by the world's greatest band, Fleetwood Mac, it is
25 not a thing of beauty in real life. Over the past

1 few years my neighborhood has been hit hard with
2 landslides, a result of record breaking rainfall.

3 Weather extremes like this are
4 becoming more common as a result of climate change.

5 2018 was particularly bad. Homes in my
6 neighborhood were among the 131 properties damaged
7 by landslides in Allegheny County that year. When I
8 walk in Riverview Park I can still see houses in
9 various stages of collapse or danger at the edge of
10 the park. This frightens me because my own home is
11 one of many in Pittsburgh built into a hill.

12 In addition to houses collapsing, a
13 section of Route 30 collapsed that year. It's a
14 major road I regularly travel. A landslide sent 300
15 feet of roadway and thousands of tons of soil
16 plummeting onto an apartment building and other
17 buildings below. These slides are obviously
18 dangerous and they're costly. The City of
19 Pittsburgh had to triple its landslide budget to
20 \$7,000,000. Early last year PennDOT reported
21 monitoring more than 300 landslides in just seven
22 southwestern Pennsylvania counties.

23 The agency stated that they doubled
24 their landslide budget, but even then could not
25 repair all slides. Repairing the collapsed section

1 of Route 30 alone cost \$6.9 million dollars. If a
2 landslide were to occur on my property, we'd hope
3 we'd be lucky enough to escape harm. But even if we
4 emerge physically unscathed, we would be devastated
5 financially. Like many Americans, our major asset
6 is our home and landslides are not covered by
7 homeowners insurance. Not to mention the countless
8 irreplaceable possessions like wedding photos and
9 family heirlooms that would also be lost.

10 I spend sleepless nights wondering if
11 we shouldn't sell our home and move somewhere safer.

12 But where would that be? Safer is getting
13 increasingly harder to find. In my neighborhood we
14 have landslides. In others, there's flooding. And
15 still others, we'd be closer to the factories
16 spewing clouds of Pennsylvania. As a person with
17 adult onset asthma, that is not an option for me.
18 But there is a solution today.

19 Pennsylvania has the opportunity to
20 collaborate with other northeast and mid-Atlantic
21 states by joining the regional greenhouse gas
22 initiative or RGGI. RGGI is a win-win to reduce
23 emissions and improve our climate. The only way we
24 can prevent the worst effects of climate change and
25 more landslides like we're already seeing in our

1 communities is by significantly reducing climate
2 changing emissions.

3 RGGI is our best chance at doing that
4 right now in PA. Like Stevie Mac sings, we've been
5 afraid of changing for too long. It's time to
6 change our approach to environmental protection.
7 Pennsylvania should make the common sense choice for
8 today and for our future to join the regional
9 greenhouse gas initiative.

10 CHAIR: Thank you, Amy. Next, we have
11 number 20, Valerie Viscusi.

12 MS. VISCUSI: Yes, hi. Can you hear
13 me?

14 CHAIR: Yes. We can hear you.

15 MS. VISCUSI: Okay.

16 My name is Valerie Viscusi, spelled V
17 as in Victor, I, S as in Sam, C-U, S as in Sam, I.
18 I am from Lansdale, Pennsylvania. And I am
19 testifying as a private citizen. So like I said, my
20 name is Valerie Viscusi, I am a resident of
21 Montgomery County in the southeast part of the
22 state. I am a master's student studying natural
23 resources and environmental sciences.

24 I am here today like many others to
25 discuss the importance of Pennsylvania joining the

1 regional greenhouse gas initiative or RGGI.
2 Throughout my studies I have witnessed the effects
3 of climate change. I have seen those around me
4 struggle firsthand with the detrimental effects. I
5 have seen Pennsylvania's beautiful landscape and
6 happy citizens depleting. We can reverse this.
7 RGGI has been around since 2008, which is 12 years
8 ago, and we have yet to join this important program.

9 We are the only northeast state not to
10 join RGGI, which is quite an embarrassment. In 2019
11 Governor Wolf issued an executive order directing PA
12 to join. So why haven't they? It's not rocket
13 science. Pennsylvania is the fourth largest emitter
14 of greenhouse gasses, which sometimes flips with the
15 third after California, Texas and Florida. And a
16 change needs to be made and it needs to be made now.

17 In states already in RGGI, carbon
18 pollution has decreased by 47 percent, which
19 outpaces the rest of the U.S. by 90 percent. Those
20 are not small numbers. And it is clear to see that
21 states in RGGI are on track to greatly help our
22 environment. Pennsylvania residents are suffering
23 due to carbon emissions and the pollution it is
24 causing.

25 Low air quality is causing respiratory

1 illness, heart attacks and cancer in our citizens.
2 Those drastically affected by air pollution have to
3 check air quality before they can even go outside.
4 Why is oil and gas more important than human health?

5 Why are we okay with letting citizens live a low
6 quality life that they cannot control? Air quality
7 should not be a luxury for the rich.

8 It is not a matter of the economy and
9 jobs either. RGGI is proven to create jobs and
10 generate billions of dollars of revenue in energy.
11 As previously mentioned, RGGI is expected to create
12 27,000 new jobs in PA and put two billion dollars
13 into our economy in the next ten years alone. The
14 argument of oil and gas bringing in more money is
15 invalid and simply selfish.

16 As well as the increase in jobs and
17 revenue, electricity prices have fallen in RGGI
18 states by 5.7 percent while the rest of the U.S. has
19 had electricity prices increase by 8.6 percent.
20 Which would you rather have, higher electricity
21 prices or lower prices? The answer is obvious.

22 PA joining RGGI just makes sense. Why
23 wouldn't we prioritize a future where your children
24 have clean air? Why wouldn't be prioritize a future
25 with less illness and death? Pennsylvania joining

1 RGGI will drastically decrease pollution that
2 affects human health, our environment and our
3 climate. Joining RGGI promotes of success, a future
4 of clean energy jobs, a future of great revenue and
5 future of hope. It is time to step up,
6 Pennsylvania. It is time to join RGGI. Thank you.

7 CHAIR: Thank you, Valerie. Next, we
8 have number 21, Heidi Shiver.

9 MS. SHIVER: Yes, good morning. My
10 name is Heidi Shiver. It is H-E-I-D-I, S-H-I-V-E-R.
11 I live in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. And I am
12 testifying as a concerned citizen. So good morning
13 and thank you for the opportunity to share my
14 support of RGGI. I live in Doylestown Township with
15 my husband, where we've installed two large solar
16 arrays to cover our electrical needs, as well as
17 drive an electric car.

18 Since I've retired from teaching I've
19 shifted my focus to advocating for our environment.

20 I served as Bucks County Environmental Society's
21 fourth president, was at a solar tour, organized a
22 solar energy panel discussion and raised over
23 \$70,000 to install a solar array education center.

24 I currently serve on Doylestown
25 Township's environmental advisory council and on

1 Bucks County's Wet Acre 100 leadership team. I am
2 testifying because we are in a global emergency and
3 we need to act immediately to turn human caused
4 global warming around. Climate change is here and I
5 see its effects every day. I see increased intense
6 rain, storms events causing major flooding, power
7 outages and trees uprooted around my community of
8 Doylestown. I see unprecedented tornadoes just a
9 half a mile from my home recently, which devastated
10 neighborhoods and the church, and damaged neighbors'
11 homes as well as the Doylestown Hospital.

12 I see unprecedented seasonal changes
13 when my trees bloom too early, when bees emerge or
14 migrating butterflies and birds return. I see
15 Monarch's starting too late for the fall migration,
16 desperately looking for nectar when flowers have
17 already died back. Including to daughter from the
18 Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, since 1895,
19 here in my county of Bucks it has warmed twice the
20 one degree Celsius average of the lower 48 states,
21 being one of only 71 counties out of 3,107 counties
22 in the entire United States to reach the plus two
23 degree Celsius threshold.

24 This is, frankly, outrageous. And
25 we've been dragging our feet too long. There is no

1 time to waste and we need to act now. RGGI provides
2 an excellent opportunity to do just that and join
3 other motivated northeastern and mid-Atlantic states
4 to reduce carbon emissions immediately. By joining
5 RGGI we can reduce our state's carbon emissions by
6 188,000,000 metric tons by 2030, which is equivalent
7 to planting over 3,000,000 trees for ten years or
8 removing 40,000,000 cars off the road.

9 It will bring in revenue for fossil
10 fuel polluters that can be invested into innovative,
11 energy efficient programs, local renewable energy
12 projects and creative sustainable green color
13 careers and jobs in our communities, our counties
14 and state. By joining RGGI, it will propel
15 Pennsylvania out of the 20th century and into the
16 21st century as leaders that we can all be proud of,
17 providing a sustainable future, including a healthy
18 environment and climate for our children and
19 grandchildren and the entire ecosystem as well.
20 Thank you so much.

21 CHAIR: Thank you, Heidi. Next, we
22 have number 22, Gaye Fifer. Do we have Gaye?
23 Darek, were you able to find her?

24 MR. JAGIELA: I have her un-muted.

25 MS. FIFER: I am here.

1 CHAIR: There we go.

2 MS. FIFER: Yep, yep. Sorry about
3 that. My name is Gaye Fifer. That's G-A-Y-E, F-I-
4 F-E-R. And I have lived in Swissville,
5 Pennsylvania, for 11 years. I am a retired public
6 school teacher and have been working on
7 environmental issues all my adult life. I believe
8 that it's very important for us to leave a world
9 with clean air and clean water for future
10 generations.

11 In my work I saw children affected by
12 poor air quality, with higher incidences of asthma
13 in neighborhoods near industrial facilities. Those
14 children are suffering the results of negligence and
15 greed that they have no way to influence. I want
16 them to have a chance to grow up and to be
17 production, healthy citizens.

18 My work has left me hopeful for better
19 opportunities and possibilities as those children
20 learn to become leaders. But this is what happens
21 if we continue to use up resources and dirty our air
22 and water. The most important reason we should join
23 RGGI is because of the threat climate change poses.
24 We are already noticing the effects of climate
25 change and Pennsylvania. Heat waves, changing

1 seasons, flooding, landslides, agricultural issues.

2 I also feel responsible for what we
3 export to other states and countries. We could be a
4 much better model of caring for the next generation
5 and for people who are more likely to experience the
6 effects of climate change imminently. In addition -
7 can you still hear me? Uh-oh.

8 CHAIR: Keep going.

9 MS. FIFER: Okay. All right.

10 In addition to reducing the emissions
11 that are causing climate change, joining RGGI would
12 have obvious public health benefits. Air pollution
13 reductions from RGGI will particularly benefit those
14 most impacted by poor air quality, such as children,
15 seniors and low income and environmental justice
16 communities. By joining this program, Pennsylvania
17 will be able to significantly improve our air
18 quality by reducing pollution from sulfur dioxide,
19 nitrogen oxide and particulate matter.

20 These pollutants are linked to health
21 problems, including respiratory illness, heart
22 attack, stroke, cancer and mental health issues. In
23 Pennsylvania our constitution guarantees the right
24 for all residents to have clean water to drink and
25 clean air to breathe. Joining the regional

1 greenhouse gas initiative is one major step we can
2 take to ensure our air is cleaner and to reduce
3 pollution.

4 Joining RGGI makes sense in every way
5 to me. We can steward our resources, clean up our
6 air and water, provide new, clean energy jobs and
7 move Pennsylvania forward into a more
8 environmentally sustainable future. Wouldn't you
9 want this for your children? Thank you.

10 CHAIR: Thank you, Gaye. Next, we
11 have number 23, Anne Wootten.

12 MS. WOOTTEN: Good morning.

13 My name is Anne Wooten, W-O-O-T-T-E-N.

14 I grew up in a small town called Hawthorne, New
15 York, a suburb of - or a bedroom community of the
16 City of New York. I came to live in - in
17 Pennsylvania in 2009, because there was a job that I
18 was offered as a geriatric nurse practitioner. I
19 currently live in Wynnewood, Pennsylvania. I am a
20 retired geriatric nurse practitioner. I have
21 reached - retained my registered nurse's license to
22 use when I visit homebound elderly as part of the
23 friendly visitor program at Saint Helena's Food
24 Bank, where I have been volunteering since I
25 retired.

1 Almost all the seniors I see as part
2 of the friendly visitor program have medical
3 conditions affected by increased air pollution. The
4 worst of these being asthma and heart disease. I
5 want to give testimony today out of a concern for
6 the future of this planet and out of concern for
7 what is happening in the State of Pennsylvania with
8 regard to that pollution.

9 We have an opportunity to reduce our
10 carbon emissions by participating in - in RGGI. I
11 would also - it would also be, you know, an
12 opportunity - it would also be an opportunity to
13 create jobs in the clean energy sector and lower the
14 cost of electricity in our state. When I went
15 looking, I found out that Pennsylvania is the fourth
16 largest producer of greenhouse gasses in the
17 country, behind Texas, California and Florida.

18 Currently there are 7,788 active wells
19 in this state and 66 operators or owners of these
20 wells in the state. There have been 4,006
21 violations for these companies, who paid \$6.1
22 million dollars in fines. A large number of these
23 violations have occurred in northeast Pennsylvania.
24 To me that sounds like a lot of wells, a lot of
25 companies and a lot of violations. And not enough

1 monies for these violations.

2 And there are more and more illnesses
3 related to carbon emissions, particularly among the
4 elderly and communities of color and low income
5 communities. This is disturbing to me. With RGGI -
6 with the RGGI proposal, I see an opportunity to do
7 something about this. The regional greenhouse gas
8 initiative is, as you know, a multi-state program,
9 which was started in 2008. It works by setting a
10 cap on carbon pollution. With that cap going down
11 each year. Power plant owners must pay for their
12 own pollution.

13 This prods them to reduce pollution
14 even more quickly. The states that are a part of
15 this program can then invest that money in renewable
16 energy projects. As the fourth largest emitter of
17 greenhouse gasses, Pennsylvania is responsible to do
18 more in implementing climate solutions and reducing
19 emissions. We had that opportunity to do so in
20 collaborations with other states in the northeast
21 and mid-Atlantic region.

22 There is clear data that in states
23 already participating, carbon pollution has
24 decreased by 47 percent, outpacing the rest of the
25 country by 90 percent. Statistics show that reduced

1 carbon emissions could mean increased energy bill
2 savings each year, which would be significant. It
3 would be like removing on average 2.1 million
4 vehicles from the road in one year.

5 CHAIR: Anne, I am sorry to interrupt.
6 But your time is up.

7 MS. WOOTTEN: Oh.

8 CHAIR: If you could just make sure
9 that you submit your comments in writing to us at
10 regcomments@PA.gov. We'll make sure that we read
11 the rest.

12 MS. WOOTTEN: Thank you. I will.

13 CHAIR: Thank you.

14 Okay. Next up we have number 24,
15 Elizabeth Lowenthal.

16 MS. LOWENTHAL: Hi. Can you hear me?

17 CHAIR: Yeah. We can hear you. Go
18 ahead.

19 MS. LOWENTHAL: Okay. Great.

20 My name is Dr. Liz Lowenthal. I live
21 in Narberth in Montgomery County. And I work in
22 Philadelphia. I am speaking today as a private
23 citizen and the mother of two school age girls.
24 Professionally I work as a pediatrician and an
25 epidemiologist for child health.

1 Both as a mother and a professional
2 focused on the health of children I recognize that
3 there is little that is more important to future
4 generations than committing to decreasing
5 environmental pollution and reversing climate
6 change. That is why I have chosen to take time out
7 of my crazy busy schedule to testify today.

8 I am proud to be a Pennsylvanian. So
9 it pains me to know that we are one of the largest
10 polluters in the country. There is so much that I
11 could say about the impacts of pollution and climate
12 change on the lives of my pediatric patients, on the
13 lives of my family and friends and on my own life.

14 I care for patients with asthma and
15 other illnesses that are caused by or exacerbated by
16 air pollution. I have loved ones whose lives have
17 been upended by natural disasters. In preparing
18 these remarks I found my mind kept returning to a
19 conversation that I had with my daughters on the
20 recent loss of our neighbor.

21 It was late November, but it felt like
22 May or June. We were in shorts and t-shirts. The
23 temperature was nearly 70 degrees. Being isolated
24 by the COVID-19 pandemic, we've been thankful for
25 days when we can be outside. On this particular day

1 we were initially cheered further by beautiful
2 cherry tree blossoms in our neighborhood. The trees
3 in bloom are ones that we know in the past have only
4 bloomed in the spring.

5 We also noticed that daffodil greens
6 are coming in our yard and the yards of many of our
7 neighbors. Our summer flowers are also still in
8 bloom. My ten year old was full of questions. Will
9 the flowers bloom in the spring if they start
10 blooming now? How do you think the trees - do you
11 think the trees will die if they get too confused
12 about the seasons?

13 My 14 year old, however, after initial
14 excitement about the unexpected beauty on our walk
15 soon became solemn. I'll paraphrase what she said
16 to me. She said, you know, so much has changed just
17 in my lifetime that I expect most of this won't be
18 around for me to look at with my own kids. Think
19 about that for a moment. It is absolutely true that
20 we've seen physical signs of climate change during
21 my children's short lives.

22 My mother couldn't have said that
23 about her childhood. And I couldn't have said that
24 about mine. When my teen states sadly that she
25 expects dramatic worsening of the environment in the

1 next few decades, I pray that she's wrong. But I
2 feel that she could be right. And if she is right,
3 it would be our fault.

4 We have the power to make our air and
5 our water cleaner. We have the power to slow
6 climate change. As a pediatrician I try to treat
7 each of my patients with what evidence suggests is
8 going to give them the best chance to thrive.
9 Between 2008 and 2018, carbon pollution has
10 decreased by 47 percent in participating RGGI
11 states, outpacing the rest of the country by 90
12 percent. We could call RGGI a prescription as
13 evidence is medicine for the environment. This is
14 what Pennsylvania needs to prescribe today. By
15 joining the regional greenhouse gas initiative we'll
16 be taking an important step towards improving the
17 world that we leave for our children. Thank you for
18 listening.

19 CHAIR: Thank you, Elizabeth. Next
20 up, we have number 25, Emma Sabin.

21 MS. SABIN: Yes. Hello. Can you hear
22 me?

23 CHAIR: Yes, we can hear you.

24 MS. SABIN: All right. Thank you.
25 My name is Emma Sabin. And I am

1 testifying time as a concerned citizen. I am a
2 freelance data analyst and mother of a 15 year old
3 boy who attends Central High School, a public school
4 in the Philadelphia School District. We live in the
5 lovely Chestnut Hill Neighborhood of northwest
6 Philadelphia. Where we take greenery and clean air
7 for granted.

8 However, I have friends and
9 acquaintances who do not have the same luxury we do.
10 And have children impacted by asthma and bad air.
11 Hearing about harrowing nights in the emergency room
12 with young children's lives in the balance from
13 people I care about is just one among many reasons
14 why I support RGGI.

15 My remarks today will focus on air
16 pollution, its impact on asthmatics and the
17 additional burden placed on children and minorities.

18 I will finish by citing projections that support
19 the necessity of Pennsylvania's joining RGGI.

20 Air pollution depletes the quality of
21 life for asthmatics. Exposure to elevated levels of
22 smog can lead to adverse health outcomes, including
23 respiratory symptoms, cardiovascular disease and
24 cancer. Children are at the greatest risk to ground
25 level ozone and are more likely than adults to

1 experience attacks of asthma.

2 Unhealthy spikes in ground level ozone
3 pollution correspond with increases in emergency
4 room visits and hospitalizations for people with
5 asthma. Children and minorities bear the brunt of
6 air pollution. In 2018 at the state level,
7 children's lifetime asthma prevalence was 12.9
8 percent, representing an estimated 322,166 children
9 in Pennsylvania.

10 Black children were twice as likely to
11 have lifetime asthma as white children, 21 percent
12 versus 10.5 percent. In 2019, Pittsburgh ranked
13 number seven after 529 metropolitan areas across the
14 nation in having the most moderate air quality index
15 days. Moderate being an indicator of the presence
16 of smog. Moderate days can be harmful to vulnerable
17 groups, such as children and the elderly.

18 Pittsburgh had 220 such days, whereas
19 the Philadelphia and Camden region had 99 such days.

20 The cost to the State of Pennsylvania is at the
21 very least half a billion dollars spent annually on
22 hospitalizations due to asthma attacks, with
23 children presenting a significantly higher rate than
24 adults. And Medicaid pays some 37 percent of these
25 costs.

1 If we don't join RGGI, air pollution
2 will worsen and more children will suffer. If we do
3 join RGGI, we can invest the revenues in revenues in
4 renewable energy generation within the State of
5 Pennsylvania. And we can't stop there. In order to
6 make our air safe to breathe again, Pennsylvania
7 must increase both the renewable energy goals in the
8 state's alternative energy portfolios act and in
9 RGGI.

10 In wrapping up I'd like to say that
11 RGGI not only begins to correct a moral tragedy, the
12 unnecessary sacrifice of our children's and
13 grandchildren's health. It also provides
14 Pennsylvania with a great opportunity to invest in
15 the renewable energy industry, one that promises
16 significant job and state revenue growth. It is a
17 win-win for the future and Pennsylvania. Thank you.

18 CHAIR: Thank you, Emma.

19 Next we have number 26, April Clisura.

20 MS. CLISURA: Yes. Yes. Thank you.

21 My name is April Clisura. That's A-P-
22 R-I-L, C-L-I-S-U-R-A. And I live in Pittsburgh,
23 Pennsylvania. In 2017 as a new stay at home mom
24 living in a drafty house without air conditioning in
25 a city where you can sometimes smell the bad air

1 quality, it was natural for me to start getting
2 involved in local issues of air quality and home
3 energy efficiency.

4 As a citizen of this Commonwealth, few
5 policy questions could be more clear cut to me than
6 that we should have a system for purchasing CO2
7 allowances. It is unbelievable that we have gone on
8 for so long without one. Even those predictions
9 about how the warming of the planet will affect
10 Pennsylvania and other states have begun to become
11 reality. Just as crops in Pennsylvania are under
12 threat for flood damage and stress - heat stress,
13 lobstering in mid-coast Maine has declined and
14 fishermen are forced to move either further north or
15 find a new livelihood.

16 Not only is this causing economic
17 stress, it is also causing problems in civil
18 society. The neighborhood next to and downhill from
19 mine has experienced a dramatic increase in flooding
20 over the last ten years, with combined sewer
21 overflow backwashing into basements and blowing out
22 manholes like a geyser during heavy rain events.

23 As the fourth largest emitter of
24 greenhouse gasses in the country, we Pennsylvanians
25 have to recognize that we have an outsized role in

1 contributing to climate change. With regards to our
2 power plants, in our past people did successfully
3 argue that the need for a stable power supply
4 demands concessions on our air quality. And argued
5 that we, over the decades, learn to solve the far
6 down the road problem of the greenhouse effect
7 before it would impact us. But not today.

8 Today we have studied enough medical
9 evidence to know that the impacts of our air
10 pollution are not borne equally by all in the
11 population. We have enough science to know that the
12 CO2 we in the industrialized world in the last 40
13 years will be around for a very long term and will
14 determine the quality of life that our grandchildren
15 and beyond will experience. And today, numerous
16 experts have repeatedly stated that it is not the
17 technology that limits us from adapting larger
18 amounts of renewable energy production. But the
19 lack of political will.

20 I urge officials to make sure
21 weatherization and retrofitting of old buildings is
22 part of the energy efficiency component of RGGI
23 investment strategies. It would not only create
24 jobs, but relieve the suffering of elderly and low
25 income Pennsylvanians who can't safely or centrally

1 heat their homes. I have lent heaters to three
2 different neighbors during winters.

3 Another reason to focus on the energy
4 efficiency aspects of RGGI is that there is no
5 totally clean bill of health when it comes to large
6 scale energy production. While renewable sources of
7 energy like solar and wind should definitely expand
8 because greenhouse gas driven climate change is the
9 greatest threat to masses of vulnerable people all
10 over the world, it is still not completely without
11 impact. Coal and natural gas extraction has harmed
12 our worker's health and our own land and water for
13 generations. But on some scale the supply change
14 for Lithium and other substances to build solar
15 panels and wind turbines has hard workers and
16 polluted land used for subsistence in China, South
17 America and other places.

18 To mitigate that, we should do
19 everything in our power to use recycled materials in
20 the supply change, use alternatives like saline
21 storage batteries and exert what influence we can
22 over mining practices globally. And above all we
23 should strive to consume less energy.

24 The infrastructure for the CO2 budget
25 trading program is there. It works for the common

1 good of energy rate payers, taxpayers and all
2 citizens, especially those with asthma and chronic
3 respiratory problems. All we need to do it is
4 implement it. For the sake of a stable climate and
5 for public health, I strongly support Pennsylvania
6 joining the regional greenhouse gas initiative.
7 Thank you.

8 CHAIR: Thank you, April.
9 Next, we have number 27, Jacqueline
10 Palmer.

11 MS. PALMER: Can you hear me?

12 CHAIR: Yes. We can hear you.

13 MS. PALMER: Okay. All right. I'm
14 sorry. My computer's not working. Okay.

15 CHAIR: We've got you.

16 MS. PALMER: And I want to thank you
17 for this opportunity to speak. I am a concerned
18 citizen. And yes, I am Jacqueline Palmer, P-A-L-M-
19 E-R. I am a retired food scientist. And I have
20 lived in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, for 33 years.
21 My husband, our two adult sons and I appreciate the
22 importance of implementing RGGI to help increase
23 carbon dioxide emissions.

24 At this point it has become clear that
25 the dangers of current carbon dioxide emissions are

1 severe enough that controls must begin immediately
2 if we are to avoid the greatest possible outcomes of
3 global warming and climate change. If not, our
4 state will experience more extreme weather events
5 such as heat waves, droughts, rainstorms, blizzards.

6 I have tried to understand the positives and
7 negatives of this program. And I concluded that
8 this is our next best step in moving forward to
9 lowering carbon dioxide levels. While ultimately I
10 feel all Pennsylvanians will benefit.

11 And some communities have concerns
12 over effects on jobs. I'd encourage that the
13 National Resources Defense Counsel has reported that
14 thousands of job years have resulted after
15 implementing RGGI in states, which have already
16 joined.

17 Governor Wolf has said that some of
18 the proceeds of RGGI could be used to help
19 communities in need. Legislators can advocate for
20 the shares of these proceeds to go directly into
21 these communities to help those constituents who
22 need help during this transition. I would hope that
23 some of the workers in these communities could be
24 trained for new jobs created. The majority of RGGI
25 proceeds are planned to be invested in clean energy

1 and renewable energy.

2 With the expected lowering of the
3 demand in fossil fuel based electricity, the amount
4 of carbon dioxide pollution is reduced. But also,
5 there is potential for improved air quality, which
6 will help many of those people who are most affected
7 by additional pollutants, such as sulfur dioxide,
8 nitrogen oxides and other particulates. We all know
9 these pollutants have been linked to serious
10 problems, such as heart disease, cancer, mental
11 illness and respiratory illness.

12 As others have mentioned, children. I
13 have recently learned from a young doctor who has
14 been treating asthmatic patients who are children.
15 Simply put, children are smaller, they breathe more
16 often. And the amount of the pollutant has a
17 greater effect on small bodies. I feel fortunate
18 that here in Pennsylvania our constitution
19 recognizes that clean air, pure water and
20 preservation of the environment as a basic right.

21 You as members of this board have this
22 unique opportunity to move RGGI forward to help
23 defend this constitutional right. I ask you to
24 help. I ask you to take this next step to avoid the
25 worst of expected global warming on our climate,

1 environment and our health. And again, thank you
2 very much for your time today.

3 CHAIR: Thank you, Jacqueline.

4 Next up we have number 28, Shelley
5 Ross. Do we have Shelley on the line?

6 MS. ROSS: Yes, this is Shelley.

7 CHAIR: Hi, Shelley. You can begin.

8 MS. ROSS: Thank you.

9 My name is Shelley Ross, spelled S-H-
10 E-L-L-E-Y. And the last name is Ross, R-O-S-S as in
11 Sam. I am speaking in support of the regional
12 greenhouse gas initiative. I have lived in
13 Pittsburgh since 1984. My children were born here
14 in the mid-1990s. When they started playing sports
15 they were both diagnosed with asthma. I learned
16 then that the residents of Allegheny County are more
17 likely to have asthma than the general population by
18 quite a significant amount.

19 This is due in part to air pollution.
20 The air pollution have in Pittsburgh will only get
21 worse as the effects of climate change progress.
22 Warmer air traps ground level ozone, which forms the
23 smog that chokes us and creates lung and health
24 problems. As temperatures increase, we'll see even
25 more air quality action base. I shudder to think of

1 what that will mean for Pittsburgh's most vulnerable
2 residents.

3 I am also worried about other
4 consequences of climate change that we'll experience
5 here in Pennsylvania. I could look at my children
6 struggling to get enough air and know that this was
7 the fault of our legislators failing to enforce
8 existing legislation, take appropriate steps to end
9 this age old problem in this state and keep their
10 constitutional obligation to Pennsylvanians to
11 breathe clean air.

12 Certainly they are not representing
13 their constituents in this matter. Up to one
14 quarter of some populations in Allegheny County have
15 asthma. And yet very little has been done. Have
16 you ever seen a child struggling to get enough
17 oxygen, your child? Having recently moved from
18 Oakland Region Square I experience the foul air even
19 more frequently.

20 I have been embarrassed to host out of
21 town friends at times. I have discouraged others
22 from moving here due to our air toxicity. Will
23 Pennsylvania join ten other states to take action on
24 climate change, protect our residents, help clean
25 our air and ensure a healthy future? Will

1 Pennsylvania be forward thinking and proactive? Or
2 will Pennsylvania continue to live in the stone age
3 of ignoring climate change and thinking that
4 pollution is just something we have to endure in
5 spite of its poisoning effects, to save a handful of
6 jobs and support an industry which is already on its
7 way out?

8 Does the legislature want to show that
9 they care about Pennsylvanians, take steps to reduce
10 carbon emissions and chain with other forward
11 thinking legislatures? I hope our lawmakers will
12 pass the regional greenhouse gas initiative, to help
13 us move towards their obligation to ensure that we
14 are doing our part to avoid the worse impact of
15 climate change. And so we could have clean air to
16 breath, which again, is our right under the state's
17 constitution.

18 And if that doesn't seem compelling
19 enough, watch a child struggling to breathe, your
20 child. Thank you.

21 CHAIR: Thank you, Shelley.

22 Next, we have number 29, Juliet Birch.
23 Do we have Juliet on the line?

24 MS. BIRCH: Hi. Yes. This is Juliet.

25 CHAIR: Hi. You can begin.

1 MS. BIRCH: Good morning. My name is
2 Juliet Birch. That is spelled J-U-L-I-E-T, B-I-R-C-
3 H. I am a resident of Media, Pennsylvania. And I
4 am testifying today as a private resident. I go to
5 school in Baltimore, Maryland. And I will be
6 graduating from Goucher College this coming May with
7 a bachelor's degree in political science. By this
8 time next year I will be pursuing a master in public
9 policy, with a concentration in environmental policy
10 from an institution in the Greater Philadelphia
11 area.

12 Growing up in Media, PA, I suffered
13 from a lot of health problems. When I was just two
14 years old I personally was hospitalized for a
15 debilitating inflammation of the lungs caused by
16 asthma. To this day I can still feel my lungs
17 tighten when it starts to get chilly out, and this
18 condition greatly affects my ability to breathe
19 freely on days with particularly poor air quality.
20 I have personally struggled to get enough oxygen due
21 to air pollution. And I am not alone in this
22 experience.

23 The prevalence of childhood asthma in
24 Pennsylvania is .6 percent higher than the national
25 average, and this is only on the rise. This is why

1 I believe that the regional greenhouse gas
2 initiative is so important. RGGI is designed to
3 reduce greenhouse gas emissions, thereby helping to
4 mitigate the effects of climate change.
5 Pennsylvania's cities have some of the worst air
6 pollution in the country and increasing temperatures
7 from climate change actually exacerbate air
8 pollution.

9 A 2016 report from the American Lung
10 Association found that the Pittsburgh Metro Region
11 has the eighth highest levels of year round particle
12 pollution in the country. The Harrisburg area
13 ranked ninth and the Philadelphia was 12th. That is
14 an embarrassment and we cannot afford to allow this
15 issue to get any worse. By joining RGGI we will
16 significantly improve our air quality by reducing
17 pollution from sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide and
18 particulate matter.

19 These pollutants are linked to health
20 problems, including respiratory illness, heart
21 attack, stroke, cancer and mental health problems.
22 Air pollution reductions from RGGI will particularly
23 benefit those most impacted by poor air quality,
24 such as children, seniors and low income
25 communities.

1 In Pennsylvania our Constitution
2 guarantees the right for all residents for clean
3 water to drink and clean air to breathe. Thus far I
4 feel that I have not been fully afforded that right.

5 The constitution alone has not protected me from
6 the air pollution that has complicated my breathing.

7 Joining the regional greenhouse gas
8 initiative would help Pennsylvania to reduce our
9 greenhouse gas emissions and work us one step closer
10 to ensuring clean air. It would give me the
11 opportunity to step outside and take a deep breath
12 of fresh air. For all of these reasons and more I
13 support entering Pennsylvania into the regional
14 greenhouse gas initiative. Thank you.

15 CHAIR: Thank you, Juliet.

16 Next up we have number 30, Alex Lola.

17 MS. LOLA: I'm here. Hi.

18 CHAIR: Hi, Alex.

19 MS. LOLA: Thank you.

20 Hi, my name is Alex Lola. Thank you
21 so much for the opportunity to testify in support of
22 RGGI today. I am doing so as a private and very
23 concerned citizen of Pennsylvania. I live in south
24 Philly and I am here to voice my support for RGGI,
25 because I see my community hurting.

1 Some of the poorest and most neglected
2 communities of the Commonwealth, Philadelphians are
3 already suffering from the impacts of climate change
4 and the consequences they bring. Philadelphia was
5 ranked last year as the fourth asthma capital in the
6 country, meaning poor air quality paired with access
7 to adequate affordable healthcare makes us the
8 fourth city to live in when it comes to asthma
9 risks.

10 I shouldn't have to say this, but
11 that's really bad. There shouldn't even be a list
12 of asthma capitals and we certainly shouldn't be on
13 it. Additionally, neighborhoods in south and north
14 Philly are almost 20 degrees hotter in the throes of
15 summer than our suburban counterparts due to the
16 urban sea island effect and has significantly less
17 air conditioning in homes and public spaces.

18 For our most vulnerable residents,
19 those degrees become the difference between life and
20 death. Increased heat is also tied to increased
21 domestic and community violence. Another issue that
22 takes the lives of hundreds in our city every year.

23 And it's only getting hotter. And it's also
24 getting wetter. Philly has some of the oldest and
25 most dilapidated housing stock in our region.

1 Meaning the increased storm frequency and severity
2 we're already experiencing puts even more of our
3 neighbors at risk for homelessness and grave health
4 issues.

5 I say all of this not because they're
6 secrets or little known facts. But because they're
7 a few of the very real ways that climate change is
8 already hurting my city each and every day. I say
9 all of this because it's easy to slip into a
10 rhetoric that talks about future climate effects,
11 which allows us to kick this insidious can further
12 and further down the road.

13 But people in this Commonwealth are
14 hurting today, here and now, because of local,
15 national and global inaction on the global climate
16 crisis. But here we are, faced with an initiative
17 and an opportunity. We've been writing in many of
18 our qualms. RGGI is no silver bullet to our warming
19 climate, or centuries of racism, colonialism and
20 unbridled development and environmental degradation
21 that cut us here. But it is a pretty big step in
22 recovery. And one that we cannot overlook.

23 In the next ten years, RGGI is going
24 to enable us to reduce over 100,000 tons of nitrogen
25 oxide pollution and nearly 7,000 tons of sulfur

1 dioxide pollution, both pervasive and harmful
2 pollutants that can trigger asthma attacks and other
3 respiratory illnesses. Reducing this pollution will
4 help to protect and help vulnerable Pennsylvanians
5 across the state. And that's not all.

6 Many of our neighboring states, many
7 of whom decided long ago to take the step we're just
8 considering today, have cut their carbon emissions
9 by nearly half. And if Pennsylvania joins this
10 program we can cut our carbon emissions by
11 188,000,000 tons by 2030. That will by no mean cool
12 our climate, but it is nothing to scoff at in terms
13 of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and slowing our
14 increasingly warm and thus perilous climate.

15 Take a second to imagine what all that
16 means. Hundreds of fewer premature deaths. Tens
17 and thousands fewer hospital visits and missed days
18 of school and work. That's the reality for so many.

19 For we have the opportunity now to change course.
20 To keep someone's loved ones out of the ER. To keep
21 your children's friends from keeling over on the
22 playground in need of an inhaler. And help reduce
23 the pollution that's driving the climate crisis.

24 We can start making a healthy, cleaner
25 reality our reality by joining RGGI. And also

1 generate a lot of income and good paying jobs for
2 our state. That income can go a long way in further
3 mitigating many of the issues I just mentioned,
4 energy efficiency and clean energy. That income can
5 help those in our most vulnerable communities
6 survive, if not prosper, when paired with reduce
7 climate structures. After centuries of neglect,
8 don't we deserve at least that much?

9 Pennsylvania cannot forego this
10 opportunity. We must join RGGI and take steps to
11 reduce our pollution and emissions now. There is
12 too much at stake and there's too many of us. Thank
13 you for letting me testify today.

14 CHAIR: Thank you, Alex.

15 Next up, we have number 31, Amanda
16 Lapham.

17 MS. LAPHAM: Hello, this is Amanda.

18 CHAIR: You can begin.

19 MS. LAPHAM: Hello.

20 And thank you for the opportunity to
21 testify today in support of Pennsylvania joining the
22 regional greenhouse gas initiative. My name is
23 Amanda Lapham and I currently live in Philadelphia.
24 Just a few blocks north of city hall. The
25 neighborhood where I live has undergone dramatic

1 changes over the last several decades.

2 The apartment building I live in was
3 once a shoe factory and it's not LEAF certified,
4 powered by 100 percent wind energy and completely
5 energy efficient. The community trail behind my
6 home where I walk my dog each morning was once the
7 railroad that served the historic Reading terminal
8 and is now a public green space, with 11 different
9 species of trees and pollinator friendly flowers.

10 Living in this area inspires me daily
11 to imagine a more sustainable future, one that
12 prioritizes community, sustainability and tackling
13 climate change. And as a young person I am often
14 thinking about my own future and what would it look
15 like if we don't prioritize sustainability and don't
16 take serious action on tackling the climate crisis?

17 With the changes I've already seen in my own back
18 yard it is clear the solutions exist and can
19 continue in communities all across the state as long
20 as we prioritize and invest in them.

21 What if we invested in more public
22 green spaces that could sequester carbon and create
23 safe spaces to socialize and play? What if we
24 invested in affordable energy efficient housing with
25 solar panels atop every roof? Joining RGGI will

1 allow us to do just that. Tackle climate change and
2 invest in our futures. By setting a cap on carbon
3 pollution from power plants and reducing those caps
4 each year, climate pollution will dramatically and
5 continually decrease.

6 States already participating in this
7 program have been able to cut their carbon pollution
8 by 47 percent, almost in half. By requiring power
9 plant owners to pay for their pollution, we'll cut
10 emissions even faster and will be able to invest the
11 money raised into projects that transition us away
12 from harmful fossil fuels, prioritize clean energy
13 and energy efficiency and overall protect our
14 environment and our health.

15 To date, RGGI has raised over \$2.5
16 billion dollars in participating states for these
17 types of projects, which only further helps us
18 combat the impacts of climate change we've already
19 begun to experience. When I walk along the
20 converted rail park in my neighborhood or sit in my
21 home that was once a factory and is now equipped
22 with modern day clean energy technologies, I am
23 grateful and inspired by the power to take something
24 old and antiquated and transform it into something
25 wonderful and new.

1 By joining RGGI, Pennsylvania has the
2 opportunity to pursue the transformation of our own
3 enemy economy from our polluting past to a clean
4 future, while cutting the carbon emissions we so
5 desperately need to reduce. That's why I support
6 Pennsylvania joining the regional greenhouse gas
7 initiative, to help us reduce climate pollution and
8 invest in the sustainable clean energy future our
9 communities need and deserve. I look forward to
10 seeing what kind of future we can imagine and build
11 together. Thank you.

12 CHAIR: Thank you, Amanda.

13 Next, we have number 32, Olivia
14 Perfetti. Do we have Olivia?

15 MS. PERFETTI: Yes, this is she.

16 CHAIR: All right, Olivia. You can
17 begin.

18 MS. PERFETTI: Thank you so much for
19 the opportunity to testify today. My name is Olivia
20 Ross Perfetti, spelled O-L-I-V-I-A, R-O-S-S as in
21 Sam, P as in Paul, E-R-, F as in Frank, E-T-T-I.
22 And I live in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. So today I
23 want to talk about why I strongly support taking
24 action on climate change by joining RGGI.

25 I wish I could remember the first time

1 I learned about climate change. And tell you how
2 this was a pivotal - pivotal moment in my life. But
3 I can. I am 23 years old and the reality is that
4 climate change has been a real and present danger to
5 our world during my entire lifetime. So let me tell
6 you as a young person why climate change is always
7 in the back of my mind and increasingly the first
8 thing when I wake up in the morning.

9 Unless we take bold action to reduce
10 greenhouse gas emissions now the effects of climate
11 change will be catastrophic. Under a business as
12 usual scenario, by the end of the century our Earth
13 will be more than three degrees Celsius warmer than
14 it is now. And that would have serious consequences
15 for Pennsylvania. Even though my part of
16 Pennsylvania is safe from the wildfires raging out
17 west and the hurricanes bothering our southeast
18 coast, we won't be spared from the other climate
19 change induced catastrophes.

20 We'll see changing precipitation
21 patterns, which will likely intensify flooding
22 during the winter and spring and worsened droughts
23 during the summer and fall. In my City of
24 Pittsburgh where it's so hilly, we'll have more
25 injuries and deaths from flooding and the landslides

1 that follow. People will have to give up their
2 homes and businesses, because what used to be a safe
3 place to live will be flooded knee deep every time
4 there's a thunderstorm.

5 Higher temperatures bring even more
6 danger. Children, the elderly and low income
7 communities are especially at risk for heart stroke
8 and dehydration in hot weather. Warmer air will
9 also increase ground level ozone, which leads to
10 smog. Pittsburgh also has some of the dirtiest air
11 in the nation. Allegheny County is in the worst two
12 percent of counties nationwide for cancer risk and
13 for air pollution.

14 We cannot afford to make the air less
15 safe to breathe here. I am worried about people
16 like my dad who has a lung condition that is getting
17 harder and harder to cope with every year that
18 passes. Changing precipitation and higher
19 temperature are just two of the ways that we'll feel
20 the effects of climate change here in Pennsylvania.

21 There are others like increased vector borne
22 diseases, impacts to agriculture and our food
23 system. Not to mention the effects of climate
24 change that will be seen across the globe, including
25 forced migration and political instability due to

1 even scarcer resources.

2 And yet even knowing that this might
3 be my future and my son's future, I still have hope.

4 We can still prevent the worst impacts of climate
5 change, but we have to act now. Our leaders need to
6 take bold actions to cut greenhouse gas emissions
7 and transition to renewable energy. And it's
8 happening.

9 Little by little across the country in
10 the world, we're seeing programs like the regional
11 greenhouse gas initiative to take effect. It just
12 needs to happen quicker and we need places like
13 Pennsylvania to get on board. As the fourth largest
14 emitter of greenhouse gasses in the country,
15 Pennsylvania joining RGGI would have a big impact.
16 We know that RGGI has been successful in
17 participating in northeast states, significantly
18 reducing carbon emissions, without hurting
19 electricity consumers or the state's economies.

20 Joining RGGI is the first necessary
21 step to reducing our own greenhouse gas emissions.
22 It is our responsibility to the world and to
23 residents of Pennsylvania who are already and will
24 continue to suffer from our failure to solve this
25 crisis. I can't emphasize enough the clock is

1 ticking towards the worst consequences of climate
2 change. And I think about those every day.

3 I've had conversations with friends,
4 wondering whether we should bring children into such
5 an uncertain future. Or whether they should pursue
6 a job in New York if it's going to be underwater in
7 20 years. This is no longer a threat in the far
8 distant future. Our lives, the lives of Generation
9 Z across the world are in the balance. And we need
10 our leaders to step up and take action by joining
11 RGGI. Thank you.

12 CHAIR: Thank you, Olivia. Next, we
13 have - I'm told we can't find Sarah Tilly (phonetic)
14 on the line. And so Sarah if you are on the line,
15 please make sure you are dialed in using the phone
16 number that you gave to Jennifer Swan when you
17 signed up to provide testimony. Next up we'll go to
18 number 34, Gloria Lee.

19 MS. LEE: Hi. This is Gloria.

20 CHAIR: Hi, Gloria. You can begin.

21 MS. LEE: Hi, my name is Gloria Lee.
22 And I am testifying today as a private resident in
23 support of the regional greenhouse gas initiative.
24 I currently live in Philadelphia and I moved here
25 from Denver, Colorado, with a friend a couple years

1 ago. Before we came to Philadelphia we loved going
2 out on runs and taking hikes together. And I was
3 looking forward to continuing our runs when we moved
4 here.

5 Until he told me that the air in
6 Philadelphia isn't like the air back home. He said
7 that here it was safer to run indoors to avoid
8 exposure to air pollution. At first I wasn't really
9 the biggest believer. The air outside didn't seem
10 as toxic as it was. But one day when I took a car
11 ride down to the Wells Fargo center to watch a
12 hockey game I could see why he said that the air was
13 so bad. I passed a bunch of power plants barreling
14 this black smoke and steam into the sky. And now I
15 hate passing that area on the south side of the
16 city.

17 I want to be able to run outside
18 without worrying about how sick I'm going to get in
19 the process. The chemicals being pumped into the
20 atmosphere by those power plants in Center City as
21 well as many others throughout Pennsylvania have
22 been shown to be carcinogenic. They can also lead
23 to a host of respiratory illnesses, heart attacks,
24 strokes and more. Not to mention a lot of that
25 pollution is carbon. And the immense carbon

1 pollution that is sequestered in our air exacerbates
2 the already worsening climate crisis that we have on
3 our hands.

4 After having an opportunity to work an
5 environmental organization here in Pennsylvania, I
6 was introduced to the regional greenhouse gas
7 initiative or RGGI. And despite the fact that every
8 state above us is in RGGI, unfortunately
9 Pennsylvania is not. Putting a cap on toxic carbon
10 emissions is an extremely effective initiative, as
11 it can help us lessen our contribution to climate
12 change.

13 But here are some numbers that aren't
14 produced yet. Thanks to the initiative, carbon
15 emissions from our neighbors in RGGI have fallen 90
16 percent faster than the rest of the country. And by
17 2030 Pennsylvania could reduce carbon emissions by
18 188,000,000 million tons. And to put that into
19 perspective, that would be like taking 36 million
20 cars and their pollution off of our roads.

21 As another benefit, RGGI is expected
22 to create 27,000 new jobs, bringing two billion
23 dollars into our states economy within the next
24 decade alone. The fact is, joining RGGI will
25 greatly reduced the progression of climate change.

1 And it will do wonders for the health and wellbeing
2 of Pennsylvanian residents.

3 We should be putting the health of our
4 communities before pollution factories. And we
5 should put our environment's wellbeing before
6 corporate interests. The most I can do is to tell
7 you that Pennsylvanians and Earth are suffering.
8 But you have the power to make huge changes for the
9 better. I, along with many other Pennsylvanians,
10 are strongly in favor of RGGI and I hope that you
11 hear all of our voices and I hope that you work to
12 uphold the right for all Pennsylvanians to breathe
13 clean air.

14 Thank you very much for the
15 opportunity to attest on behalf of the regional
16 greenhouse gas initiative.

17 CHAIR: Thank you, Gloria.

18 Next, we have number 35, Terri
19 Supowicz. Do we have Terri?

20 MS. SUPOWICZ: Yes. I'm here.

21 CHAIR: Hi, Terri.

22 MS. SUPOWICZ: Oh, okay. I first have
23 to say I am so excited because I got connected.
24 Because this kind of stuff is not something I do
25 well. So this is very exciting that I get to do

1 this.

2 Okay. My name is Terri Supowicz, T-E-
3 R-R-I, S-U-P-O-W-I-C-Z. I live at 310 Hay Street,
4 actually in Wilkinsburg. But most of the time
5 people just say Pittsburgh. And I am a concerned
6 citizen. My little personal story is short. Right
7 now for 22 years I've lived in spitting distance
8 from the railroad tracks for oil and gas trains,
9 bomb trains run day and night.

10 I can see them from my kitchen window.

11 If there is an incident, I am dead. There is no
12 question about that, which is not a very happy
13 thought. I've been fighting fracking in
14 southwestern Pennsylvania since 2010 when Pittsburgh
15 had its first protest downtown. I was there. Ten
16 years later and we're still fighting the same fight.

17 It is time fossil fuels were left in the ground
18 where they belong and we look to creating
19 sustainable energy by using wind and sun.

20 And that the oil and gas industry
21 start to pay their fair share with all of the
22 pollution that they have created. Until that time,
23 the fossil fuel industry must be dramatically
24 reduced in its emissions. And again, pay its fair
25 share for the air, water and soil pollution they

1 have caused. RGGI is a step in that direction.

2 Many residents of Pennsylvania are
3 sick. They have respiratory illnesses, heart
4 attacks, strokes, cancer and mental health problems.

5 And many less serious illnesses, but still
6 debilitating like headaches, runny noses, nausea,
7 coughs and sore throats. All of these are related
8 to pollution from sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide
9 and particulate matter. All of these would also be
10 reduced if we joined RGGI.

11 And the power plants would actually be
12 paying for some of the pollution they are emitting.

13 We should join. It is the right thing to do.
14 Pennsylvania is the fourth largest emitter of
15 greenhouse gasses in the nation. It is crucial that
16 Pennsylvania join RGGI as one of the largest
17 polluters in the country when Pennsylvania joining
18 RGGI would have a huge impact on reducing carbon
19 emissions. The data is clear from 2008 to 2018,
20 carbon pollution has decreased by 47 percent in
21 participating RGGI states, ahead of the rest of the
22 country by 90 percent. I know you've heard that
23 over and over and over again. But it is an astounding
24 statistic.

25 Is there any reason not to join?

1 Joining RGGI will result in creating jobs, reducing
2 electricity prices and generating billions of
3 dollars to be invested in clean energy projects. We
4 must join. Thank you.

5 CHAIR: Thank you, Terri.

6 Next, we have number 36, Meredith
7 Bennett.

8 MS. BENNETT: Hello.

9 My name is Meredith Bennett. Yes. My
10 name is Meredith Bennett. It is spelled M-E-R-E-D-
11 I-T-H, B-E-N-N-E-T-T. And I am from Monroeville,
12 PA, near Pittsburgh. So Pennsylvania has a
13 wonderful opportunity to establish itself as a
14 leader in a global response to climate change by
15 joining the regional greenhouse gas initiative.
16 This initiative would have many advantages for our
17 state, especially considering the current COVID-19
18 pandemic. The pandemic serves as a reminder of the
19 many threats to the health of Pennsylvanians.

20 Climate change and greenhouse gas
21 pollution pose unique threats to our health,
22 including respiratory and cardiovascular diseases
23 associated with air pollution and increasing
24 temperatures. Climate change will also increase the
25 frequency of severe weather events that can threaten

1 people's safety and livelihoods. Despite the
2 devastation it has caused the COVID-19 pandemic
3 offers a unique opportunity to embrace for renewable
4 energies with urgency.

5 The renewable energy industry is
6 growing rapidly and will replace fossil fuels. It
7 is simply a question of whether Pennsylvania will
8 embrace this transition and reap the benefits of it.

9 The regional greenhouse gas initiative would create
10 many clean energy jobs, which are already more
11 abundant than fossil fuel jobs. The flexible nature
12 of this initiative allows companies to choose the
13 most effective way to reduce their pollution.

14 It is important to remember that
15 reducing pollution is not only the right thing to
16 do, but also cost effective. For example, the
17 regional greenhouse gas initiative will promote
18 energy efficiency, which would in turn save money.
19 These savings are especially crucial in the economic
20 wake of COVID-19. The remedy would also allow
21 Pennsylvania to protect the communities most at risk
22 of the detrimental effects of climate change.

23 As a native Pennsylvanian, I see the
24 regional greenhouse gas initiative as a source of
25 hope. Young people like me are looking to their

1 leaders to take decisive action against climate
2 change. By embracing initiatives like this one,
3 elected officials can show that they take climate
4 change and environmental degradation seriously.
5 Crises that not only threaten us, but generations to
6 come.

7 I am currently a senior at Duquesne
8 University, studying environmental science. And I
9 the engineering chief of a scientific journal at
10 Duquesne. As someone preparing to enter the
11 environmental field, I enthusiastically support the
12 regional greenhouse gas initiative. I believe it is
13 a great opportunity for Pennsylvania to protect its
14 citizens and the environment in our beautiful state.
15 Thank you.

16 CHAIR: Thank you, Meredith.

17 Next, we will have Maria Guadalupe
18 Almanza provide testimony. And her testimony is
19 going to be assisted with interpretation by Pam
20 Rodriguez. One second. Let me get the timer here.
21 I should have had this ready.

22 MS. ALMANZA: Hola, Buenos Dias.

23 CHAIR: Good morning. All right. I
24 will begin your timer.

25 MS. ALMANZA: Good morning. My name

1 is Guadalupe Almanza. I am originally from Mexico.

2 But I have lived in one of the rural areas of
3 Lancaster for 15 years. I am a wife, mother of four
4 children and I also have a granddaughter. Okay. I
5 am also a member of the Casa (phonetic)
6 Organization. I feel very grateful to this land for
7 the opportunities that it has given our entire
8 family.

9 Okay. And for this reason I feel
10 obliged to do everything possible to take care of
11 it. Thus, today, I join my voice to the dozens of
12 people who have already testified to show my support
13 for RGGI. We live and work in the fields. My
14 husband is a rancher and we take care of cows. It
15 is hard work, but we take pride in doing it.

16 My family and I, as I am sure many
17 other farmers are, we are the first who want to
18 protect our environment. So we have to make sure
19 that RGGI is implemented and that it is implemented
20 in a way that benefits and that it puts the
21 potentially affected communities first, like the
22 people who work in the fields or in the mines here
23 in Pennsylvania.

24 For example, RGGI funds could be used
25 to create grants, grants to farmers. And in that

1 way create better practices in agriculture. RGGI
2 can also help low income communities, if we invest
3 that money in energy efficiency and thus lower bills
4 and use less energy. These are just two examples
5 that would help families like mine. In closing, I
6 want to thank you for your time and for giving me
7 the opportunity to express myself in Spanish. God
8 Bless you.

9 CHAIR: Thank you to Maria and Pam.
10 Next, we have number 39, Julia Nakhleh.

11 MS. NAKHLEH: Hi. My name is Julia
12 Nakhleh. That is spelled N-A-K-H-L-E-H. And I am
13 from Collegeville, Pennsylvania, which is outside of
14 Philadelphia. I am testifying as a private citizen.

15 Thank you for letting me speak today.

16 I support Pennsylvania joining RGGI, because RGGI
17 will help reduce the impacts of climate change.
18 Here in Pennsylvania we are already seeing the
19 impacts of global warming. One of the many effects
20 of climate change are extreme rain events, including
21 Hurricane Irene, Hurricane Sandy and most recently
22 Derecho in Philadelphia, causing power outages and
23 storm damage.

24 2019 was a particularly raining
25 spring, causing standing water in many places,

1 including my backyard. Causing me to spend
2 thousands of dollars on storm water litigation.
3 According to Climate Central, Philadelphia has had a
4 360 percent increase in heavy downpours since 1950.

5 Because Philadelphia has a combined sewer overflow
6 system, heavy rainfall increases the amount of
7 sewage and other pollution from storm water runoff t
8 hat ends up in our rivers.

9 RGGI is a big piece of the puzzle to
10 help mitigate the effects of climate change by
11 reducing carbon dioxide emissions. RGGI will help
12 the environment, the economy and the health of
13 Pennsylvanians. RGGI has many ways to address the
14 climate crisis. I want to focus on renewable
15 energy. By requiring power plants to decrease their
16 carbon dioxide emissions it will encourage renewable
17 energy, such as wind and solar.

18 Current RGGI states have benefitted
19 from RGGI accelerating their deployment of renewable
20 energy. As someone who has solar panels on their
21 house and powers an electric vehicle, I have seen
22 firsthand the benefits of solar energy. My solar
23 panels have helped run my electric bills. Solar
24 installation by definition has to employ local
25 workers and in fact jobs in renewable energy are one

1 of the fastest growing in this country.

2 These jobs create stable, high wage
3 employment for blue collar workers. According to
4 Forbes by 2025 the cost to build an equivalent solar
5 or wind facility will cost less than the operating
6 costs of almost every existing coal plant in
7 America. Renewable energy is the future. Solar and
8 wind bring good paying, local, jobs, helps lower
9 electric bills and helps to green the electric
10 grid. And RGGI will help accelerate this change.
11 This will be very beneficial to Pennsylvania.

12 As a mother and an advocate for
13 children I am deeply concerned about the future we
14 are leaving our children. RGGI will help make it a
15 better future by reducing the impact of climate
16 change. Other states have seen the benefits of
17 RGGI, now is the time for Pennsylvania to join the
18 successful, market based solution. This would
19 reduce greenhouse gasses, improve the environment,
20 public health and encourage renewable energy, which
21 will bring local, good paying jobs to our citizens.

22 RGGI will help transition the energy sector into
23 the future. Joining RGGI is the right decision for
24 Pennsylvania. Thank you.

25 CHAIR: Thank you, Julia. Next up we

1 have number 40, Molly Rearden.

2 MS. REARDEN: Hi. Hi, my name is
3 Molly Rearden. That is spelled R-E-A-R-D-E-N. I am
4 from Exton, Pennsylvania, in Chester County. I have
5 loved growing up in Pennsylvania and I miss it when
6 I'm away at school at American University in D.C.
7 However, I am also disappointed that my state is one
8 of the biggest contributors to greenhouse gas
9 emissions in the country.

10 I and others I know have always tried
11 to do what we can to reduce the negative impact we
12 have on the environment, because we have always been
13 told it is our individual responsibility to protect
14 the earth. I know, personally, there can be a lot
15 of guilt that comes with this narrative over not
16 being able to do enough or making mistakes. And I
17 also know the feeling of helplessness when things
18 fail to change despite the number of plastic bags
19 you refuse to use.

20 And after the year we've had with
21 people consuming and driving much less, with air
22 pollution remaining, more or less the same and our
23 Earth on track to undergo catastrophic climate
24 change. It is obvious why I and others feel so
25 powerless with this pressure to individually save

1 the planet. Even if we drive less and eat less
2 meat, it won't solve the climate crisis if power
3 plants are allowed to emit millions upon millions of
4 tons of carbon dioxide every year.

5 Emitters are substantially adding to
6 the country's pollution problem. And the U.S.
7 cannot be as clean and safe as possible until
8 Pennsylvania, the fourth largest emitter of
9 greenhouse gasses in the country addresses its own
10 pollution problem. Joining RGGI could reduce our
11 emissions by over 100,000,000 tons by 2030.

12 Reducing our pollution will improve
13 the quality of life for many in Pennsylvania.
14 Cleaning up our air could prevent hundreds of deaths
15 and thousands of hospital visits. Air pollution
16 contributes to physical health problems as well as
17 mental health problems. The anxiety and pressure
18 people feel when facing climate change can sometimes
19 be too much to handle.

20 Additionally, not having access to
21 clean air every single day and seriously take a toll
22 on one's mental health and it is an issue that many
23 in PA deal with because of our big polluters. There
24 is a lot of pressure put on individuals to do the
25 best they can to live a cleaner life. So why isn't

1 the same, if not more, pressure being put on our big
2 polluters if they are ones contributing the most
3 pollution to our pollution problem?

4 By joining RGGI, Pennsylvania can
5 start putting people first and holding industrial
6 polluters accountable for lessening - lessening the
7 quality of life for everyone in Pennsylvania and
8 putting all of our health at risk. Thank you so
9 much.

10 CHAIR: Thank you, Molly. Next, we
11 have number 43, Michael DiMonte. Do we have Michael
12 on the line? Darek, were we able to find Michael
13 DiMonte?

14 MR. JAGIELA: He is un-muted right
15 now.

16 CHAIR: Okay.

17 Michael, you're un-muted on our end.
18 But we can't hear you. Maybe you can work with
19 Darek. Hello?

20 MR. DIMONTE: Can you hear me?

21 CHAIR: Yes, now I can hear you.

22 MR. DIMONTE: Okay. Great. Sorry for
23 the delay. Thank you.

24 I am Michael DiMonte. I speak today
25 on behalf of the Working for Justice Ministry of

1 Saint Paul's United Methodist Church, clean air
2 group, in Allison Park. I live in Cranberry
3 Township - pardon me, Cranberry Township. My home
4 is just north of Pittsburgh, a few miles downwind of
5 the coal fired power plant in Beaver, the nuclear
6 power plant also in Beaver and the shale fracker
7 plant under construction in Potter Township.

8 I speak to you today in support of
9 RGGI. I favor the reduction of greenhouse gas
10 emissions and expanding the use of clean energy
11 uses. To be clear, my support does include
12 expanding the use of nuclear power. I do not fear
13 it.

14 My comments, likely, will be a little
15 different than others. I intend to elicit some
16 images to draw some parallels that you will almost
17 certainly agree with. And hopefully can communicate
18 an impactful truth. I know you have heard lots of
19 facts and data from others. So I'd like you to
20 visualize a river in your mind's eye. It might be
21 the Ganges River in India. It might be the Yellow
22 River in China. These are among the most polluted
23 rivers in the world. Can you see them? They're
24 brown. There are unpleasant things floating near
25 the surface. Can you smell them? The stink, don't

1 they?

2 We look at the communities that
3 surround these rivers with hate and wonder how did
4 this happen? How do they live like this? How can
5 they breathe and even drink this water in? I mean,
6 bathe and even drink this water in. I have seen
7 these rivers myself up close and personally. The
8 images I have just sketched for you are not
9 fantasies. They are real. They are true.

10 Now I ask you to visualize the
11 atmosphere that surrounds the earth. You may know
12 that it's about 60 miles thick, or thin. It is less
13 than one percent the diameter of the earth. Add to
14 your image now the winds of the atmosphere, moving
15 like rivers over Pennsylvania. We all breathe this
16 air. We drink it in, don't we? And we bathe in it,
17 every day, all day.

18 So I ask, why do we spew our waste,
19 our pollutants of carbon dioxides, nitrous oxides,
20 methane and other waste into our air? It's much
21 like people living along the Ganges and the Yellow
22 River. We have cleaned things up, mostly, so that
23 we don't smell the stink of these in our air, that
24 precious river flowing all around us. But they are
25 waste products and they are pollutants.

1 We know these things are true and that
2 greenhouse gasses are poisoning our environment. As
3 surely as the pollutants in the Ganges and the
4 Yellow. It's just by a different mechanism. So why
5 do we continue to do this? We should not. We
6 should not sacrifice many Pennsylvanian citizens,
7 literally, for our very few wealthy special
8 interests. Coal miners and fossil energy workers
9 can be redeployed if we focus our energies and
10 resources and human creativity in ways that the RGGI
11 will enable.

12 I ask you to take the actions
13 necessary to implement the RGGI program fully in
14 Pennsylvania and to allow all clean energy sources
15 to compete on the basis that values the quality of
16 their products. They should compete on the basis of
17 cost and cleanliness, reliability and
18 sustainability. Thank you.

19 CHAIR: Thank you, Michael.

20 Next up we have Joseph Hedden.

21 MR. HEDDEN: I'm here.

22 CHAIR: Hi, Joseph.

23 MR. HEDDEN: Hi.

24 My name is Joseph Hedden, H-E-D-D-E-N,
25 Junior. I am a Christian Pastor and I am speaking

1 to you from Murrysville. Dear Secretary McDonnell
2 and the Environmental Quality Board, thank you for
3 fallowing me to share my comments today. I am
4 offering them as a private citizen.

5 As a member of the United Church of
6 Christ, a one million member denomination in the
7 United States, my faith directs my actions and we
8 have an initiative in the United Church of Christ
9 called three great loves, seeking a just world for
10 all. That is we believe as the United Church of
11 Christ that we are called to express and live out
12 three great loves in our faith. Love of children,
13 love of neighbor and love of creation.

14 I support the Department of
15 Environmental Protection's proposed standard to join
16 the RGGI initiative and to cut carbon pollution and
17 other pollutants from electric power generation. I
18 say this because I believe that the RGGI fulfills
19 the values of the three great loves. As a father of
20 two children who have struggled with asthma and
21 asthma related conditions, I am well aware that
22 fossil fuel production for industry and electricity
23 can create uncomfortable and even dangerous health
24 conditions for children and adults.

25 Even worse is the harrowing statistic

1 that Pennsylvania has the third most air pollution
2 related deaths in the United States, 2,300 in 2018,
3 behind only California and New York. By joining
4 RGGI we can reduce these negative impacts on our
5 children, our neighbors and this beautiful creation.

6 The Pittsburgh region where I live and work is
7 consistently one of the worst regions for year round
8 air quality, being one of the bottom ten regions of
9 the United States.

10 Climate change, with its increased
11 temperatures, will also make health problems worse.

12 The American Lung Association reports that climate
13 change and consequent temperature rise makes the
14 conditions for creation of smog and ozone greater.
15 On the positive side we are living through a
16 technological transition. Pennsylvania can lead and
17 innovate away from the highly subsidized fossil fuel
18 industry and toward an innovative 21st century
19 energy market and new technologically cutting edge
20 industries.

21 The new jobs in southwestern
22 Pennsylvania and across Pennsylvania that will grow
23 are 21st century jobs in energy efficiency,
24 innovation, renewable sources of electricity, solar
25 and wind. Business and industry leaders support

1 market based solution such as carbon limits proposed
2 by RGGI. The Department of Environmental
3 Protection's own analysis confirms that joining RGGI
4 will lead to a net increase of more than 27,000 jobs
5 and add \$1.9 billion to the state's economy. This
6 program has been a success in the ten states where
7 it's been implemented, cutting climate pollution by
8 a third and raising nearly three billion to invest
9 in clean energy and other purposes.

10 As a resident of Murrysville where the
11 first commercial gas well in the Untied States was
12 discovered in 1878, I understand that coal, natural
13 gas and oil built our communities in southwest
14 Pennsylvania. I understand the fear of losing
15 livelihoods. However, as a Christian who believes
16 that I am called to live out my values and a
17 believer in the market economy. I believe it is
18 time to allow both the market as well as our
19 children's health to flourish.

20 I see RGGI as a way to invest in these
21 communities and to not be left behind by other
22 states in the northeast. I believe RGGI will
23 provide a revenue stream to help coal, natural gas
24 and oil communities transition to other skilled
25 careers that will provide for families. RGGI will

1 also defend our children's health.

2 RGGI proceeds should be used to fund a
3 just transition for fossil fuel workers and
4 communities who are owed a debt of gratitude for
5 their years of service and endured exacerbated
6 health risks. Thank you very much for listening to
7 my remarks.

8 CHAIR: Thank you, Joseph. Next we
9 have number 45, Dave McCullough. Hello?

10 MR. MCCULLOUGH: Hello? Can you hear
11 me?

12 CHAIR: Yes. We can hear you.

13 MR. MCCULLOUGH: Okay. Am I loud
14 enough?

15 CHAIR: Yeah. Sounds great. Go
16 ahead.

17 MR. MCCULLOUGH: My name is David
18 McCullough. I am evangelical pastor now living in
19 York, Pennsylvania. I have led congregations in
20 Clearfield, Bellefonte and Montoursville where
21 fossil fuels are important for the jobs and economy
22 of those regions. In retirement I send a letter
23 weekly to 200 evangelical pastors in Pennsylvania
24 regarding evangelical - rather, environmental
25 issues.

1 And I want to strongly affirm the
2 testimony given by the just now Joseph Hedden,
3 Junior. I agree with him completely. I strongly
4 believe that joining RGGI is a morally and
5 intellectually responsible choice for Pennsylvania
6 in view of public health, safety, economics and the
7 wellbeing of current and future generations.
8 Despite the efforts of the fossil fuel industry to
9 bend and manipulate science and statistics, it is
10 essentially for the health and wellbeing of our
11 people to transition quickly to safe and
12 environmentally friendly sources of energy.

13 Tons of carbon dioxide, methane gas,
14 benzene, PM 2.5 particles are emitted hourly into
15 the air we breathe, resulting in the deaths of
16 thousands of infants and children. Fossil fuel
17 workers themselves, the poor, ethnic minorities, the
18 elderly. And it is a nightmare for the \$1,257,000
19 Pennsylvanians who suffer from asthma. It is
20 unconscionable to bend the health of so many on the
21 grounds it provides good paying jobs and improves
22 our economy. While the same results could be
23 achieved through much safer, cleaner means that do
24 not kill and do not cause global warming.

25 RGGI offers a proven strategy and

1 resources to help us accomplish that. The fossil
2 fuel's industry provides good paying jobs that do
3 indeed help our economy. But at the price of
4 damaging the health of many, killing thousands of
5 people every year in Pennsylvania and causing global
6 warming that threatens all living creatures on this
7 planet.

8 RGGI offers an effective structure and
9 resources to retrain fossil fuel workers for much
10 healthier jobs that are safer for them and for
11 everybody else in providing energy. Studies done
12 with integrity show that the transition to safe
13 energy production in years will provide a much
14 healthier economy than present, while ending the
15 murder of innocent people who do not receive the
16 hard profits generated from these owners of the
17 fossil fuel industry.

18 No matter how strong the evidence,
19 some choose to deny the overwhelming obvious that
20 the production and use of fossil fuels is the cause,
21 the primary cause now of global warming. The
22 industry is determined to conceal the truth in order
23 to protect the wealth it achieves for a few. Much
24 like the tobacco industry did for generations.

25 No cost is fair to influence senators,

1 representations, government agencies and the public
2 to prevent us from dealing with the problem
3 responsibly. Some in this state have sold their
4 souls for economic and political advantage. I know
5 God intimately. I know how God feels about certain
6 people. God will forgive many things, but not a
7 crime so deadly and so deliberately.

8 Global warming is such a threat to our
9 children and to their children. We cannot afford to
10 wait for the radical action necessary to slow it
11 down and put it in reverse. It will not happen
12 overnight. But every hour we waste has consequences
13 that can only be tragic. It is a fact that
14 thousands of Pennsylvania's children, youth and
15 adults die every year from the pollution generated
16 in the production and use of fossil fuels.

17 Denying the truth does not lessen the
18 tragedy. Nor will it satisfy God's command to love
19 one another. The only love it represents is the
20 love of money and power. And on the day I stand
21 before God I would not want such cruelty on my
22 record. There are some things God will neither
23 forgive nor forget. Thank you very much.

24 CHAIR: Thank you, Dave. Next with
25 have number 48, Seth Bush.

1 MR. BUSH: Good day. My name is Seth
2 Bush, S-E-T-H, B-U-S-H. I live in Swissville,
3 Pennsylvania. And I am testifying as a Pennsylvania
4 native. The key message I want to leave you with is
5 this. The transition from fossil fuels to a clean,
6 regenerative economy is inevitable. But doing it in
7 a way that Pennsylvanians benefit is not.

8 The old way of making energy with coal
9 and gas will go away, one way or another. That is
10 inevitable. But we have a choice about what happens
11 next, when and how we get there. One option is to
12 keep going the old way, ignoring or excusing the
13 effects that burning fossil fuels has on our air
14 quality, our health and the climate, until the
15 resources run out, the world changes without us or
16 we've made ourselves so sick that we can't keep
17 going.

18 Or we can choose the path that RGGI
19 provides to us. That is, to invest in a modern
20 energy economy and transition with grace. I'd like
21 you to consider that second option might be better
22 for Pennsylvanians. There's no reason to delay.

23 RGGI is a proven way to modernize our
24 energy economy with a plan. I can say it's proven
25 because I spent several years living in Maryland.

1 One of the nine states that's been in RGGI since its
2 inception over a decade ago. I lived in Baltimore
3 and got to see the benefits firsthand.

4 There are two important ways that RGGI
5 has worked to improve air quality in Maryland and
6 modernize the state's energy economy. The first way
7 that RGGI works is to help phase out the old energy
8 economy by shifting incentives from burning
9 polluting coal and gas for power to generating power
10 from renewable sources.

11 Four coal plants have been retired in
12 Maryland since the state joined RGGI, two near major
13 population centers. I remember when my friend,
14 Doris, who lives in Baltimore and has chronic
15 obstructive pulmonary disease, despite never smoking
16 a cigarette in her life, told me how her breathing
17 has improved since the CP Crane Coal Plant closed
18 just outside the city. That means she spends less
19 sick days out of work as an educator and I get to
20 keep a healthy friend.

21 I have lots of friends in Pennsylvania
22 with breathing related health challenges, who I want
23 to stay healthy also. Yet, dangerous power plant
24 emissions in Pennsylvania in 2019 were nearly equal
25 to those in all of the RGGI states combined. This

1 means more bad air quality days, more sick families
2 and a great burden on our communities. It is time
3 for that to change.

4 So it is about cleaning up our dirty
5 energy systems and building renewable energies to
6 take their place. I also remember how good it felt
7 to go to Sunday worship with my community at
8 Homeward Friends Meeting in Baltimore, knowing that
9 the building's electricity came from new solar
10 panels on the roof that were made possible by a
11 grant funded by RGGI revenue. What if
12 Pennsylvanians had such easy access to renewable
13 energy funds?

14 The second way that RGGI works is by
15 investing in community led energy efficiency
16 measures and job creating infrastructure
17 improvements so less energy is wasted. This helps
18 to reduce energy consumption overall, thus reducing
19 pollution and taking pressure off the whole energy
20 system to make the transition from fossil fuels to
21 renewables easier.

22 The State of Maryland makes funds
23 earned through RGGI available to local organizations
24 like Retrofit Baltimore, a local non-profit that
25 provides free energy efficiency audits and retrofits

1 to low income homeowners. Perhaps the best part is
2 though that Retrofit Baltimore trains people every
3 year to do the work and then pays them to get on the
4 job experience. The result has been an infusion of
5 skilled labor and good jobs into Baltimore's local
6 economy.

7 And we know this example from
8 Baltimore is not isolated. These sorts of programs
9 have cropped up in suburban and rural areas of
10 Maryland and other RGGI states also. An analysis
11 group has shown RGGI has created 45,000 job years of
12 work since 2011 across the member states. As the
13 inevitable transition happens, Pennsylvanians can't
14 afford to pass on the job growth possible with
15 energy efficiency and renewable energy industries
16 that would impact not just the cities, but our rural
17 areas also.

18 Maryland has used RGGI to choose a
19 more useful, economically savvy path to a modern
20 energy economy and Marylanders have benefitted
21 greatly from improved air quality, job creation and
22 reduced energy wastes. Now it is Pennsylvania's
23 turn to benefit from RGGI. I urge the EQB to
24 finalize the rulemaking as soon as possible, with
25 some minor modifications further described in my

1 written testimony.

2 It is time to put RGGI to work now, so
3 we can transition to a modern energy economy with
4 some grace instead of waiting until it is too late.

5 And we must do it in a way that trusts the people
6 most affected by poor air quality and the burden of
7 high energy bills to invest the revenue in a way
8 that helps them benefit in the transition to this
9 new energy economy. When we choose that path, we
10 will all benefit. Thank you.

11 CHAIR: Thank you, Seth.

12 Next up we have number 49, Dana Syler
13 (phonetic). Is Dana on the line?

14 MR. JAGIELA: I do not see Dana on the
15 line.

16 CHAIR: All right. Then we will go to
17 number 50, LaNita Desire. Do we have LaNita?

18 MS. DESIRE: This is - this is LaNita.

19 CHAIR: Hi, LaNita. Go ahead.

20 MS. DESIRE: Thank you.

21 Good morning. My name is LaNita
22 Desire. I am a lifelong - I'm sorry. LaNita
23 Desire, L-A-N-I-T-A, last name Desire, D-E-S-I-R-E.
24 And I am a lifelong resident of Beaver County. And
25 thank you for allowing my testimony is support of

1 the supposed ruling in regards to Pennsylvania
2 joining the other states in regards to the regional
3 greenhouse gas initiative.

4 Pennsylvania stands out among
5 neighboring states as an energy powerhouse that has
6 made smart use of the major supplies of natural
7 resources. As a people's gas cap program
8 participant, the cap program has been a lifesaver
9 for me and my family. I hope to keep my utility
10 allowances.

11 RGGI will set a strict limit on carbon
12 emissions in Pennsylvania. As an asthma sufferer, I
13 along with countless others would welcome the
14 cleaner air. I want to be reassured of the
15 importance of keeping power plants regulated and my
16 asthma controlled. Pennsylvania is the nation's
17 second largest producer of natural gas, the third
18 largest of coal, the 16th largest producer of crude
19 oil and third largest producer of electricity,
20 according to the U.S. Energy Informant Information
21 Administration.

22 One of the most effective ways to
23 ensure emissions do not increase is by capping the
24 amount of emissions of particular sorts or sectors
25 can emit. This is done in other ways in other

1 states and countries. Even though Pennsylvania's
2 reductions are encouraging, the DEP projects
3 emissions to increase in five years and even more if
4 additional policies are not implemented. The
5 increases are primarily in the electricity sector,
6 which has some of the greatest potential to reduce
7 emissions in the near future.

8 RGGI is a successful example of a
9 regional cap utilized in the northeast and mid-
10 Atlantic - the mid-Atlantic. Climate changes are
11 passing all around and the DEP has duties and
12 responsibilities to the citizens of the United
13 States. And I urge the State of Pennsylvania to
14 introduce RGGI for all of us concerned citizens of
15 Pennsylvania. And I have a five year old who was
16 born outside and he loves the outdoors. And I want
17 him to continue to love the outdoors, but not at the
18 risk of his health in the process.

19 So I just wanted to share my thoughts
20 and my opinion this morning. Thank you so much for
21 accepting my testimony.

22 CHAIR: Thank you, LaNita.

23 MS. DESIRE: Thank you.

24 CHAIR: Next up we have number 51,
25 Karen Knutson.

1 MS. KNUTSON: Hi there. My name is
2 Karen Knutson, K-N-U-T-S-O-N. I live in Indiana
3 Township and Allegheny County. I am urging you to
4 support the RGGI project in Pennsylvania. Joining
5 this initiative is absolutely essential to help us
6 begin the urgent process of decarbonization that
7 must occur if we are to keep our climate change
8 target.

9 I see this as being a win-win. And I
10 don't really understand why Pennsylvania wouldn't
11 want to join it. RGGI helps industry reduce its
12 carbon emissions as it also helps residents to
13 reduce their energy use by making home improvements
14 they cannot otherwise afford to do. The initiative
15 also creates new jobs for displaced grant workers,
16 as well as others.

17 Finally, the initiative has already
18 been proven to be extremely successful in the other
19 states that are already members. We know that
20 climate change impacts will disproportionately
21 affect those who are under-resourced. And this
22 program could be used to help these families make
23 many improvements to their homes to make them more
24 energy efficient, saving money and improving their
25 quality of life.

1 Scientists in the IPCC have noted that
2 we will require rapid and far reaching transitions
3 in energy, land and infrastructure and industrial
4 systems. These systems transitions are
5 unprecedented in terms of scale and they would
6 require us to make deep emissions cuts across all
7 sectors. These changes must really happen now if we
8 are to avoid additional catastrophic events that
9 threaten our continued existence on this planet.

10 I am not alone in wanting to see
11 leadership from the state to help us make these
12 changes. People around me have been doing what they
13 can to reduce their emissions and pollution on an
14 individual level. In my township, for example,
15 solar permits have been exploding, increasing around
16 25 percent in the past couple of years. There are
17 so many hybrid and electric cars now on the road.
18 We are all trying to recycle, taking reusable bags
19 to the store. We have changed our light bulbs to
20 more efficient ones.

21 But we also know that these changes
22 are so tiny compared to the work that must be done.

23 And we know that it will take government assistance
24 to help us make the big changes that are required.
25 We are doing what we can, but we need leadership to

1 help our industrial neighbors to join us in fighting
2 climate change.

3 I live close to the Cheswick Power
4 Plant. It is a couple hills down from my house and
5 its pollution impacts my health. Three people in my
6 family have asthma and we have been very
7 disappointed to notice the ongoing and endless poor
8 quality air days where we can't go outside.

9 Every time I think about RGGI I think
10 about an image that I can't get out of my head.

11 It's like one of those old pictures you see of
12 something that seems to shocking and antiquated, you
13 can't believe that people used to think it was okay.

14 You know, like a photo of a toddler in the 50s,
15 sitting in the front seat of a car without a car
16 seat, or one of children smoking, or a picture of a
17 colonial era hunter standing in front of a mountain
18 of elephant tusks.

19 What were they thinking? It just
20 seems so obviously wrong that you can't believe
21 people ever thought it was okay. My image is this,
22 every summer I take my family over to Glen's Custard
23 in Cheswick. It is an ice cream shop that sits
24 right at the bottom of one of the most polluting
25 coal plants in the nation. We live a few hills away

1 from the power plant. I've always been struck by
2 the incongruity of this scene and it seems even more
3 poignant with every passing year.

4 Because we sit and eat our ice cream.
5 We are literally under the shadow of an enormous
6 smoke stack, polluting our air and ignoring the
7 destruction of the planet. Industry has shown us
8 again and again that they are not committed to
9 making the right choices for their neighbors. This
10 very plant had a judgment against it, which pointed
11 out its local avoidance of following environmental
12 regulations. We are idly standing by while a
13 company is willfully polluting the air we breathe.

14 We don't seem concerned enough about
15 it. And when our children's children look at photos
16 of us there, they will be shocked to see that this
17 is how we lived. That we didn't do anything more to
18 stop the pollution, even when we had the knowledge,
19 technology and money to do so. It doesn't have to
20 be this way. Better pollution controls exist for
21 industry, it's just that our plants choose not to
22 use them.

23 We need to have stronger leadership to
24 protect our right to clean air and water. When the
25 cracker plant nearby comes online we'll be adding

1 even more pollution to our air. So it is imperative
2 that we find ways to reduce our emissions, to keep
3 our air quality better. We have the knowledge and
4 the will to change. Pennsylvanians want to see this
5 change. There will be increasing pressure in the
6 next few years to make these changes and it would be
7 great if the state helped us to not look like the
8 last elephant hunters, but to be at the leading edge
9 of the next new age.

10 We need leadership to help us. Please
11 implement RGGI as soon as possible. Thank you very
12 much.

13 CHAIR: Thank you, Karen. Next we
14 have number 52, Cathy Cullen.

15 MS. CULLEN: Good morning.

16 CHAIR: Good morning.

17 MS. CULLEN: Hi.

18 My name is Cathy Cullen, C-U-L-L-E-N.

19 And I live in Ferguson Township in Center County.
20 I am in favor of Pennsylvania joining the regional
21 greenhouse gas initiative. Pennsylvania has a long
22 history as an energy leader. Our natural resources
23 have helped spur the growth and development of both
24 the state and nation. As others have noted this
25 morning, while being the number one exporter of

1 electricity in the country, our Commonwealth is also
2 one of our nation's largest polluters. We now have
3 an opportunity to change that.

4 By joining RGGI, Pennsylvania will be
5 participating in a CO2 reduction program that is
6 both proven and flexible. As has already been
7 experienced by participating states, the carbon
8 trade system will encourage energy producers to
9 adopt measures to reduce or avoid pollution.
10 Because of the flexibility of the program,
11 Pennsylvania can choose how to allocate revenues in
12 a way that best fits our Commonwealth.

13 We can and should support energy
14 efficiency upgrades for families and small
15 businesses and should prioritize low income families
16 in this effort. We should assist local governments
17 in their work to implement climate action. And we
18 should engage our climate funding and forestry
19 communities by advancing carbon sequestration
20 solutions, such as regenerative agricultural
21 methods, small farm manure digesters and improved
22 forest management.

23 As has already been discussed today,
24 these initiatives will create jobs. The residents
25 of our Commonwealth deserve to benefit from this

1 type of job creation. In addition to the direct
2 benefit of reduced carbon emissions and increased
3 investment in Pennsylvania's energy future, there
4 will be a secondary benefit to joining RGGI related
5 to health.

6 States participating in RGGI have seen
7 a notable reduction in harmful pollutants like soot,
8 mercury and sulfur dioxide. These potential
9 pollution reductions are good news for Pennsylvania,
10 which has some of the worst air quality in the
11 nation. It is also personally important to me. My
12 lungs are sensitive to fine particulate matter, such
13 as soot and also to high ozone levels. Both of
14 these are generated in the process of producing
15 energy from fossil fuels.

16 Two years ago my husband and I moved
17 to central Pennsylvania so I could escape the
18 unhealthy air that made it difficult for me to spend
19 time outside, especially in the summer. My asthma
20 is now under much better control. I am lucky that
21 we had the ability to move to an area in
22 Pennsylvania that allowed my health to improve.
23 Many others are not this lucky.

24 RGGI has a ten year history of
25 delivering health and climate benefits to

1 participating states. According to a 2017 report on
2 the health impacts of the RGGI program, residents in
3 the northeast are now experiencing significantly
4 fewer premature deaths, heart attacks and
5 respiratory illnesses. The residents of our
6 Commonwealth deserve this same benefit.

7 I believe that it is time to begin a
8 new chapter in Pennsylvania's history of energy
9 production. That's the promise of the power of the
10 RGGI pollution cap, to expand the use of renewable
11 energy. Let's invest in initiatives that produce
12 jobs. Let's reduce carbon emissions, while also
13 reducing other harmful pollutants and create a
14 future in which everyone in our state and region can
15 enjoy the benefits of clean air.

16 As a part of Pennsylvania's entry into
17 the RGGI initiative and an adoption of the proposed
18 CO2 budget trading regulation, thank you to the DEP
19 and EQB staff for their hard work in pursuing this
20 initiative. And thank you for this opportunity to
21 express my views.

22 CHAIR: Thank you, Cathy. And I just
23 want to note our sincere appreciation for everyone
24 for sticking to the allotted times. It helps us get
25 through all of those folks who - who want to provide

1 their testimony and have their voice heard. So
2 thanks - thanks to everyone who has gone so far.
3 And thank you to those who have yet to give their
4 testimony for hanging in with us. Next up we have
5 number 53, Sarah Crothers. Do we have Sarah on?

6 MS. CROTHERS: Hi. Good afternoon
7 everybody. My name is Sarah Crothers. And I grew
8 up in Philadelphia. I am currently of Reading,
9 Pennsylvania, in Berks County. I care about our
10 state signing onto the regional greenhouse gas
11 initiative because of the current and future climate
12 change issues we face, not only as a community, but
13 as a species globally.

14 Climate change needs to be addressed,
15 because we are already seeing the impacts. We as
16 humans have the ability to continue to go along with
17 business as usual, and continue to be met with these
18 dire consequences. Or we can use the information we
19 have to make intelligent, informed decisions to
20 protect our health and our livelihood.

21 I have recently developed asthma as an
22 adult and I am increasingly concerned about
23 Pennsylvania's air quality. The greenhouse gasses
24 that I released into our atmosphere will continue to
25 contribute also to warmer and wetter weather and

1 increased health issues for people. As I think
2 about our most recent summers, the heat records we
3 have reached and the increased flood and storm
4 damage we have seen is concerning. It poses a
5 safety issue to the residents of Pennsylvania, and
6 that is expensive.

7 We are living in the good old days in
8 regards to climate. Just think, the hottest days
9 we've experienced and the most powerful storms we
10 have recently experienced are really the best it's
11 going to get.

12 In regards to where I live, asthma is
13 extremely widespread in Reading. This is
14 unfortunately common for low income folks in the
15 city, who are mostly people of color. City
16 residents especially bear the brunt of not just the
17 negative health effects, but also the high costs of
18 fossil fuels, paying a high percentage of income on
19 energy costs. This is an issue now more than ever,
20 as asthma is a preexisting condition that causes an
21 increased risk of serious illness during the
22 pandemic. In addition, energy costs are higher than
23 ever and being able to heat and light our homes now
24 more than ever, as we are confined to our homes to
25 mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

1 This is why I'm here today, urging
2 Pennsylvania to sign onto the regional greenhouse
3 gas initiative without any major revisions to the
4 rules as proposed. This is a smart move that will
5 help combat climate change disasters that we face.
6 We see time and time again that our most vulnerable
7 populations are at risk.

8 This is a moral issue when the most
9 vulnerable populations such as the elderly, our
10 youth and children and low income communities do not
11 always have a seat at the decision making table.
12 Our policy makers have an obligation to do what is
13 best for the people of the state. And our future
14 energy will come from clean and renewable resources,
15 it must. And it is necessary for Pennsylvania to
16 sign on to the regional greenhouse gas initiative.
17 Thank you.

18 CHAIR: Thank you, Sarah. I am being
19 told that we do not have Michael Doyle on the line.
20 So Michael if you are out there, if you've called
21 in from another line, please let us know. And just
22 one more reminder to make sure that everyone send
23 their written testimony to regcomments@PA.gov. And
24 that will ensure that we are able to read your
25 testimony accurately. Next up we have number 55,

1 Lois Bower Bjornson.

2 MS. BJORNSON: Yeah.

3 Thank you for giving me the
4 opportunity to speak today. I live in ---
5 Pennsylvania, approximately 40 minutes south of
6 Pittsburgh in Washington County, in the most heavily
7 fracked county of our state. I grew up over the
8 Monongahela River in a coal mining town. So I am no
9 stranger to the industry and what it does when it is
10 there and what it does when it leaves. As far as
11 moving forward with RGGI, I think this is a
12 phenomenal idea and it is needed to be done.

13 And we need to keep moving forward.
14 The old way of thinking that the only way to go is
15 fossil fuels is the wrong way of thinking. Let's be
16 the state that is moving forward with progressive
17 thinking as far as energy is concerned. Let's stop
18 being the state that is going to push the climate
19 over the edge due to our fossil fuel usage.

20 I have four children. They have all
21 grown up in the area and they all have had health
22 impacts due directly to air quality. It is a sad
23 state when your children realize what climate change
24 is because they've grown up in it. It is something
25 that as a parent I never thought I'd explain to my

1 kids.

2 So again, I strongly support the
3 testimony prior to me of the people support the RGGI
4 initiative and moving forward with the changes.
5 This is something that is needed to be done. And
6 let's be the state now that moves forward instead of
7 backwards. Thank you.

8 CHAIR: Thank you, Lois. And last on
9 our list we have number 56, Shawn Hogan.

10 MS. HOGAN: Hello.

11 My name is Shawn Hogan, S-H-A-W-N, H-
12 O-G-A-N. I am from Philadelphia. And I am speaking
13 as a concerned citizen. Good morning and thank you
14 for being here today as we discuss Pennsylvania's
15 entry into the regional greenhouse gas initiative.
16 I speak today as a lifelong citizen of Pennsylvania.

17 I am a member of the youth led climate justice
18 movement called the Sunrise Movement.

19 As a 25 year old hoping and fighting
20 for a future where my needs and my generation and
21 the generations to come are met. I urge the State
22 of Pennsylvania to join RGGI as a preliminary step
23 towards what our state must do to reduce our
24 greenhouse gas emissions and fight climate change.
25 It is clear that RGGI does two necessary things,

1 reduces emissions and funds projects that will
2 create green jobs for PA residents. Results on
3 these metrics from other RGGI states are an
4 encouraging step in the right direction.

5 The mechanism of RGGI is important as
6 well. It shifts the cost of pollution and climate
7 change away from our state's residents to the
8 corporations that actually do the polluting.
9 Because our state, country and society have these
10 questions about how to prioritize justice and right
11 wrongs.

12 I urge everyone here to stick with the
13 fact that a child in our state currently pays the
14 cost of pollution and greenhouse gas emissions with
15 their health and future while corporations profit.
16 Although only a first step, RGGI begins to right
17 this wrong. That all said, RGGI isn't perfect.
18 Simply, it's not bold enough.

19 I used to say that climate change is
20 an existential threat. But now it is an existential
21 reality. It's here. Unprecedented frequency and
22 intensity of fires in the west and hurricanes in the
23 south say that loud and clear. We need climate
24 action from our state that is big, ambitious and
25 benefits all Pennsylvanians.

1 Outlining that would take far more
2 than my allotted time. So I want to specifically
3 discuss two shortfalls of RGGI that I think the
4 state legislature, governor and the EQB should
5 consider and must address immediately after signing
6 on to RGGI. If you do not address these shortfalls
7 of RGGI and improve upon them, you are failing all
8 marginalized populations and youth of Pennsylvania.

9 First, RGGI caps just carbon dioxide.

10 While the most prevalent greenhouse gas, carbon
11 dioxide is not the only greenhouse gas emitting from
12 the State of Pennsylvania. Methane, a gas that is
13 80 times more powerful than CO2 at warming our
14 planet over a 20 year period is a particular concern
15 in our state. This is the gas that leaks from
16 natural gas extraction and transmission. Additional
17 policies must significantly curb and ultimately
18 eliminate our state's methane emissions from energy.

19 Second, the implementation of RGGI and
20 all future climate policies must prioritize the
21 health and wellbeing of our state's most vulnerable
22 residents. A just implementation of RGGI will
23 closely monitor a pollution based shift
24 geographically as carbon credits are traded. And we
25 must make bold moves to make sure that all

1 Pennsylvanians benefit from cleaner air and water.

2 Additionally, the programs that RGGI
3 will fund must prioritize workforce development,
4 training and employment in communities that have
5 been most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, current
6 economic depression and environmental injustice.
7 Joining RGGI is not the bold action that
8 Pennsylvania needs. We need even bolder solutions
9 if we stand a chance at protecting all
10 Pennsylvanians from the chaos that the climate
11 crisis threatens us with. But it is a step in a
12 better direction.

13 There are playbooks and data from
14 other states stretching back from over a decade. We
15 don't have to trail blaze to join RGGI. I urge the
16 state government to join RGGI. But even more
17 importantly, I urge the PA legislature, governor and
18 EQB to build more momentum towards justice in our
19 state. The youth of Pennsylvania need more from
20 you. Do not stop it. Thank you.

21 CHAIR: Thank you, Shawn.

22 Thank you all for your patience and
23 taking the time to provide testimony today. One
24 last reminder that we ask that you please email your
25 written testimony to reg comments at PA.gov. With

1 no other commenter's present, on behalf of the EQB I
2 hereby adjourn this hearing at 12:20 p.m.

3 * * * * *

4 HEARING CONCLUDED AT 12:20 P.M.

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I hereby certify that the foregoing proceeding was reported by me on 12/11/2020 and that I, Alex Riegel, read this transcript, and that I attest that this transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceeding. This notarial act involved the use of communication technology.

Dated the 19th day of January, 2021



Alex Riegel,

Court Reporter