



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

\* \* \* \* \*

IN RE: CO2 BUDGET TRADING PROGRAM

\* \* \* \* \*

BEFORE: LAURA GRIFFIN, CHAIR  
DAREK JAGIELA  
JENNIFER SWAN  
ALLEN LANDIS

HEARING: Monday, December 14, 2020  
1:00 p.m.

Reporter: Bernadette M. Black

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NONE OFFERED

## P R O C E E D I N G S

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

My name is Laura Griffin. I am the  
regulatory coordinator for the Department of  
Environmental Protection. I am facilitating this  
hearing on behalf of the Environmental Quality  
Board. Assisting me today is Derek Jagiela, our  
host; Allen Landis, our executive director of the  
Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority; and  
Jennifer Swan, who most of you have corresponded  
with to register for this hearing.

I officially call this hearing to  
order at 1:00 p.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. The proposed rulemaking was adopted by  
the EQB at its meeting on September 15th, 2020. It

1 proposes to establish a program to limit carbon  
2 dioxide emissions on fossil fuel-fired power plants  
3 located in Pennsylvania that have an electricity  
4 generation capacity equal to or greater than 25  
5 megawatts.

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

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

1 Pennsylvania will see carbon dioxide emission  
2 reductions of around 180 million tons by 2030.

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

8           In order to give everyone an equal  
9 opportunity to comment on this proposal, I would  
10 like to establish the following ground rules. Allen  
11 is going to provide some of this information in the  
12 chat box, so you don't need to write everything  
13 down.

14           I will call upon the witnesses who  
15 have signed up to testify at this hearing. All who  
16 signed up were assigned a number indicating the  
17 order in which witnesses will be called on to speak.

18       Only those who signed up by contacting Jennifer  
19 Swan as indicated on the EQB webpage will be called  
20 upon to provide testimony. Testimony is limited to  
21 five minutes for each witness. And I will have a  
22 timer on the screen, which you should be able to see  
23 on the right hand side.

24           Please note that written and spoken  
25 testimony both carry the same weight. If you should



1 run out of time for your spoken testimony, we will  
2 read the rest of your comments from your written  
3 testimony.

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

13                   Please understand that testimony is  
14 not required to be five minutes long. If others who  
15 provide testimony before you are making similar  
16 statements to yours, you're free to shorten or  
17 summarize your verbal testimony at this time and  
18 then still provide your full testimony by e-mail.  
19 This will allow us to hear from more commenters at  
20 this hearing.

21                   Through the sign-up process,  
22 prospective commenters were requested to designate  
23 one witness to present testimony on behalf of an  
24 organization.

25                   Please state your name, address ---

1 the city and state are sufficient --- and  
2 affiliation, if you have one, for the record before  
3 presenting your testimony.

4           The EQB would appreciate your help by  
5 spelling out your name and any terms that may not be  
6 generally familiar so that the transcript can be as  
7 accurate as possible.

8           Because the purpose of the hearing is  
9 to receive comments on the proposal, DEP staff  
10 cannot address questions about the proposed  
11 rulemaking during the duration of the hearing.

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

21           There are a few different ways to  
22 submit written comments, which is separate from  
23 testimony. Comments may be submitted online through  
24 e-comment, which is accessible from DEP's website by  
25 clicking the e-comment icon near the top of DEP's

1 homepage, which is [www.dep.pa.gov](http://www.dep.pa.gov). Or comments may  
2 be submitted by e-mail at [regcomments@pa.gov](mailto:regcomments@pa.gov).

3 All comments are entered into  
4 e-comment and are accessible to the public. The  
5 subject heading of the proposed rulemaking and a  
6 return name and address must be included in each  
7 e-mail.

8 Comments may also be sent through US  
9 Postal Mail, addressed to the Environmental Quality  
10 Board, P.O. Box 8477, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania  
11 17105-8477.

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

19 I'd now like to call for the first  
20 commenter.

21 Is our first commenter, John Berten,  
22 with us?

23 REV. BERTEN: Hi.

24 This is John Berten.

25 Can you hear me?

1                   MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can, John.  
2                   Please go ahead. Let me start the  
3 timer.

4                   REV. BERTEN: All right.  
5                   This is the Reverend John Berten,  
6 J-O-H-N, B-E-R-T-E-N.

7                   What else do you need from me? I'm  
8 representing Germantown Mennonite Church at 21 West  
9 Washington Lane, Philadelphia, PA 19144. And I  
10 think that's all the information you need from me.

11                   So in addition to serving as a pastor  
12 at Germantown Mennonite Church in the Germantown  
13 neighborhood in Philadelphia, before I served in  
14 that capacity, I grew up in a small town in central  
15 Kansas. Every week when we drove out to visit my  
16 great aunt and uncle on their farm, we passed  
17 natural gas pumping units standing in every wheat  
18 field.

19                   Any time we took a trip to the big  
20 city or left the county, driving in any direction,  
21 we passed gas compressors and oil refineries. And  
22 so it is not surprising, then, that I, like many of  
23 my friends, developed asthma. And to this day, I  
24 sometimes struggle to breathe after exercising.  
25 That means in the past year, every time I go on a

1 run, I always ask myself: Do I have COVID, or did I  
2 just grow up near fossil fuel infrastructure?

3 I left home to attend college in  
4 northeast Ohio just as the fracking companies had  
5 --- they had decimated Western PA and began to make  
6 their play for the Utica Shale fields.

7 A couple moved to our small town in  
8 Ohio from Washington County, PA, having literally  
9 fled the state because of the toxic fumes, flammable  
10 water, and rising cancer rates. Our other neighbors  
11 were dealing with decades of industrial collapse in  
12 and around Youngstown and Cleveland, and they  
13 struggled to resist the deal pushed on them by the  
14 government and corporate interests, which was sell  
15 us your mineral rights, and after we leave a  
16 poorly-tapped well that leaks everywhere, you and  
17 your neighbors will be stuck holding the medical  
18 bills.

19 Because the state didn't offer other  
20 meaningful economic opportunities, many made this  
21 deal with the devil. And some died from cancer or  
22 from explosions or from poverty when the jobs went  
23 elsewhere.

24 We now live in West Philadelphia, less  
25 than two miles from the recently-closed PES

1 refinery. Once again, the fossil fuel industry has  
2 spent decades poisoning my neighbors and warping the  
3 local economy into its vision. I have sat in  
4 meetings convened by the city that have pitted  
5 steelworkers against their neighbors, a false choice  
6 between economic well-being and health.

7 I am here to testify in favor of  
8 Pennsylvania joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas  
9 Initiative. I'm calling on EQB and the Department  
10 of Environmental Protection to not allow fossil fuel  
11 plants to increase their emissions once RGGI is  
12 implemented.

13 Additionally, the Department must rely  
14 upon site-specific data to inform the full scope of  
15 existing and potential degradation and to impose  
16 additional conditions that are not necessary ---  
17 that are necessary to prevent and remedy  
18 degradation.

19 Ultimately, our state's participation  
20 in RGGI is a matter of survival. The dying fossil  
21 fuel industry sits on our democratic processes like  
22 this huge, dead weight. Fossil fuels industries  
23 have been poisoning and profiting for too long while  
24 preventing disadvantaged environmental justice  
25 communities from achieving justice in clean energy

1 technologies.

2                   It is not enough that we join RGGI and  
3 use it to take the equivalent of four million cars  
4 off the road, as the DEP's own study has said that  
5 it would. The rulemaking has to follow equity  
6 principles by distributing environmental and  
7 economic benefits to disproportionately impacted  
8 communities that have faced historic environmental  
9 disparities, severe economic harm, or demonstrated  
10 cumulative impact of environmental risk. We must  
11 and can use this opportunity to create jobs for  
12 communities who have never recovered from  
13 deindustrialization and who have been systematically  
14 excluded from the economy.

15                   We can and we must prioritize projects to  
16 improve the health and well-being of those who are  
17 suffering under the dead weight of the devil's deal.

18       For too long, Pennsylvania has shaken hands with  
19 the devil. And the devil has come to collect his  
20 dues in the lungs of our children, the bodies of our  
21 neighbors, and the poverty of our communities. I  
22 believe it is time to break this contract and forge  
23 a green new deal with the people of Pennsylvania.

24                   It is time to join the Regional  
25 Greenhouse Gas Initiative and use it as one tool in

1 this fight to create good jobs and a livable planet  
2 for all.

3 Thank you for your time.

4 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, John.

5 Our second speaker was not able to  
6 join us today. So speaker number 3, Mark Mondor.

7 Mark, are you with us?

8 MR. MONDOR: Yes.

9 Can you hear me okay?

10 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can, Mark.

11 Please go ahead.

12 MR. MONDOR: Thank you.

13 Good afternoon, and thank you for this  
14 opportunity to speak today.

15 My name is Marc Mondor. I am an  
16 architect and am a principal and cofounder of  
17 evolveEA, a green building and sustainability  
18 consulting and design firm in Pittsburgh,  
19 Pennsylvania. I am also president of the American  
20 Institute of Architects of Pennsylvania,  
21 representing 3,000 architect members from across the  
22 state. I also serve as vice chair of the  
23 Pennsylvania Climate Change Advisory Committee,  
24 currently at work on the 2021 Pennsylvania Climate  
25 Action Plan.



1 I am here today to speak in support of  
2 Pennsylvania's seamless entry into the Regional  
3 Greenhouse Gas Initiative. My firm, Evolve, employs  
4 17 people and has been in practice since 2004,  
5 working to integrate sustainable and triple bottom  
6 line solutions into the built environment, notably  
7 buildings. Triple bottom line means that  
8 environment and equity considerations, as well as  
9 economic considerations, be taken into account into  
10 all decisions.

11 Our experience tells us that the  
12 cheapest price is not always the best option if we  
13 account for indirect, adverse effects. Pennsylvania  
14 has been a fossil fuel juggernaut for centuries as a  
15 legitimate part of our own folklore. We quantify  
16 what we value. Energy, if created by fossil fuels,  
17 creates carbon emissions.

18 There is a triple bottom line cost to  
19 carbon, beyond the dollar cost of the energy.  
20 Carbon has a social cost, as we have seen in the  
21 results of climate change, such as cloudburst,  
22 flooding, infrastructure degradation, droughts,  
23 reduced crop yields, and the loss of our ski  
24 recreation areas. We are also seeing these effects  
25 in health outcomes related to air quality. And, as

1 our Mayor Peduto says, a less desirable destination  
2 for knowledge workers.

3                   The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative  
4 will place a price on carbon. RGGI is not a tax;  
5 it's an impact fee, that we should have been paying  
6 all along, which will incentivize more efficient  
7 energy production.

8                   Regarding my firm, Evolve's, work,  
9 this will help validate and provide a market signal  
10 for the energy efficiency consulting and design work  
11 that we do.

12                   According to E2.org, energy efficiency  
13 and renewable energy jobs are the reliably fastest  
14 growing employment sector in Pennsylvania, growing  
15 at an annual rate of 6 to 8 percent year over year.

16                   Meanwhile, gas jobs are stagnant and coal jobs are  
17 declining.

18                   If we want to talk about job creation,  
19 which is the nectar for any politician, then we need  
20 to embrace this concept. What's more is that these  
21 green jobs are also healthier for the workers who  
22 perform them, working above ground and with smaller  
23 tools.

24                   The benefit of RGGI is that it's a cap  
25 and invest program. The hundreds of millions of

1 dollars projected as annual revenue can and should  
2 be used for energy efficiency and renewable energy  
3 programs and incentives.

4                   Do we remember the Pennsylvania  
5 Sunshine Harvest and Growing Greener grants and the  
6 many programs of that sort from only a decade ago?  
7 These had a huge impact, leveraging efforts with a  
8 multifold multiplier, establishing an identity for  
9 Pennsylvania, creating jobs and reducing energy use.

10                   This revenue can and should also be  
11 spent on education programs. Pennsylvanians have  
12 been told that energy cost is a zero sum game and  
13 that RGGI will only make energy more expensive for  
14 us. The reality is that this money can be used to  
15 create low income and small business energy  
16 efficiency programs at a time when so many of us  
17 could use this relief. Efficiency and renewables  
18 programs can be created that will lead to economies  
19 of scale and predictability in the near term, which  
20 will then will attract more investment from energy  
21 and renewables companies, which will then create  
22 more green jobs.

23                   We need to move forward into a  
24 progressive energy economy. When I hear nearly  
25 every municipality and corporation talking about a

1 zero carbon and all-electric future, I want for  
2 Pennsylvania to not only keep up, I want for  
3 Pennsylvania to lead it. We have been world leaders  
4 in fossil fuel innovation and production for two  
5 centuries. With the foresight and investment that  
6 joining RGGI will enable, we can proactively provide  
7 energy leadership and be globally competitive in  
8 this century as well.

9 Thank you.

10 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Marc.

11 Speaker number 4 today is Phoebe Bolz.

12 MS. BOLZ: Hi. I am here.

13 Can you hear me?

14 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can, Phoebe.

15 Please go ahead.

16 MS. BOLZ: Awesome.

17 Good afternoon, and thank you for the  
18 opportunity to offer my testimony today. My name is  
19 Phoebe Bolz. I'm a sophomore at Bryn Mawr College,  
20 about 20 minutes outside of Philly. I've only  
21 considered myself an environmental activist for the  
22 past couple years, but I've been terrified of the  
23 climate crisis for most of my life.

24 One of the most important moments for  
25 me was actually watching a movie called "Before the

1 Flood." It's a great documentary that follows a  
2 middle-aged Leonardo DiCaprio as he discovers the  
3 reality of climate change. He learns how in 2016,  
4 cities and communities all around the world have  
5 already begun to experience the negative impacts of  
6 this crisis.

7                   This movie was a shock to my system as  
8 I started to understand that if we didn't take  
9 serious action against this looming crisis, I might  
10 not have a future. I might not make it past 2050.  
11 I was so scared.

12                   This film was also the first time I  
13 heard about a carbon tax and about cap and trade  
14 systems. I was a 15-year-old watching this movie,  
15 and I hardly understood what either of those things  
16 meant, and yet they made so much sense to me. In  
17 their simplest terms, these programs made polluters  
18 pay. And as I've learned from living in  
19 Pennsylvania, the fossil fuel industry certainly  
20 isn't paying now.

21                   In fact, in the 2012-13 fiscal year,  
22 Pennsylvania handed out 3 billion dollars in tax  
23 breaks to the fossil fuel industry. Back in 2015,  
24 these ideas of a carbon tax or a cap and trade  
25 program just didn't seem achievable. I never

1 thought that there would be enough motivation to  
2 start de-incentivizing these energy sources that  
3 actively harm our planet and our livelihoods. It  
4 was all too tightly controlled by the industry.

5                   But I first heard about RGGI this  
6 summer, and I was so excited. The Regional  
7 Greenhouse Gas Initiative is an incredibly  
8 successful cap and invest program. If Pennsylvania  
9 joined RGGI, we could avoid 188 million tons of  
10 carbon pollution by 2030 in this state alone.  
11 That's the same as taking 4 million cars off the  
12 road every year and 11 thousand cars off the road  
13 every single day. Just imagine that difference.  
14 Breathing cleaner, less toxic air instead of letting  
15 our air quality worsen for the next 10, 20, or 30  
16 years. I can feel that difference.

17                   This program genuinely excites me  
18 because it's a program that actually invests in my  
19 future. As a young person, I don't know what my  
20 life will look like in 30 years; I don't know what  
21 it will look like in 10 years. I have no choice but  
22 to advocate for good policies and programs that will  
23 protect my future and hope that politicians and  
24 decision-makers take the kind of decisive climate  
25 action that we need to ensure that I will be safe

1 and happy, not forever affected by this growing  
2 climate crisis.

3 RGGI gives me hope that a place like  
4 Pennsylvania, so tightly controlled by the fossil  
5 fuel industry, can take its first steps towards  
6 securing a livable future for every Pennsylvanian.  
7 That's why I am urging the DEP and Pennsylvania  
8 decision makers to support this program and to  
9 support the futures of young people like me all  
10 across the Commonwealth.

11 Thank you for allowing me to testify  
12 today.

13 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Phoebe.

14 Our next speaker, number 5, is Ira  
15 Josephs.

16 MR. JOSEPHS: My name is Ira Josephs.

17 That's I-R-A, J-O-S-E-P-H-S. I am an individual  
18 speaking in support of Pennsylvania joining the  
19 Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. I have always  
20 been an outdoors type of person, enjoying hiking,  
21 biking, camping, and going to the beach. And the  
22 environment has always been the most important issue  
23 to me.

24 I truly feel that climate change is  
25 threatening all life on our planet. Rising seas,

1 erratic weather patterns, more frequent and severe  
2 storms, and wildfires are just some of the harmful  
3 impacts affecting our lives. Of course, those most  
4 effected are in already compromised communities, and  
5 I sympathize with them.

6           As an individual, I do my part by  
7 riding a bicycle for transportation and drive an  
8 electric vehicle when going further. I purchase  
9 wind energy for my home and conserve resources like  
10 energy, water, and food. Also, being vegan and  
11 eating organic whole foods greatly reduces my carbon  
12 footprint. And when I have concerns, I let my  
13 legislators know as well as volunteer for  
14 environmental nonprofits.

15           I don't expect everyone to live like me,  
16 but it hurts and incenses me to see legislators,  
17 influenced by the fossil fuel industry, make or  
18 repeal laws that result in greater corporate profits  
19 at the expense of the Earth and her inhabitants.

20           I see the Regional Greenhouse Gas  
21 Initiative as a fantastic opportunity to lower  
22 Pennsylvania's carbon pollution and an important  
23 step to mitigating climate change. It will improve  
24 the lives of all Pennsylvanians.

25           It has bipartisan support, and Governor



1 Wolf is in favor of it. Nine New England and  
2 Mid-Atlantic states have been participating, and it  
3 has been very successful in reducing carbon output.  
4 And billions of dollars will be generated that can  
5 be used for renewable energy, electric vehicle  
6 charging infrastructure, green new jobs, and more.  
7 And increasing the restrictions on energy  
8 manufactures over time is easier on them than if it  
9 was all at once.

10 I realize the fossil fuel industry may be  
11 struggling to maintain the same level of  
12 profitability with the drop in transportation due to  
13 the pandemic and the low price of oil, but not doing  
14 this and allowing increasing pollution causes more  
15 harm to our vulnerable populations and the need for  
16 disaster relief that is paid for by all taxpayers.

17 I urge Pennsylvania to join RGGI to  
18 take a stand for Pennsylvanians and all life on  
19 Earth.

20 Thank you very much.

21 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Ira.

22 Speaker number 6 is Michael McAmis.

23 Is Michael with us?

24 MR. JAGIELA: I do not see him on the  
25 line.

1                   MS. GRIFFIN: Okay.

2                   We did get a message from him that he  
3 wasn't sure if he'd be able to join.

4                   Our next speaker, number 7, then, is  
5 Senator-elect Nikil Saval.

6                   MR. SAVAL: Yes, I am here.

7                   Can you hear me?

8                   MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can.

9                   Please go ahead.

10                  MR. SAVAL: Great.

11                  Good afternoon.

12                  My name is Nikil Saval. That's N-I-K-  
13 I-L, S-A-V-A-L. I am the incoming state senator for  
14 the 1st Senatorial District. I am also a community  
15 member in South Philadelphia and a parent raising a  
16 young child.

17                  I am here to add my voice to the  
18 overwhelming majority of Pennsylvanians who support  
19 our state's participation in the Regional Greenhouse  
20 Gas Initiative. And I urge the approval of this  
21 plan.

22                  I ran for state senate because our  
23 state, our country, and our world cannot afford  
24 inaction. We stand at the precipice of the climate  
25 crisis, the ground beneath our feet beginning to

1 give way. In the face of climate change and  
2 ecological devastation, we must work together and  
3 take swift and bold action to prevent the worst of  
4 its harm. Across the northeast and the  
5 mid-Atlantic, ours is the only state not to have  
6 joined or to be in the process of joining. And our  
7 state is the fourth largest emitter of greenhouse  
8 gasses in the country.

9           Pennsylvania's absence from this  
10 initiative leaves a chasm in the efforts to mitigate  
11 harm. My city, Philadelphia, is the poorest big  
12 city in the country. As with every societal harm,  
13 the damage of the climate crisis is  
14 disproportionately borne by poor communities and  
15 communities of color. The rate of asthma  
16 experienced by my neighbors is nearly three times  
17 the national average. This is to say nothing of the  
18 elevated rates of heart attack, cancer, and stroke.

19           The often cited but rarely heeded  
20 section of Pennsylvania's Constitution, residents'  
21 rights to clean water and clean air, are enshrined.

22       Participation in RGGI is a significant step toward  
23 upholding these rights. And my son, Ishaan, is two  
24 years old. The world in which he and all children  
25 are growing up is uncertain at best. For him, for

1 all of our children, and for generations not yet  
2 born, I fight for a thriving climate, for jobs with  
3 livable wages, and for the right to an environment  
4 that will not cause physical harm. Our  
5 participation in RGGI would mean that in the next  
6 ten years, Pennsylvania's carbon emissions are  
7 reduced by 188 million tons and 27,000 new  
8 sustainable jobs would be added. And hundreds of  
9 premature deaths from respiratory illnesses would be  
10 prevented.

11                   The import of the decision to join  
12 RGGI cannot be overstated. Will it take more to  
13 fight the climate crisis? Absolutely. But it will  
14 take nothing less. Delaying joining this initiative  
15 is unacceptable.

16                   I thank the Environmental Quality  
17 Board for holding these hearings, and I urge that  
18 the plan for Pennsylvania to take this necessary  
19 step be approved.

20                   Thank you.

21                   MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Senator-elect  
22 Saval.

23                   Speaker number 8 is Glenavie Norton.

24                   MS. NORTON: Hello.

25                   Can you hear me?

1                   MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can.

2                   Please go ahead and start.

3                   MS. NORTON: Okay. Yes.

4                   Good afternoon.

5                   I am Glenavie Norton. That's  
6 G-L-E-N-A-V as in Victor, I-E. The last name is  
7 Norton. And I live in Philadelphia.

8                   And before I talk about RGGI, I want  
9 to tell you a little about myself. I grew up in  
10 Washington, D.C., in the 1950s and 60s. As you  
11 know, Washington, D.C., is about 150 miles south of  
12 Philadelphia. Winters in Washington during my  
13 childhood were considerably cooler than they have  
14 been recently and than they are currently in  
15 Philadelphia. Temperatures were routinely in the  
16 30's and often lower. There was snow. Not always,  
17 but usually a couple of times a winter. It  
18 sometimes lay on the ground for up to five days.

19                   How different things are now, 150  
20 miles to the north. In Philadelphia, the three-foot  
21 snow fall of early 1996 and the two bitterly cold  
22 and snowy winters of this last decade caused by the  
23 extension southward of the polar vortex were  
24 anomalies. Last year, there was barely any snow.  
25 This year may be the same.

1                   My father worked in government with  
2 scientists of many kinds, among them physicists and  
3 nuclear physicists. He taught me as a child about  
4 global warming, then called the greenhouse effect.  
5 He described the effect of trapped carbon dioxide on  
6 and near the surface of the earth. His colleagues,  
7 the scientists --- to a man --- and they were all  
8 men --- agreed that over the long term, this carbon  
9 entrapment could become a devastating problem.

10                   We ignored the problem. It would not  
11 be ignored and it caught up with us. Now, if we  
12 cannot quickly prevent increases in global  
13 temperatures, we will destroy our planet, ourselves,  
14 and all the other animals and plants that share it  
15 with us. Hence, the immense importance of RGGI, the  
16 Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

17                   RGGI caps the pollution from power  
18 plants and reduces these caps each year, so the air  
19 gets cleaner every year. Power plant owners have to  
20 pay for their pollution, which provides an incentive  
21 for them to reduce emissions.

22                   Improvements in air quality by  
23 reductions in sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide, and  
24 particulate matter pollution will result in  
25 decreases of asthma and other respiratory diseases.

1 As a chronic allergy sufferer, I will really  
2 appreciate that. So will the inhabitants of  
3 environmental injustice communities for whom the  
4 rates of these illnesses are intolerably high.

5 In the RGGI states, that is all the  
6 northeastern and mid-Atlantic states, from Maine to  
7 Virginia, except Pennsylvania, carbon pollution has  
8 fallen by 97 percent and electricity prices have  
9 fallen by 5.7 percent while increasing significantly  
10 in the rest of the U.S. Think what would happen if  
11 Pennsylvania, the 4th highest greenhouse gas emitter  
12 in the U.S. were to join the RGGI states.

13 The future is here and we have to face  
14 it. The youth of this country, as Phoebe reminded  
15 us, are well aware of our climate emergency and  
16 afraid. My goddaughter's 11-year-old son lay awake  
17 at night thinking about it.

18 Are we going to let them down even  
19 more than we already have? I certainly hope not.  
20 That is why I passionately support RGGI.

21 Thank you.

22 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Glenavie.

23 Speaker number 9 is Valerie Cheney.

24 MS. CHENEY: Hello.

25 Can you hear me?

1                   MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can, Val.

2                   MS. CHENEY: Great. Okay.

3                   Good afternoon, everyone.

4                   My name is Val Cheney, and I'm from  
5 Media, Pennsylvania. I currently attend the  
6 University of Pittsburgh, and I'm pleased to be here  
7 today to support the Regional Greenhouse Gas  
8 Initiative.

9                   I saw a statistic recently that the  
10 average winter temperatures in the Philadelphia  
11 region have risen by 4.8 degrees over the last 50  
12 years. While this may not seem like much, many of  
13 us here have witnessed firsthand the devastating  
14 impacts brought on by these changes. Hurricanes and  
15 severe weather storms are increasingly more common  
16 in this area, so much so that many people in my town  
17 now own generators to prepare for power outages.

18                   Perhaps even more alarming is that we  
19 now have tornadoes here. Five years ago, a tornado  
20 in Aston caused a tree to fall on my friend Will's  
21 house, and the damage was so severe that the house  
22 was subsequently condemned. Fortunately, no one was  
23 hurt.

24                   But these visible impacts of climate  
25 change are only a part of the problem. We must also



1 acknowledge the aspects of climate change that we  
2 cannot see.

3                   For years now, I've been living in  
4 Pittsburgh, but only just found out that the city  
5 consistently ranks as having the worst air quality  
6 in the country. This pollution in the air cannot  
7 always be seen by our eyes, but it is certainly felt  
8 by our health. That's why I support the Regional  
9 Greenhouse Gas Initiative, because I believe it is  
10 in everyone's best interest to treat this matter  
11 with urgency

12                   We cannot afford to wait for more  
13 catastrophes to strike before taking action. Each  
14 day that we wait, we put more Pennsylvanians' health  
15 and safety at risk. By joining RGGI, we can reduce  
16 the amount of harmful air pollution, which will  
17 particularly benefit those impacted by poor air  
18 quality, such as children, seniors, and low income  
19 families.

20                   We can cut carbon emissions by 188  
21 million tons, which is the equivalent to removing 36  
22 million cars off the road. And we can do all this  
23 while generating over 27,000 new jobs in this state.  
24 These profound changes will certainly lead to a  
25 favorable outcome in terms of public health, the

1 economy, and the sustainability of our planet.

2           As one of the largest climate  
3 polluters in the country, I believe Pennsylvania has  
4 a responsibility to act and to protect people like  
5 my friend Will, whose home was lost. This  
6 responsibility is outlined in the state  
7 constitution, that guarantees the right for all  
8 residents to have access to clean drinking water and  
9 safe air to breathe.

10           Joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas  
11 Initiative is one of the major steps we can take not  
12 only to reduce carbon emissions, but actually make  
13 Pennsylvanians lives better.

14           Thank you so much for your time.

15           MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Val.

16           The next speaker, number 10, is Flora  
17 Cardoni.

18           MS. CARDONI: Hello.

19           Can you hear me?

20           MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can, Flora.

21           Please go ahead.

22           MS. CARDONI: Thanks. Thank you so  
23 much.

24           My name is Flora Cardoni, and I am the  
25 field director with PennEnvironment, the statewide,

1 citizen-based environmental nonprofit group. We  
2 have offices in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. And I  
3 live in Philadelphia myself.

4 PennEnvironment works to ensure that  
5 all Pennsylvanians have clean air to breathe, clean  
6 water to drink, public lands to enjoy, and a safe  
7 and livable climate for generations to come. And  
8 joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative is an  
9 important part of achieving that vision. So thank  
10 you for this opportunity to testify today on behalf  
11 of PennEnvironment and in support of Pennsylvania  
12 joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

13 I am testifying because as a young  
14 person today, I am extremely scared and really  
15 concerned about my future and the future of the  
16 planet in the face of the worsening climate crisis.

17 But I am also testifying on behalf of thousands of  
18 PennEnvironment's members and volunteers across the  
19 state who have attended events and made calls,  
20 signed petitions and written letters in support of  
21 RGGI this year and the 70 percent of Pennsylvanians  
22 who support the state joining the program.

23 RGGI is so widely supported because we  
24 are in the midst of a climate crisis. Here in  
25 Pennsylvania, we're already seeing the impacts of

1 climate change, from more extreme heat days, more  
2 frequent bad air days, and booming tick populations  
3 all threatening our health; to more frequent and  
4 extreme downpours and flash flooding threatening our  
5 communities.

6           Of course, all around the world, the  
7 impacts are even worse with food and water  
8 insecurity rising and more devastating wildfires and  
9 hurricanes destroying our homes.

10           In the face of these worsening  
11 impacts, many Pennsylvanians are wondering what can  
12 be done to help tackle climate pollution right here  
13 in the Commonwealth. Joining the Regional  
14 Greenhouse Gas Initiative is one commonsense step  
15 towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions and  
16 tackling climate change. And we really do not have  
17 time to waste.

18           Over the past twelve years, RGGI has  
19 proven to be the most successful state-level program  
20 in the nation when it comes to addressing greenhouse  
21 gas emissions. And the data is really indisputable.

22       From 2008 to 2018, carbon emissions reduction in  
23 RGGI states outpaced the rest of the country by 90  
24 percent. And it's really time for Pennsylvania to  
25 follow their lead. As one of the largest climate

1 polluters in the country, Pennsylvania joining RGGI  
2 would have an outsized impact on reducing emissions.

3 In fact, as other testifiers have stated, if we  
4 join RGGI, we could reduce our carbon emissions by  
5 188 million tons, the equivalent of taking more than  
6 36 million cars off the road, in just the first  
7 decade alone.

8                   These huge reductions to climate  
9 pollution are not the only benefits. By joining  
10 this program and reducing harmful emissions from  
11 power plants, we can also significantly improve our  
12 air quality by reducing particulate matter pollution  
13 and pollution from sulfur dioxide and nitrogen  
14 oxide. These pollutants are linked to health  
15 problems, including respiratory illness, heart  
16 attack, stroke, cancer, mental health problems, and  
17 more. Reducing this pollution means fewer hospital  
18 visits and asthma attacks, fewer premature deaths  
19 across our state, and a healthier population  
20 overall.

21                   RGGI also provides a huge opportunity  
22 to invest in Pennsylvania and the clean energy  
23 future that we need and deserve. The initiative is  
24 projected to put nearly \$2 billion into the state's  
25 economy over the next decade alone. And this money

1 can be used to fund important programs like  
2 low-income home weatherization projects, energy  
3 efficiency initiatives, renewable energy development  
4 and jobs training, and more. These investments can  
5 do even more to clean up our air, fight climate  
6 change, and help the people of Pennsylvania.

7                   The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative  
8 is a time-tested, commonsense program with a long  
9 track record of success. As the fourth largest  
10 greenhouse gas emitter in the country, it is  
11 Pennsylvania's duty to start lowering our carbon  
12 pollution and cleaning up our air however we can.  
13 RGGI is a step that we can and should take today  
14 towards ensuring that all Pennsylvanians have a safe  
15 and livable climate and clean air to breathe for  
16 generations to come. So I urge you to approve this  
17 plan for Pennsylvania to join the Regional  
18 Greenhouse Gas Initiative and continue to take real  
19 steps to tackle the climate crisis.

20                   Thank you.

21                   MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Flora.

22                   Our next speaker, number 11, is Joe  
23 Schreiber

24                   MR. SCHREIBER: Can you hear me?

25                   MS. GRIFFIN: If you can speak up a

1 little bit, Joe.

2 MR. SCHREIBER: Can you hear me?

3 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes. It's much better.

4 Thank you.

5 MR. SCHREIBER: Okay. Thank you.

6 My name is Joe Schreiber. It is  
7 S-C-H-R-E-I-B-E-R.

8 I am speaking today as a concerned  
9 citizen and on behalf of my three beautiful  
10 daughters and all of the other beautiful sons and  
11 daughters in our state. I am desperately worried  
12 for their futures. And I am embarrassed and ashamed  
13 that my generation has done so little to address the  
14 climate crisis. Instead of following the science  
15 and listening to the experts, we have been making  
16 choices and implementing policies that are primarily  
17 driven by the narrow self-interests and financial  
18 needs of the fossil fuel industries.

19 This climate crisis continues to  
20 worsen. And unless we rapidly change course, we  
21 will be passing on to our children a state, a  
22 country, and a planet that is even more polluted,  
23 hotter, and unstable than it is today. We will also  
24 be passing on to our children the huge costs that  
25 will be necessary to address this crisis while we

1 cynically enjoy the benefits of our short term and  
2 short-sighted greed. As you know, specifically for  
3 Pennsylvania, this means our children will have to  
4 deal with and pay for the devastating effects of  
5 extreme heat waves, dangerous flooding, landslides,  
6 agricultural losses, and cleaning up all of the  
7 other messes we are leaving behind.

8                   We have to be better than this. One  
9 small step in a positive direction is for  
10 Pennsylvania to join the Regional Greenhouse Gas  
11 Initiative. Joining with other states to gradually  
12 reduce the amount of carbon we are sending into the  
13 air, reducing the pollution in the air that we all  
14 have to breathe and in the water that we all have to  
15 drink, and requiring polluters to pay for the mess  
16 they are creating are all absolutely necessary to  
17 move us away from fossil fuels and toward a cleaner,  
18 healthier, and happier future for my daughters and  
19 for all of the younger generations to come.

20                   Our state has been a leader in so many  
21 areas over the history of our country. Now it is  
22 our time to be a leader in addressing the climate  
23 crisis by joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas  
24 Initiative. To do otherwise is to continue to fail  
25 our children.



1 Thank you for the opportunity to speak  
2 today.

3 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Joe.

4 Our next speaker, number 12, is Mark  
5 Knight.

6 Are you with us, Mark?

7 MR. KNIGHT: Yeah.

8 MS. GRIFFIN: Oh, there you are.  
9 Thanks.

10 Go ahead, please.

11 MR. KNIGHT: Okay.

12 Hi.

13 My name is Mark Knight, M-A-R-K  
14 K-N-I-G-H-T. I live in Delaware County, and I grew  
15 up in Chester County.

16 When I was 28, I became a quadriplegic  
17 after a bodysurfing accident in California. And my  
18 breathing is now compromised. There are scores of  
19 other people in our region who also have respiratory  
20 issues.

21 I am testifying here today to protect  
22 the quality of the air we all breathe and urge and  
23 declare Pennsylvania must join the Regional  
24 Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

25 As one of the largest climate

1 polluters in the country, Pennsylvania's joining  
2 would have an enormous impact on the reduction of  
3 carbon emissions into our skies.

4 By joining RGGI, we can reduce harmful  
5 air pollution that affects everyone's health,  
6 especially the health of the more vulnerable, like  
7 me.

8 RGGI would promote reducing the  
9 emissions of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxide, and  
10 particulate matter that has been linked to a  
11 multitude of health problems.

12 To end, there are also many economic  
13 benefits to joining RGGI. According to  
14 Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental  
15 Protection, the initiative is projected to create  
16 20,000 new jobs in Pennsylvania and put nearly \$2  
17 billion into the state's economy over the next  
18 decade alone.

19 Pennsylvania must live up to its name  
20 as the Keystone State and join the Regional  
21 Greenhouse Gas Initiative, along with the states  
22 Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland,  
23 Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York,  
24 Rhode Island, Vermont, and soon to be joining  
25 Virginia and recognize greenhouse gases do not stop

1 at the border.

2 Thanks for the opportunity for me to  
3 testify today.

4 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Mark.

5 Our next speaker, number 13, is David  
6 Burtenbaugh.

7 MR. BURTENBAUGH: Hey, can you hear me  
8 okay?

9 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can, David.

10 Please go ahead.

11 MR. BURTENBAUGH: Okay. Thank you.

12 You got my name right too. That's  
13 pretty cool. A lot of people don't.

14 My name is David Burtenbaugh, and I  
15 live in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15217. It's really  
16 nice to be here to talk about something that will  
17 help our state and our country. I support RGGI, a  
18 program that will work to maintain Pennsylvanians'  
19 habitable for our current and future generations.

20 RGGI is good because it holds power  
21 generating industries financially accountable for  
22 the damage we know their pollution does to the  
23 planet and human health. As I write this letter,  
24 our house is filled with the acrid sulfur smell of  
25 industrial pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

1 For years, our local plant has refused to clean up  
2 or filter their emissions. So tonight, my lungs are  
3 doing the jobs.

4                   These are the same kinds of  
5 externalities that play out in our energy  
6 production. We pay higher taxes and increased  
7 insurance when climate change causes flooding, high  
8 winds, and extreme weather events that damage homes,  
9 roads, and infrastructure.

10                   When industrial pollution makes us  
11 sick, we're burdened with hospital bills that can  
12 ruin lives. An extremely rare bone cancer called  
13 Ewing sarcoma occurs around areas of fracking. The  
14 energy sector does not factor in the cost of your  
15 hospital treatment or lost wages. It may seem  
16 morbid, but they don't pay for the funerals for  
17 impacted families of those who have died because of  
18 respiratory or health-related disease.

19                   We are facing an energy generation  
20 sector that has no answers for the impending climate  
21 crisis and a Republican legislature that props up  
22 these polluting industries as opposed to cleaner  
23 energy generation. It's as if they lack the  
24 foresight to protect their own future generations  
25 for what most certainly will come if we do not act

1 to protect our environment.

2                   With RGGI caps, corporate profits do  
3 not have to be at odds with public health.  
4 Pennsylvania --- Pennsylvania's public sector,  
5 currently the fifth dirtiest in the nation, can  
6 achieve significant emission reductions through RGGI  
7 while driving investment in renewable energy and  
8 energy efficiency, including targeted efficiency for  
9 low-income consumers.

10                   Since RGGI started in 2009,  
11 participating states have cut their carbon emissions  
12 90 percent faster than the rest of the country.  
13 RGGI has a ten-year history of delivering health and  
14 climate benefits to participating states. Residents  
15 in the northeast are now experiencing significant  
16 fewer premature deaths, heart attacks, and  
17 respiratory illnesses.

18                   If you look at the northeast part of  
19 the country, it looks like a RGGI puzzle where the  
20 states to the east are signed on. And they are  
21 renewing because it's made a positive impact to  
22 public health and their economies. The following  
23 eastern seaboard states --- and I will read them  
24 because it's important to know that we're the  
25 outlier: Maryland, Delaware, New York, Connecticut,

1 Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont,  
2 and Maine, plus New Jersey, is scheduled to join  
3 RGGI next year. We are the missing puzzle piece.  
4 It's right there on the table. We know exactly  
5 where it goes. We just need the will to put it in  
6 place.

7 I strongly support joining RGGI.

8 Thank you.

9 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, David.

10 The next speaker, number 14, is Kate  
11 Turkeltaub.

12 MS. TURKELTAUB: Hi.

13 Can you hear me?

14 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can, Kate.

15 Please go ahead.

16 MS. TURKELTAUB: Thank you for the  
17 opportunity to speak today.

18 My name is Kate Turkeltaub, and I am a  
19 19-year-old student at Lehigh University in  
20 Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

21 As the fourth-largest emitter of  
22 greenhouse gases in the nation, Pennsylvania has a  
23 responsibility to be a leader in implementing  
24 climate solutions and reducing emissions.

25 As a student at Lehigh, clean air is

1 extremely personal to me. Whether I'm walking  
2 around campus, going for a run, or exploring hiking  
3 trails, I spend a lot of time outdoors. I do not  
4 want to continue to worry about how my time outside  
5 exposes me to harmful air pollution. Time spent  
6 outside should be used to enjoy nature and not  
7 thinking about how polluted the air in Pennsylvania  
8 truly is. RGGI will play a crucial part in reducing  
9 carbon dioxide emissions here in Pennsylvania, where  
10 climate change has already caused more extreme  
11 weather, such as higher temperatures, that  
12 exacerbate poor air quality.

13                   To continue for the clean air that we  
14 all deserve, Pennsylvania must join the Regional  
15 Greenhouse Gas Initiative. Many of my closest  
16 friends here in Pennsylvania suffer from asthma and  
17 are predisposed to the risks of air pollution.  
18 Cutting greenhouse gases under RGGI has the added  
19 benefit of significantly improving our air quality  
20 by reducing pollution from sulfur dioxide, nitrogen  
21 oxide, and particulate matter. These pollutants are  
22 linked to health problems, including respiratory  
23 illness.

24                   Hundreds of premature deaths from  
25 respiratory illnesses could be prevented, as well as

1 30,000 fewer hospital visits for these illnesses.  
2 10 percent of adults in Pennsylvania suffer from  
3 asthma. And their health needs to be protected.  
4 Our health can not be left in the hands of big  
5 polluters.

6 Air quality reductions from RGGI will  
7 particularly benefit those most impacted by poor air  
8 quality, such as the local members of the South  
9 Bethlehem community that Lehigh students call home.

10 The town of Bethlehem is a low-income  
11 neighborhood that suffers from a lack of economic  
12 and political resources. And they need our help in  
13 demanding that their health matters. Environmental  
14 justice is necessary to ensure the health and  
15 wellness of all Pennsylvanians and not just those  
16 with the financial and political resources to ensure  
17 it.

18 Outside of school, I am lucky to call  
19 Connecticut home, where the benefits of lower carbon  
20 dioxide emissions are obvious. As Connecticut has  
21 already joined RGGI, it is readily apparent that  
22 Pennsylvania must do the same.

23 RGGI works, and the data is  
24 indisputable. From 2008 through 2018, carbon  
25 pollution has decreased by 47 percent in



1 participating RGGI states, outpacing the rest of the  
2 country by 90 percent. This proves how detrimental  
3 it is for Pennsylvania to adopt RGGI, as the states  
4 that have already joined continue to pave the way  
5 for a safer environment.

6                   In Pennsylvania, our Constitution  
7 guarantees the right for all residents to clean  
8 water to drink and clean air to breathe. Joining  
9 the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative is one major  
10 step we can take to ensure our air is cleaner and to  
11 reduce pollution.

12                   Thank you.

13                   MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Kate.

14                   Our next speaker, number 15, is Dan  
15 Sutton.

16                   MR. SUTTON: Hi. This is Dan Sutton,  
17 D-A-N, S-U-T-T-O-N. I live in Wynnewood,  
18 Pennsylvania. And good afternoon, and thank you for  
19 the opportunity to testify today in support of  
20 Pennsylvania joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas  
21 Initiative.

22                   Pennsylvania should join the Regional  
23 Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI).

24                   I'm a 70-year-old white male. And  
25 after a career as a computer software architect, I

1 am now retired. I am married with four children.  
2 All of them are married. And I have four  
3 grandchildren, who I very much want to be able to  
4 enjoy our earth from the oceans and lakes to the  
5 forests and mountains. I have camped and hiked in  
6 the Canadian Rockies, the western prairies, the  
7 maritime provinces, the Great Lake neighborhoods,  
8 and our mid-Atlantic states, Washington, D.C.,  
9 California, and Florida, and Virginia. I'm looking  
10 forward to hiking and fishing with my grandchildren.

11 In southeastern Pennsylvania, we used  
12 to get three feet of snow and could cross country  
13 ski in a single storm. Now we rarely get any snow.

14 Since I moved to Pennsylvania, I have had asthma,  
15 allergies, and unknown irritants, which cause  
16 difficulty breathing, and dealing with continuous  
17 stuffed, infected sinuses. Otherwise, my wife and I  
18 consider ourselves to be very privileged, and we are  
19 doing everything that we can to reduce our carbon  
20 footprint simply because we can. Too many people  
21 cannot afford to do it. The insulation of our home  
22 is up to standard. We've eliminated our oil  
23 furnace, and our energy consumption is only  
24 wind-generated electricity.

25 What if the Pennsylvania government

1 could help its residents to all do this? The states  
2 that already participate in RGGI are positive  
3 examples. They have better achievements than  
4 Pennsylvania. They've raised almost \$3 billion by  
5 being in RGGI. They've created more jobs with  
6 economic growth 31 percent higher than the rest of  
7 country. These states have reduced the electrical  
8 costs, which is a must for our financially  
9 challenged residents.

10 I volunteer with a church group to  
11 repair homes for people who cannot afford to do so.

12 While repairing a dangerous front porch, I noticed  
13 that this window had no glass --- two windows have  
14 no glass, just clear plastic taped in place.

15 Neither the owner nor our church group could afford  
16 to put in these windows. With RGGI, our government  
17 would have millions of dollars more that could be  
18 used to fight climate change by assisting our  
19 financially challenged residents by ensuring not  
20 only new windows, but LED lighting, low-flow water  
21 fixtures, and homes are fully insulated. Insulation  
22 does prevent energy exchange so that homes cost less  
23 to heat and to cool and reduce carbon footprint.

24 Our government could promote migration  
25 to green energy production within our state by

1 supporting rooftop solar panels, by distributing  
2 energy storage, or could cap those obsolete gas  
3 wells that are leaking methane into our atmosphere.

4 We could provide construction incentives for cool  
5 green roofs and, by so doing, encourage these carbon  
6 reducing solutions to proliferate. RGGI will  
7 empower our government with additional funds while  
8 enjoying healthier residents and lower medical costs  
9 for all.

10 The Pennsylvania constitution  
11 guarantees us clean water and air, yet our  
12 government is not achieving that. Personally, I  
13 need cleaner air. And joining RGGI will help that.

14 I beg you to support Pennsylvania  
15 joining RGGI so that we can speed our state's  
16 conversion from fossil fuel to clean energy, cleaner  
17 water, cleaner air, and healthier residents.

18 Thank you for listening.

19 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Dan.

20 Our next speaker, number 16, is Kathy  
21 Westman.

22 MS. WESTMAN: Can you hear me?

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

24 Please go ahead.

25 MS. WESTMAN: Thank you.

1 My name is Kathryn Westman,  
2 K-A-T-H-R-Y-N, W-E-S-T-M-A-N, and I believe I  
3 registered under my nickname, Kathie, K-A-T-H-I-E.

4 I live in Gibsonia, Pennsylvania. As  
5 a public citizen who cares about the threat of  
6 global warming, I speak today in favor of the  
7 Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative program for  
8 Pennsylvania.

9 In our state, we already are seeing  
10 some of the global warming's negative effects.  
11 Warmer temperatures contribute to a longer vector  
12 season for Lyme disease, deer ticks. A decrease in  
13 milk production has occurred in the dairy industry.  
14 And the rising threat of heat strokes continues for  
15 --- is susceptible to our higher temperatures.

16 State agriculture has suffered from our  
17 unpredictable planting seasons. And heavy and  
18 prolonged rain has affected many of our communities  
19 with flooding and land slides.

20 Pennsylvania must take action now  
21 against global warming, and joining RGGI is an  
22 opportunity to do just that.

23 Since 2008, RGGI has had bipartisan  
24 support for slashing power plant emissions that  
25 contribute to global warming. The initiative has

1 shown this benefit in other states, slashing  
2 emissions by one half. Additional benefits include  
3 billions of dollars used for clean energy and energy  
4 efficiency projects and, dear to my heart, improved  
5 air quality.

6                   For I am also speaking as a registered  
7 nurse and lifelong resident of Pennsylvania,  
8 specifically Pittsburgh and Allegheny County. I  
9 live in a city and county so very proud of our  
10 medical schools, universities, and health  
11 facilities. Yet we must hang our heads when it  
12 comes to the health of our citizens. As a nurse and  
13 as a resident here, I have seen patients and  
14 neighbors affected by our air pollution. I  
15 personally mourned a wonderful little 10-year-old  
16 boy who died from a fatal asthma attack. Pittsburgh  
17 may no longer be the Smokey City, but its unseen  
18 minute air particulate pollution levels are  
19 inexcusable. We now know better. We must do  
20 better.

21                   For so many positive reasons, RGGI is  
22 a huge step in the right direction. In states where  
23 it has been implemented, it has significantly  
24 improved public health. Criteria pollutants, which  
25 are emitted by power plants and enter the lungs and

1 the blood stream, they have been reduced. This has  
2 prevented hundreds of heart attacks, thousands of  
3 asthma attacks, premature deaths, and other health  
4 problems.

5 I quote from a Columbia University  
6 study that showed southeastern Pennsylvania has  
7 already benefited from particulate matter reductions  
8 under the RGGI plans of neighboring states. By  
9 participating in RGGI and cleaning up local power  
10 plant pollution, the Commonwealth would achieve even  
11 greater benefits.

12 And finally, I speak as a person of  
13 faith. COVID-19 has made us all aware of the many  
14 who are disproportionately affected by the virus.  
15 It has highlighted those who suffer from  
16 pre-existing conditions. It vividly shows that air  
17 pollution and its devastating health effects are one  
18 of the starkest examples of environmental racism.

19 Low income communities and communities  
20 of color often face greater exposure to air  
21 pollution because of their proximity to industrial  
22 factories. RGGI will help address this inequality.

23 My faith calls me to care for all  
24 creation. I believe it is a moral obligation to  
25 stop global warming and work towards a better

1 environment for all. I believe RGGI will benefit  
2 our state and all its citizens.

3 Thank you.

4 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Kathy.

5 Our next speaker, number 17, is James  
6 Resh.

7 MR. RESH: Yes.

8 This is James Resh, R-E-S-H. I'm from  
9 Indiana, Pennsylvania. I'm a concerned citizen in  
10 favor of RGGI.

11 Are you hearing me okay?

12 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we are, James.

13 Please go ahead.

14 MR. RESH: The Carboniferous period  
15 in geological time lasted 60 million years, Fixing  
16 and ultimately storing carbon that we have used to  
17 fuel our development and growth since the industrial  
18 revolution. Sixty million years to store the  
19 carbon, and here we are using it up in a millisecond  
20 of geological time. This has to be creating an  
21 imbalance in the carbon cycle with our atmosphere  
22 and oceans being the recipient of this extra carbon.  
23 This extra carbon dioxide is warming our atmosphere  
24 and acidifying our oceans, and we will soon reach a  
25 point of no return.



1                   This imbalance in carbon needs to be  
2 addressed now and our reliance on fossil fuels, in  
3 particular coal, diminished. The Regional  
4 Greenhouse Gas Initiative, RGGI, is a good place to  
5 start. My hope is that the RGGI will find a  
6 benevolent means to transition our energy market  
7 away from coal to natural gas, renewables, and  
8 increased efficiencies.

9                   I am from Indiana County, home of four  
10 coal-fired power plants and probably the county to  
11 be most affected by RGGI. 100-car unit trains bring  
12 coal daily to supply these plants. Meanwhile, 5,700  
13 tons of carbon --- an hour of carbon dioxide ---  
14 leave the scrubbers. The coal and fly ash waste  
15 storage areas next to these plants continue to grow,  
16 some larger than the hills that surround these power  
17 plants. Yet Indiana County sits in the middle of  
18 one of the country's largest natural gas deposits,  
19 the Marcellus Shale. The RGGI can be the catalyst  
20 for switching these plants to use of this natural  
21 gas.

22                   Utilizing natural gas will preserve  
23 some of the traditional energy economy. But I am  
24 pointing out that it is only a bridge to a carbon  
25 neutral energy environment. The RGGI can be the

1 stimulus to get us to a renewable and efficient  
2 energy portfolio. Wind and solar is already  
3 competitive with fossil fuels and probably cheaper  
4 if we take the health and environmental costs fossil  
5 fuels creates. The RGGI can capture these costs,  
6 using them to incentivize renewables and  
7 efficiencies.

8                   Solar panels that I placed on my home  
9 are meeting the energy needs for my home and the  
10 efficient all-electric car that I now drive.  
11 Groundhog Solar, an Altoona-based company employing  
12 seven people, installed the panels. The  
13 net-metering agreement I have with the power company  
14 and tax credits encouraged my own investment in the  
15 infrastructure for this solar system. Solar arrays  
16 placed in rural communities on marginal farmland can  
17 provide income for the farmer, energy for jobs for  
18 the rural community, and reduce energy losses  
19 through distributed generation. The potential  
20 scenarios for solar are unlimited.

21                   The 200-mile range of my electric car  
22 reflects increases in battery and electric motor  
23 technology. While this range is great for most  
24 commuting and daily applications, the lack of  
25 charging facilities is a deterrent for many. More

1 efficient charging stations would encourage the  
2 switch to electrical vehicles, while advancing  
3 battery technology will increase the storage  
4 potential and reduce costs.

5           Revenues generated through the RGGI  
6 can be used to promote job creation as Pennsylvania  
7 explores other carbon neutral energy sources and  
8 energy efficiency technologies. In 2010, I worked  
9 with a local dairy who installed manure  
10 digester/generator system. A grant through the  
11 Energy Harvest program helped build the facility,  
12 and to date, the facility has generated 13,000  
13 megawatt hours of electricity, reduced methane gas  
14 emission, and continues to employ ten people.  
15 Biofuels and our many waste streams represent  
16 potential energy sources and job creators.

17           It is essential that we move to a  
18 carbon neutral energy strategy. The RGGI is a  
19 market based and job creating strategy that will  
20 enhance Pennsylvania's economy while working to  
21 combat climate change.

22           That's it.

23           MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, James.

24           I'm sorry about that.

25           Our next speaker, 18, is Steve

1 Olshevski.

2 Are you with us, Steve?

3 MR. JAGIELA: He is unmuted.

4 MS. GRIFFIN: Steve Olshevski.

5 Okay.

6 We'll try a couple people, and then  
7 we'll come back and maybe Steve can unmute himself.  
8 He's on mute.

9 So number 19, Amanda Kowalski.

10 Is Amanda on the line?

11 MR. JAGIELA: Amanda is not on the  
12 line.

13 MS. GRIFFIN: Okay.

14 Number 20, Marien Shearer.

15 REV. SHEARER: I'm here.

16 My name is Marien Shearer,  
17 S-H-E-A-R-E-R. I'm from Reading. And I am pleased  
18 to be able to address you today.

19 I am testifying as an individual  
20 citizen. But what I would like to flag for you is  
21 the constituency that includes me and thousands of  
22 others who want real movement on addressing climate  
23 change.

24 I'm sure other testifiers today will  
25 have commented on the way the regional initiative

1 works, with cap and trade opportunities so that  
2 companies which are saving energy and operating  
3 green can trade credits to ones that need to  
4 compensate for their energy usage.

5 Others have been detailing how much  
6 money can be saved and how much energy can be saved  
7 and how much cleaner our air can be and how  
8 Pennsylvania can begin to provide a greater number  
9 of clean energy jobs and benefit from the revenue  
10 from the greenhouse gas initiative.

11 What I would like to lift up is that,  
12 like me, there are many out here who want real  
13 progress on addressing climate change.

14 Though I'm testifying as an individual  
15 today, I am a member of or correspond with Citizens'  
16 Climate Lobby, League of Conservation Voters,  
17 Conservation Voters of Pennsylvania, Sierra Club,  
18 Berks Stands Up, Berks Nature, Power, and Penn  
19 Environment, just to name the organizations I can  
20 think of today. All of these organizations have  
21 thousands of members in Pennsylvania, spread in  
22 chapters all over the state, and all of them want  
23 real movement on climate change.

24 And I am a member of the United Church  
25 of Christ, which has 40,000 members in Pennsylvania.

1 The UCC, the Presbyterian Church USA, the  
2 Evangelical Lutheran Church, United Methodist  
3 Church, Episcopal Church, American Baptist,  
4 Unitarian Universalists, Quaker Meetings,  
5 Mennonites, Roman Catholics, Moravians, many  
6 evangelicals, some Orthodox, and most Jewish  
7 organizations all have statements and policies  
8 asking our governments and our businesses to do  
9 better regarding our climate.

10 All of these policies call for less  
11 use of fossil fuels as a way to honor the creation  
12 God has given us and honor the God who gave it.

13 So lest the readers and hearers of our  
14 testimonies think that there are only a few crazy  
15 environmentalists out there who wish us to join the  
16 regional initiative, let me reassure you otherwise.

17 For each person who got organized enough and brave  
18 enough to sign up for this testimony today or write  
19 in with theirs, there are a dozen more who wish they  
20 had done so or wish they could have taken the time.

21 For every organization I've named,  
22 there is another I don't even know about. On every  
23 college campus and in every city, there is a  
24 sustainability committee and sustainability  
25 initiative to save money and energy. Those who

1 benefit from the fracking and oil industries do not  
2 want to change that, of course, but thousands upon  
3 thousands of your fellow citizens of the  
4 Commonwealth want us to take reasonable steps. Here  
5 is one that is painless and profitable.

6           Joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas  
7 Initiative is but one step toward the cleaner and  
8 healthier world we all desire. For many of us who  
9 think of ourselves as environmentalists, it is not  
10 even a very big step, because it allows all kinds of  
11 energy producers to keep producing dirty energy but  
12 just pay more for the privilege, which they should.

13 But it is how we take the next step down the road  
14 toward ceasing to need all that fracked gas and  
15 drilled oil, so that our children may still breathe  
16 the air and drink the water.

17           Why should Pennsylvania be the  
18 backward one among the northeastern states in  
19 addressing climate change? Let's take our place in  
20 the competition and show ourselves to be  
21 outstanding. Let's remember the many hundreds, the  
22 many thousands, of citizens who stand behind each of  
23 us who are testifying today. And let's do this.  
24 Let's be cleaner and be better.

25           Thank you for the opportunity to

1 testify.

2 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Marien.

3 I'm going to try 18, Steve Olshevski.

4 MR. OLSHEVSKI: Hi. Can you hear me?

5 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can, Steve.

6 Please go ahead.

7 MR. OLSHEVSKI: Oh, great. Great.

8 Thanks for letting me try again.

9 MS. GRIFFIN: Sure.

10 MR. OLSHEVSKI: Okay.

11 Good afternoon, and thank you for  
12 allowing me to testify today. Again, my name is  
13 Steve Olshevski, spelled S-T-E-V-E,  
14 O-L-S-H-E-V-S-K-I. I live in Philadelphia,  
15 Pennsylvania.

16 I'm here representing Radnor Meeting  
17 on Conestoga Road in Radnor, Pennsylvania, a Quaker  
18 congregation of about 200 members. And I am a  
19 member of this meeting.

20 In January of this year, our  
21 congregation united around a minute stating that we  
22 must take action as a congregation to remediate the  
23 climate crisis and the racial and environmental  
24 injustices that accompany it. We believe the  
25 scientists that tell us that unless carbon emissions



1 are cut by 50 percent by 2030 and then to net-zero  
2 by about 2050, humanity will probably experience a  
3 global climate catastrophe of incalculable severity  
4 before the end of this century.

5 Conflicts due to rising sea levels,  
6 food insecurity, water scarcity, and mass migrations  
7 are already causing horrific injustice and  
8 threatening world peace. They will only get worse.

9 I am testifying here today because  
10 putting Pennsylvania into the Regional Greenhouse  
11 Gas Initiative is one of the simplest and most  
12 effective solutions to address our concern.

13 RGGI is a proven win-win in reducing  
14 greenhouse gas emissions. RGGI has been a big  
15 success in the ten states where it is in place,  
16 cutting climate pollution by a third and raising  
17 nearly \$3 billion to invest in clean energy and  
18 other purposes.

19 Having PA join RGGI is a simple  
20 solution to help remediate our climate crisis. We  
21 strongly support the adoption of a carbon market in  
22 Pennsylvania and endorse Governor Wolf's decision to  
23 participate in the Regional Greenhouse Gas  
24 Initiative, the nation's oldest carbon market.

25 Based on the recent Acadia report

1 describing the results achieved by states already in  
2 RGGI, if we adopt the proposed regulations, our  
3 carbon market has the potential to be extremely  
4 beneficial to all Pennsylvanians by lowering  
5 greenhouse gas emissions, creating an estimated  
6 27,000 new jobs by 2030, and growing the economy  
7 statewide by at least \$1.9 billion by 2030.

8                   I also want to add something of a  
9 personal note. In the spring of 2021, my wife and I  
10 are anticipating our first grandchild. God willing,  
11 this child will have a long life and live into the  
12 next century. Scientists have predicted that the  
13 greenhouse gas emissions that my generation has, and  
14 continues to put into the atmosphere, will cause  
15 many problems for the people in my grandchild's  
16 generation. Temperatures will rise, sea levels will  
17 rise, and more large storms will destroy land,  
18 homes, and livelihoods.

19                   It doesn't have to be this way.

20                   I want my grandchild and all of the  
21 children and grandchildren of the people in this  
22 hearing and in the state to be given a world like  
23 the world we grew up in. I do not want to hand over  
24 a world that is an environmental and climatic  
25 disaster.

1                   I don't want to tell my grandchild,  
2 "Sorry, we did what we could. We are giving you a  
3 disaster that you will probably spend the rest your  
4 lives cleaning up because we couldn't muster the  
5 political courage to approve a process for  
6 Pennsylvania to join RGGI back in 2020."

7                   Every generation before mine has  
8 worked hard and sacrificed to make the world a  
9 better place so that their children could enjoy a  
10 better life. We must do all we can to continue to  
11 leave our children a world that is better than the  
12 one we came from.

13                   We've known about climate change  
14 caused by greenhouse gases since the 1970's. Why  
15 has it taken so long, nearly 50 years, for us to  
16 take active steps to correct the problem? It is  
17 time to stop delaying and take this important step  
18 so that all of our grandchildren will thrive in the  
19 world we leave them. And there couldn't be a better  
20 time than using this to support economic recovery  
21 after this pandemic.

22                   I am asking you to support RGGI's  
23 implementation as soon as possible.

24                   Thank you for your time and  
25 consideration.

1                   MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Steve.

2                   Our next speaker, number 21, is Duane  
3 Mosgar (phonetic).

4                   Are you there, Duane?

5                   MR. JAGIELA: I'm not seeing him on  
6 the line right now. He was earlier.

7                   MS. GRIFFIN: Okay.

8                   We will have to come back to Duane and  
9 see if he comes back on.

10                  So number 22, Zack Jackson.

11                  REV. JACKSON: Can you hear me okay?

12                  MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can, Zack.

13                  Please go ahead.

14                  REV. JACKSON: All right.

15                  Well, good afternoon.

16                  My name is Reverend Zack Jackson,  
17 Z-A-C-K, J-A-C-K-S-O-N. I am a pastor and a science  
18 educator in Reading. I just want to thank you for  
19 giving me the opportunity to speak with you all  
20 today.

21                  In my dual role as pastor and science  
22 educator, I have often struggled to figure out how  
23 to turn conviction into action. How do I get people  
24 to not only understand the facts but to make a  
25 change? As our presence is not for lack of data,

1 right? I mean, we've all seen so many facts and  
2 figures and charts and graphs about carbon emissions  
3 and climate change, we should all have honorary  
4 science degrees by now. And yet we're still having  
5 this debate about whether or not our actions and  
6 consequences and the world is worth saving for our  
7 children.

8                   So I'll save the climate numbers for  
9 another hearing or another person and share my  
10 personal plea with you instead. I pastor a  
11 congregation in Reading, which is our fifth most  
12 populated city and once was home to a booming  
13 industrial economy. I have parishioners who love to  
14 tell me about the good old days with shops and the  
15 theatres and the activities with families and all of  
16 that that was possible because people in the city  
17 had good paying blue collar jobs that supported this  
18 complex, thriving local economy.

19                   Of course, those same industries also  
20 poisoned the Schuylkill and scorched the soil and  
21 caused increased rates of lung disease. And when  
22 the jobs left, the environmental impacts were made.

23                   So now Reading is one of the poorest cities in the  
24 state with one of the highest levels of air  
25 pollution and with little hope of any extensive,

1 non-specialized blue collar work anymore.

2                   I care deeply about the city. And I  
3 know that it is filled with good, loving,  
4 kind-hearted people who are working tirelessly to  
5 bring it into a new era of art, culture, prosperity;  
6 people who want to --- people who want to not only  
7 see jobs and industry return, but want to see it  
8 done in a way that doesn't leave the same kind of  
9 mess that the previous industries left.

10                   We are a people who believe, as the  
11 poet, Wendell Berry, wrote, that we do not so much  
12 inherit the world from our ancestors as we borrow it  
13 from our children.

14                   Here in Reading, we already have the  
15 largest lead battery plant in the world. We're  
16 equipped to be a hub of further battery production  
17 in the new green economy. We have an opportunity to  
18 not only economically advance this region into the  
19 21st century energy economy, but to repair the  
20 damage that was done to our local ecology.

21                   As a pastor, I spent a lot of time and  
22 energy and money caring for the needs of the poor in  
23 the community. But their poverty cannot be fixed by  
24 our charity. We churches, we're like lifeguards,  
25 standing on the riverbanks, rescuing people who are

1 drowning in the rough waters. But we're so busy  
2 with this work that we barely have any time to walk  
3 upstream to find out how these people keep falling  
4 in in the first place.

5                   Now, our representatives in government  
6 have the power to stop these people from falling  
7 into the river, from falling into poverty. You have  
8 the power to make systemic change that makes the  
9 world a better place.

10                   Now, RGGI does not go nearly as far as  
11 what we actually need to heal the earth. And I  
12 think the proponents of it will be the first to tell  
13 you that. But compromise is necessary, and it is a  
14 step in the right direction.

15                   And at the very least, we'll provide  
16 the necessary funding to transform Reading and other  
17 cities like it into the engines of the new and  
18 vibrant green economy.

19                   So thank you for your work, and thank  
20 you for your time.

21                   MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Reverend  
22 Jackson.

23                   Our next speaker, number 23, is Eileen  
24 Kraus-Dobratz.

25                   MS. KRAUS-DOBRATZ: Can you hear me?

1                   MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can, Eileen.

2                   Please go ahead.

3                   MS. KRAUS-DOBRATZ: Good afternoon.

4                   My name is Eileen Kraus-Dobratz,  
5 K-R-A-U-S D-O-B-R-A-T-Z. I live in Pittsburgh. And  
6 I am speaking as a private citizen.

7                   I'd like to share two personal stories  
8 that reflect on this important issue:

9                   My first experience illustrates our  
10 need for improved air quality to keep the Pittsburgh  
11 region growing. I work in an office with many young  
12 professionals. One grew up here and had childhood  
13 asthma ---

14                   MS. GRIFFIN: I'm sorry, we can't hear  
15 you now.

16                   MS. KRAUS-DOBRATZ: Huh?

17                   MS. GRIFFIN: I can hear you a little  
18 bit.

19                   Can you get a little closer to the  
20 microphone?

21                   MS. KRAUS-DOBRATZ: I'm talking into  
22 my phone. But maybe if you mute me on your screen  
23 so I don't get feedback.

24                   MS. GRIFFIN: Okay.

25                   I can hear you now.



1 I don't know.

2 Darek, can you help her at all?

3 MR. JAGIELA: I'm not seeing her phone  
4 number connected right now, unless she's calling me  
5 on a different number.

6 MS. KRAUS-DOBRATZ: I'm having a ---

7 MR. JAGIELA: Maybe I can try and get  
8 this troubleshot if you want to try and take the  
9 next one and then come back to her.

10 MS. GRIFFIN: All right. Thank you.

11 Eileen, we will come back to you.

12 So our next speaker is Alec Watts.

13 MR. WATTS: Hello.

14 MS. GRIFFIN: Hi, Alec.

15 MR. WATTS: Everybody can hear me all  
16 right?

17 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can.

18 Please go ahead.

19 MR. WATTS: Awesome.

20 My name is Alec Watts, A-L-E-C,  
21 W-A-T-T-S, and I'm currently a student at Duquesne  
22 University Masters Program for Sustainable Business  
23 Practices.

24 I spent four years in Waynesburg  
25 University, and I went there for the oil and gas

1 industry because that's where the money was coming  
2 from. In my studies, I found that there was a lot  
3 of other things going on. I took environmental  
4 science courses, geology courses, things like that.

5 I saw what was happening to the planet, and I knew  
6 I couldn't be a part of it. I saw what fossil fuels  
7 were doing to human health, to our planet, and to  
8 the ecosystems all around us.

9           After graduation, I took a trip out  
10 west with a few of my buddies. I drove from coast  
11 to coast and saw the beautiful plains, mountains,  
12 rivers, and valleys. And I knew what we were doing  
13 each and every day was destroying that. I decided  
14 to change my course. I decided to study  
15 sustainability and move forward in that path. Like  
16 I said, I am now at Duquesne University Masters  
17 Program for Sustainable Business Practices. I'm the  
18 fellow to Doctor Robert Sroufe, and we're currently  
19 writing a paper on the CO2 being a missing link in  
20 corporate strategy.

21           Investors, shareholders, and consumers  
22 are demanding change. RGGI will push us in that  
23 right direction. As we adapt to a change in  
24 economy, our ecosystems must adapt as well. This  
25 isn't a fight to save the planet, this is a fight to

1 save humanity. The planet will adapt. It always  
2 has.

3                   You see what's happening with CO2:  
4 ocean acidification, soil degradation,  
5 deforestation, loss of species, increased natural  
6 disasters, and human health effects. Everything is  
7 connected, from the oceans to the rivers to the  
8 humans. But as soon as we make today our  
9 compounding assets to our future return on  
10 investment.

11                   RGGI must become a part of  
12 Pennsylvania. Carbon neutrality is spreading across  
13 the world. From major corporations like Microsoft  
14 and Amazon to countries and states, Denmark, San  
15 Francisco, they're demanding a change. RGGI will  
16 push us in that direction, to put a cap on our  
17 carbon emissions.

18                   These emissions are detrimental to  
19 human health, to the future, and to our  
20 grandchildren and great grandchildren. This is a  
21 fight worth fighting.

22                   And I appreciate your time.

23                   I strongly encourage joining RGGI in  
24 Pennsylvania.

25                   MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Alec.

1                   Our next speaker, number 25, is Don  
2 Naragon.

3                   DR. NARAGON: Hello.

4                   Can you hear me?

5                   MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can, Donald.

6                   Please go ahead.

7                   DR. NARAGON: My name is Doctor Donald  
8 Naragon, N as in Nancy, A-R-A-G-O-N. And I am a  
9 resident of Franklin Park. Thank you for the  
10 opportunity to speak at this virtual hearing. I am  
11 speaking on behalf of the Board of Directors of the  
12 League of Women Voters of the Commonwealth of  
13 Pennsylvania. On the Board, I'm a vice president  
14 with a focus on the environment.

15                   Article I, Section 27, of the  
16 Declaration of Rights was added to Pennsylvania's  
17 constitution in 1971. Section 27 states the people  
18 have a right to clean air, pure water, and the  
19 preservation of natural, scenic, historic, and  
20 esthetic values of the environment. Pennsylvania's  
21 public natural resources are the common property of  
22 all the people, including generations yet to come.  
23 As trustee of these resources, the Commonwealth  
24 shall conserve and maintain them for the benefit of  
25 all the people.

1           The League of Women Voters played a  
2 significant, primary role leading to the adoption of  
3 Article 1, Section 27. The League strongly supports  
4 actions that advance the Commonwealth toward these  
5 rights. To that end, it is time for Pennsylvania to  
6 adopt a proven program to reduce carbon pollution,  
7 to create thousands of jobs, and to join RGGI.

8           As reported by the PA Department of  
9 Health in the 2019 report, The State of Health  
10 Equity in Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania cities that  
11 ranked in the top 25 of U.S. cities for highest  
12 levels of year-round particle pollution are:  
13 Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Johnstown-Somerset,  
14 Altoona, Lancaster, Harrisburg, and Erie-Meadville.  
15 Philadelphia has the 22nd highest level of ozone  
16 pollution of all U.S. cities. The report also  
17 states that Pennsylvania ranks third in the nation  
18 in CO2 emissions.

19           Reducing these pollutants and other  
20 greenhouse gases would move the Commonwealth toward  
21 ensuring every citizen's right to clean air.

22           Annually, for the past eight years,  
23 the League of Women Voters of PA has held a Shale  
24 and Public Health Conference. Most of the papers  
25 presented at these conferences have concluded that

1 the closer a person lives to a greenhouse gas  
2 emitter, the poorer the person's health outcomes:  
3 for example; asthma, some cancers, low birth  
4 weights, and preterm births. Reducing greenhouse  
5 gas emissions would be expected to improve health  
6 and, therefore, reduce the cost of health care and  
7 the number of lost workdays.

8                   These pollutants have also been shown  
9 to contribute to global warming, increasing the  
10 frequency and intensity of major storms. Note that  
11 there were 30 named tropical storms this year.  
12 While the Gulf Coast suffered from torrential  
13 flooding and rains, some counties in Pennsylvania  
14 experienced severe drought warnings, and many other  
15 counties were in drought watches. Uneven and  
16 extreme weather is caused by the increasing amounts  
17 of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

18                   While humankind is not responsible for  
19 all the increase in greenhouse gases, it would be  
20 prudent to reduce to the greatest extent possible  
21 humankind's contribution to the increase. This  
22 would be a start toward the right of all  
23 Pennsylvanians to the preservation of the natural,  
24 scenic, and esthetic values of the environment.

25                   Reducing the combustion of fossil

1 fuels will reduce the demand for the fuels, which  
2 will lead to job losses in the fossil fuel industry  
3 and will interrupt the cycle of children following  
4 in their parents' footsteps into jobs in the fossil  
5 fuel industry. Displaced workers and those who  
6 don't see a future will need training/retraining  
7 programs and assistance with the difficult  
8 transition to opportunities in developing  
9 industries.

10                   The Department has modeled an  
11 investment strategy which would use the annual  
12 proceeds for energy efficiency, renewable energy,  
13 greenhouse gas abatement, and a minor amount for  
14 program expenses. Funding for training/retraining  
15 programs and transition assistance is not mentioned,  
16 but should be to demonstrate to the potentially  
17 displaced workers that there are paths forward to  
18 new jobs, new careers.

19                   The shift from fossil fuel energy to  
20 solar, wind, nuclear, hydro, and geothermal energy  
21 would be expected to create additional jobs in these  
22 fields. But not every displaced worker will want to  
23 work in these industries. Training and retraining  
24 should also include other industries such as  
25 carpentry, sustainable agriculture, and

1 transportation.

2 In summary, RGGI is the market-based,  
3 job creating, proven tool for Pennsylvania to tackle  
4 the problems that climate change presents and to  
5 tackle the obligation of providing all  
6 Pennsylvanians with the constitutionally guaranteed  
7 right to clean air.

8 Thank you for considering my  
9 testimony.

10 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Donald.

11 Okay.

12 We're going to try and see if we can  
13 get Eileen back on the phone.

14 Number 23, Eileen Kraus-Dobratz.

15 Are you with us, Eileen?

16 It doesn't sound like we have Eileen  
17 with us.

18 Okay.

19 MS. KRAUS-DOBRATZ: Can you hear me?

20 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes.

21 Excellent. Perfect.

22 Would you like to try again, please,  
23 Eileen?

24 MS. KRAUS-DOBRATZ: Okay.

25 I'll try to get it right this time.



1                   Hi. My name is Eileen Kraus-Dobratz.  
2 That's K-R-A-U-S D-O-B-R-A-T-Z. I live in  
3 Pittsburgh. I am speaking as a private citizen.

4                   I'd like to share two personal stories  
5 that reflect on this important issue, as we had so  
6 many wonderful facts and figures:

7                   My first experience illustrates our  
8 need for improved air quality to keep the Pittsburgh  
9 region growing. I work in an office with many young  
10 professionals. One grew up here and had childhood  
11 asthma, which disappeared when he left the region.  
12 When he returned to Pittsburgh, so did his asthma.  
13 Now he is starting a family and is very concerned  
14 that putting down roots here will cause his children  
15 to get asthma too.

16                   Pittsburgh needs to attract young  
17 workers. We need to replace the many thousands of  
18 workers lost when the steel mills closed.

19                   How can we attract new workers to the  
20 region if they have these serious health concerns  
21 for themselves and their children? And why will  
22 growing companies, who need the young workers,  
23 invest and open offices here if they cannot attract  
24 the workers they want?

25                   My second personal --- Now, this was

1 confirmed by an op-ed from one young Pittsburgh  
2 Google employee in January 2020 noting that air  
3 quality had been a factor in the decision of several  
4 co-workers to leave the city and advising other  
5 Google employees to stay away because of the air  
6 pollution. That should be a warning and an object  
7 lesson in the economic importance of healthy air to  
8 the region.

9                   My second personal experience  
10 relates to the urgency of cutting greenhouse  
11 emissions. The very safety of our homes,  
12 neighborhoods, and roads has been impacted by  
13 landslides occurring after particularly heavy rains,  
14 which are more common with climate change.

15                   In my neighborhood in the east end of  
16 Pittsburgh, there were serious landslides in 2018.  
17 Two houses were taken out right in the middle of our  
18 city, less than a mile from the tech hub. Not in an  
19 outskirt, or a sparsely populated area, but in the  
20 middle of the city.

21                   I walked by last week and saw another  
22 two, three lots. The hillside is still not  
23 repaired. And the parking lot at the bottom of that  
24 landslide, that serves a large commercial  
25 residential building, still has piles of debris that

1 reduce parking space. And there have been several  
2 lengthy road closures with expensive repairs due to  
3 landslides in 2019.

4           So RGGI will not just improve our  
5 health, economic growth, and our regional  
6 prosperity, it will also improve the long-term  
7 safety of our homes and other infrastructure by  
8 reducing carbon pollution.

9           So we have a problem. Is RGGI a good  
10 way to address it? RGGI is one of the first ways to  
11 approach this problem because it allows market  
12 forces to operate. It provides incentives to power  
13 companies to invest in greater efficiency and in  
14 clean-energy technologies. It allows for a gradual  
15 move toward cleaner energy based on what businesses  
16 do best: a cost-benefit analysis.

17           And RGGI is proven effective. RGGI  
18 states have reduced carbon emissions by 45 percent  
19 since 2005. PA emits nearly 1 percent of global  
20 carbon pollution, more than many countries. The  
21 electricity sector is the second highest source of  
22 greenhouse gas emissions in PA.

23           With RGGI, PA can greatly cut  
24 emissions of both climate pollution and air toxics.  
25 Your wise decision is critical on this issue. For

1 my grandchildren, I urge you to move forward to  
2 enable PA to join RGGI without major modifications.

3 Thank you.

4 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Eileen.

5 Our next speaker, number 26, is Issy  
6 Lawrie.

7 MS. LAWRIE: Hi.

8 Can you hear me?

9 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can.

10 Please go ahead.

11 MS. LAWRIE: Okay.

12 My name Issy Lawrie, I-S-S-Y,  
13 L-A-W-R-I-E. I live in Girard, Erie County. I'm  
14 speaking today in support of the Carbon Dioxide  
15 Budget Trading Program.

16 I am representing the Erie group that  
17 I belong to, Our Air Our Water Our Rights. The  
18 mission statement of Our Air Our Water Our Rights  
19 replicates Pennsylvania's Constitution Article 1,  
20 Section 27. It states that the people of  
21 Pennsylvania have the right to clean air, pure  
22 water, and the preservation of the natural, scenic,  
23 historic, and aesthetic values of the environment.

24 Clean water is extremely important ---  
25 I'm sorry. Clean air is extremely important to us.

1 Our Air Our Water Our Rights group has organized  
2 electric vehicle car shows in Erie in 2018 and 2019,  
3 and we would have in 2020 also if we hadn't been in  
4 the midst of this pandemic.

5           Why do we organize electrical vehicle  
6 car shows? Because encouraging people to choose  
7 electric vehicle ownership will result in reduced  
8 fossil fuel emissions. Reduced fossil fuel  
9 emissions equals cleaner air. Cleaner air means  
10 more healthy people. Reduced fossil fuel emissions  
11 is also essential in tackling our very real climate  
12 crisis.

13           As a small group of citizens in  
14 Erie, we are doing what we can. But we need our DEP  
15 and our legislators to do something to improve our  
16 air and mitigate the effects of the climate crisis  
17 also. And that's something would be to have PA  
18 participate in a carbon dioxide trading program. By  
19 joining this program, we would ensure that our air  
20 is cleaner and our pollution reduced.

21           RGGI, which is a carbon dioxide  
22 trading program, started in 2008, which is 12 years  
23 ago. Ten eastern seaboard states are already  
24 participating. It just boggles my mind that  
25 Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland,

1 Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York,  
2 Rhode Island, and Vermont are already in RGGI and PA  
3 isn't. Why are we dragging our feet? It is high  
4 time Pennsylvania got on board and started to reap  
5 the benefits that these other states are getting.  
6 We in PA deserve cleaner air too.

7           The data from the RGGI participating  
8 states is indisputable. From '08 to 2018, carbon  
9 pollution decreased by 47 percent in these states.  
10 This decrease in pollution outpaced the rest of the  
11 country by 90 percent.

12           PA is the fourth-largest emitter of  
13 greenhouse gases in the nation after California,  
14 Texas, and Florida. We in PA have a responsibility  
15 to be a leader in implementing climate solutions and  
16 reducing emissions.

17           I realize the fossil fuel industry has  
18 a tight hold on the way we do things in  
19 Pennsylvania, but the climate crisis and the air  
20 that our families breathe are life and death issues  
21 that we are facing is right now. We need a DEP and  
22 legislators that are bold enough to stand up to the  
23 fossil fuel industry and do what is right for the  
24 people of PA.

25           The benefits of joining RGGI are huge.

1 Not only will we get cleaner air, which will improve  
2 our health, we'll also get an improved economy and a  
3 way to mitigate the effects of our very real climate  
4 crisis.

5 For all these benefits, for all the  
6 people of PA, for our children and our  
7 grandchildren, we, the members of Our Air Our Water  
8 Our Rights of Erie County, most strongly urge the PA  
9 DEP to set us up to participate in RGGI.

10 Thank you.

11 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Issy.

12 Our next speaker, number 27, is Ava  
13 Roberts.

14 MS. ROBERTS: Hi.

15 Can everyone hear me?

16 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can.

17 Please go ahead.

18 MS. ROBERTS: Wonderful. Thank you.

19 Good afternoon, everyone. My name is  
20 Ava Roberts, which is A-V-A, last name Roberts,  
21 R-O-B-E-R-T-S. I am a junior at Chatham University  
22 and a native Pittsburgher. I currently live on  
23 Darlington Road in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15217.

24 I am testifying today in support of  
25 the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative because it is

1 a keystone in the Keystone State's clean and healthy  
2 future.

3 My family and I moved away from  
4 Pittsburgh to western Maryland when I was barely  
5 two. We feared the environment, the air and water  
6 quality in Pittsburgh specifically, would continue  
7 to deteriorate and that my mother's asthma would  
8 consequently worsen if we continued to live there.

9 Because I've always had a soft spot  
10 for Pittsburgh, however, I moved back to attend  
11 school at Chatham University. Unfortunately,  
12 throughout the past three years that I've lived  
13 here, I've seen my parents' fears about the area's  
14 environmental risks come true. Allegheny County  
15 ranks second highest in the nation for cancer risk  
16 from air pollution. It emits more carbon than all  
17 of the RGGI states combined. It also has the fourth  
18 worst levels of greenhouse gas emissions in the  
19 nation, which are made up of chemical compounds like  
20 carbon dioxide and sulfur dioxide, which can not  
21 only worsen the effects of climate change with  
22 things like more dangerously hot and dry summers,  
23 but they can also create health defects.

24 To put this into perspective, for an  
25 entire week in November of this year, I barely went



1 outside in Pittsburgh due to sinus problems, nasal  
2 drainage, and my lungs aching from breathing the air  
3 on my morning runs. When I returned home to  
4 Maryland in mid-November for Thanksgiving break, the  
5 clean, crisp air felt like a retreat.

6           Additionally, as other testimony has  
7 noted thus far, studies show environmental justice  
8 communities, or those in Pennsylvania where 20  
9 percent or more individuals live in poverty or where  
10 30 percent or more of the population is a racial  
11 minority, absorb the highest risks of air  
12 pollution-related deaths in Allegheny County,  
13 Pennsylvania, specifically. These communities,  
14 especially racial minority ones, also have the  
15 highest emergency room visits for asthma  
16 complications. This pollution, spurred by high  
17 emitting industrial sites, disproportionately harms  
18 these communities. And RGGI's strict limits on  
19 these polluters can be a very fundamental first step  
20 in restorative justice for these groups.

21           People like my family, and especially  
22 those living in these environmental justice  
23 communities who I just spoke of, who are most  
24 detrimentally impacted by industrial air pollution,  
25 should not have to choose health over living in

1 places like Pittsburgh, or any other place, for that  
2 matter.

3                   Pennsylvania needs to act now to clean  
4 up our dirty air before it is too late. And RGGI  
5 will not only reduce our carbon emissions from  
6 polluting power plants, but we'll also see  
7 reductions in other harmful pollutants that cause  
8 the potentially dangerous health problems I  
9 mentioned as well as spurring climate change.

10                   My story is just one example of how  
11 poor air quality, which is also a major driver of  
12 climate change, can ultimately drive people away  
13 from our great state of Pennsylvania. Therefore, I  
14 ask Pennsylvania to join our neighboring states and  
15 adopt RGGI.

16                   The data on the efficiency of this  
17 program is simply too good to ignore. From 2008  
18 through 2018, carbon pollution has decreased by 47  
19 percent --- that's nearly half --- in participating  
20 RGGI states, outpacing the rest of the country by 90  
21 percent. Additionally, implementing the program in  
22 Pennsylvania would create 27,000 new jobs and put  
23 nearly \$2 billion into the state's economy over the  
24 next decade alone. Not only this, but we could  
25 avoid hundreds of premature deaths due to poor air

1 quality and reduce our carbon emissions by 188  
2 million tons by 2030.

3           Reduction in the air pollution-related  
4 deaths I previously talked about alone is enough  
5 reason to join RGGI. And the rest of the benefits  
6 are nothing to scoff at either. This initiative  
7 could prevent people like my family, who are  
8 concerned about their and their loved ones' futures,  
9 from being driven away from Pennsylvania. It will  
10 also have the dual benefit of reinvigorating our  
11 economy, which is especially needed after the  
12 COVID-19 crisis' effects on our state and our  
13 country's economy.

14           Overall, the Regional Greenhouse Gas  
15 Initiative is a slam dunk for Pennsylvania. It is a  
16 vote to preserve all Pennsylvanians' health now and  
17 for a cleaner and healthier future.

18           Thank you for your time and the  
19 opportunity to speak today.

20           MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Ava.

21           Our next speaker, number 28, is Grace  
22 Johnston.

23           MS. JOHNSTON: Yes, I'm here.

24           MS. GRIFFIN: Okay.

25           Please go ahead, Grace.

1                   MS. JOHNSTON:    Thank you.

2                    My name is Grace Johnston.    That's  
3    G-R-A-C-E, J-O-H-N-S-T-O-N.    I live in Pittsburgh,  
4    Pennsylvania.    And I'm testifying as a private  
5    citizen.

6                    Good afternoon, and thank you for the  
7    opportunity to speak today in support of this deeply  
8    important issue of Pennsylvania joining RGGI.

9                    I'm a senior at Temple University.  
10    I've lived in Pennsylvania for the past 15 years,  
11    most of my life.    As a geography student, the  
12    environment is incredibly important to me.    I'm  
13    excited that we have the chance to take meaningful  
14    action on climate change in Pennsylvania through  
15    RGGI, and here's why:

16                    My father is a greater Pittsburgh  
17    native, having grown up in Latrobe.    Most summers,  
18    he would go on a family vacation to Conneaut Lake.  
19    About an hour and a half drive north of Pittsburgh,  
20    Conneaut Lake is the largest natural lake in  
21    Pennsylvania.    He took my mother, my brother, and  
22    myself on vacation there about six years ago.    And  
23    he was shocked see how much it had changed.    The  
24    banks were more dry; the beach had some litter.    Is  
25    some of this due to natural aging?    Of course.

1                    Still, I can't help but wonder if  
2 there are other reasons that the lake that my dad  
3 remembered is no longer so. Climate change is  
4 already affecting our local environment, causing  
5 droughts in some areas, floods in others, and will  
6 continue to wreak havoc on our natural world if we  
7 don't do something now.

8                    Rural Pennsylvania is not the only  
9 place hurting from pollution either. As I  
10 mentioned, I grew up in PA, in the suburbs of  
11 Pittsburgh, and Allegheny County has some of the  
12 worst air quality in the entire nation. We're in  
13 the worst 2 percent of counties at risk for cancer  
14 from air pollution, which means there are people  
15 here developing cancer just from breathing the air.

16                    How can that be in what was recently  
17 named the most livable city in the U.S.?

18                    Joining RGGI is the next major step we  
19 can take to reduce carbon pollution and the toxic  
20 emissions that are also emitted by power plants.  
21 RGGI will particularly benefit those most impacted  
22 by poor air quality, such as children, seniors, and  
23 other vulnerable populations, the groups of people  
24 who are most at risk for breathing in PA's dirty air  
25 daily.

1                   Joining RGGI is a necessary step if  
2 we're going to have a stable climate in the future  
3 and protect more places like Conneaut Lake from  
4 being impacted by climate change. Ensuring all  
5 Pennsylvanians have clean air to breathe and  
6 protecting the health and well-being of our  
7 residents should be top priority, always. Our  
8 Pennsylvania Constitution guarantees that all  
9 residents in PA have the right to clean drinking  
10 water and clean air to breathe. It is time to  
11 uphold that legal responsibility and join RGGI.

12                   Thank you for your time.

13                   MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Grace.

14                   Our next speaker, number 30, is Gale  
15 Schwartz.

16                   MS. SCHWARTZ: Hello.

17                   Can you hear me?

18                   MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can, Gail.

19                   Please go ahead.

20                   MS. SCHWARTZ: Excellent. Thank you.

21                   My name is Gale Schwartz. I'm the  
22 associate director of policy and strategic  
23 initiatives at the Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania.  
24 I am based out of our Western Pennsylvania office.  
25 But the Housing Alliance is a statewide non-profit

1 membership organization dedicated to increasing  
2 access to safe and affordable homes for all  
3 Pennsylvanians.

4                   The diversity of our membership  
5 provides us with a unique perspective on a range of  
6 housing issues, including housing as a foundation  
7 for health. Our members include low-income  
8 households, organizations surveying low-income  
9 renters and homeowners, organizations serving people  
10 experiencing homelessness, housing developers,  
11 housing authorities, and local governments. We at  
12 the housing alliance believe the proposed CO2 budget  
13 trading program offers a promising opportunity in  
14 Pennsylvania to effectively reduce emissions while  
15 bringing desperately needed resources to  
16 historically disinvested communities to improve  
17 healthy housing, reduce energy costs, and create  
18 good paying jobs in local communities.

19                   Ultimately, the CO2 trading program  
20 has great potential to improve the lives of all  
21 Pennsylvanians. But we ask you to ensure that it  
22 does not exacerbate energy poverty or create other  
23 localized community impacts. We encourage ongoing  
24 assessment and targeted reinvestment back into  
25 subsidized and naturally occurring affordable

1 housing for low-income households and historically  
2 underserved communities that ease utility cost  
3 burdens and improves overall health of the housing  
4 and, more importantly, the families living inside.

5           Far too many Pennsylvanians ---  
6 Pennsylvania households have family members,  
7 especially children, suffering from chronic  
8 breathing problems and rely on ovens and other  
9 unsafe and inefficient heating sources to stay warm  
10 in the winter.

11           On average each year, at least 13,000  
12 Pennsylvania families enter into winter without  
13 heat. And thousands more have inadequate heat to  
14 warm their homes to a healthy temperature.  
15 Increased energy costs threaten to further  
16 exacerbate housing poverty across our state and  
17 drive up hidden costs in other systems, including  
18 health and education and employment sectors.

19           This challenge is further exacerbated  
20 by aging housing stock. The median age for housing  
21 in Pennsylvania is 57 years old. Low-income, black,  
22 and LatinX families disproportionately live in older  
23 housing of lower quality that is difficult and  
24 costly to keep warm in the winter and often is  
25 plagued by indoor pollutants like mold, asbestos,



1 and physical pollutants like lead.

2                   These families pay a  
3 disproportionately higher utility cost, often  
4 exceeding 30 percent of their total household  
5 income. At the same time, these families are  
6 disproportionately exposed to outdoor air pollutants  
7 as well, as they live closest to big polluters like  
8 power plants, industrial complexes, and  
9 transportation hubs.

10                   These factors and more contribute to  
11 poor health outcomes in low-income communities and  
12 communities of color.

13                   Creating a CO2 budget trading program  
14 that prioritizes reinvestment in locally  
15 administered programs, providing direct energy and  
16 economic benefits in low-income and front line  
17 communities, is needed now more than ever. As  
18 families are asked to stay at home, to stay safe  
19 during the COVID-19 pandemic, we have unique  
20 opportunities to expand the programs to make sure  
21 the air both outside and inside are of a standard  
22 that all Pennsylvanians, no matter their income  
23 level or ZIP code, are safe with decent air quality  
24 in their homes.

25                   Thank you so much for the opportunity

1 to comment today.

2 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Gale.

3 Speaker number 31 informed us that  
4 they would not be able to participate today.

5 And before we move on, I just want to  
6 say thank you to everyone who has spoken so far for  
7 staying within the five-minute time limit. We  
8 really appreciate being able to efficiently keep  
9 things moving and get everyone's testimony today.

10 Our next speaker, number 32, is  
11 Andrea Wittchen.

12 MS. WITTCHEN: Hi.

13 Can you hear me all right?

14 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can, Andrea.

15 Please go ahead.

16 MS. WITTCHEN: Hi.

17 My name is Andrea Wittchen. That's  
18 A-N-D-R-E-A, W-I-T-T-C-H-E-N. I'm representing  
19 iSpring. And I live in Bethlehem. I'm a co-founder  
20 and owner of iSpring, a regional sustainability  
21 consulting firm in the Lehigh Valley and  
22 Philadelphia area working with manufacturers, higher  
23 education institutions, and the public sector in the  
24 areas of metrics and recording, operational  
25 sustainability, and education and outreach.

1 I'm also the president of the Lehigh  
2 Valley Sustainability Network, which provides a  
3 web-based resource for regional cooperation and  
4 sustainability issues throughout the Lehigh Valley.  
5 I'm testifying today in support of Pennsylvania's  
6 participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas  
7 Initiative to cut climate change pollution from  
8 electric power plants.

9 For 12 years, I have worked along with  
10 my clients as they have tried hard, often in a  
11 vacuum and with little governmental support, to  
12 battle the effects of climate change by reducing  
13 their carbon footprints and minimizing their CO2  
14 emissions. But their efforts, while so important to  
15 their organizations, cannot possibly have the  
16 magnitude of impact that controlling CO2 emissions  
17 from the electric power sector would have.

18 I have watched over my six-decade-plus  
19 lifetime as private enterprise continually refuses  
20 to make economic choices that incorporate the  
21 concerns and needs of their communities in their  
22 race to maximize profit.

23 Fossil fuel-based electric power  
24 plants rank high on the list of plenty of companies  
25 who have put profit before planet and reaped

1 enormous benefit. The Lehigh Valley, where I live,  
2 has one of the worst air quality levels in the  
3 country. This is not a coincidence nor is it  
4 unavoidable.

5 Regulation of carbon emissions by  
6 power plants situated throughout the Commonwealth  
7 would contribute to mitigation of particulate matter  
8 in the air and improve air quality.

9 The point is that we and the power  
10 plants have known this for decades, and yet they  
11 have continued to make economic decisions that have  
12 not contributed to a solution.

13 The plan to participate in RGGI will  
14 put our electric power sector into a regimen that  
15 will force a regional limit on CO2 emissions by  
16 power plants. This is something they have  
17 repeatedly refused to do on their own. But it's our  
18 health and our quality of life that is at stake.  
19 One of the government's primary roles has always  
20 been to protect its citizens. And the commitment to  
21 participate in RGGI speaks directly to government  
22 fulfilling that role.

23 The economic aspects of RGGI provide  
24 an incentive for the electric power sector to reduce  
25 their emissions for their own economic benefit. A

1 price on carbon and the ability for efficient  
2 compliant companies to trade or bank credits creates  
3 a market that motivates companies to continuously  
4 push the envelope on implementing new cleaner  
5 technologies.

6                   Up until now, Pennsylvania electric  
7 power companies have had a free ride on producing  
8 dirty carbon pollution. Participation in a  
9 multi-state compact like RGGI also multiplies the  
10 effectiveness of carbon emission reduction. Carbon  
11 pollution doesn't recognize state boundaries. The  
12 more states involved in carbon emission reduction,  
13 the more comprehensive the solutions are and the  
14 faster they can be implemented.

15                   This past summer, we saw how wildfires  
16 in the west affected our air quality in  
17 Pennsylvania. Carbon pollution has the same effect.  
18 And banding together, states can restrain emissions  
19 over a broad area, delivering cleaner air to  
20 millions of citizens.

21                   Sadly, there has been a noticeable  
22 lack of leadership on this issue at the national  
23 level over the last four years. As I wrote just  
24 this morning in the Morning Call, the U.S. is less  
25 than halfway to the goal it committed to in the

1 Paris agreement of cutting emissions to 28 percent  
2 below 2005 levels by 2025. There's little chance of  
3 meeting it. And Pennsylvania has not exactly been  
4 leading the way.

5 But RGGI, joining RGGI, can change  
6 this. And while there's new hope with the incoming  
7 administration of returning to our national and  
8 global leadership, we cannot as a state continue to  
9 shirk our responsibility. Joining RGGI would allow  
10 us to do our part.

11 Thank you very much.

12 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Andrea.

13 I've been informed that speaker 33  
14 cannot join us today.

15 So our next speaker is speaker number  
16 34, Scott Van Bramer.

17 MR. VAN BRAMER: Hello.

18 Can you hear me?

19 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can, Scott.

20 Please go ahead.

21 MR. VAN BRAMER: Yes.

22 My name is Scott Van, B-R-A-M-E-R, and  
23 I am speaking today as a private citizen and a  
24 resident of Philadelphia. Thank you for the  
25 opportunity to speak today in support of the

1 Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

2 I am a professor of chemistry at  
3 Widener University, and I have been interested in  
4 atmospheric chemistry since I was an undergraduate  
5 student in the 1980's, when alarms were first being  
6 raised about the danger of global warming.

7 At that time, the idea that humans  
8 could have a significant impact on the planet's  
9 climate was difficult to imagine. But over the past  
10 30 years, I have watched the science progress and  
11 seen the increasing sophistication of the models  
12 used to predict the impact of climate change.

13 At the start, most of the science was  
14 back of the envelope calculations. Our  
15 understanding about climate has improved  
16 dramatically since that time. Our understanding of  
17 atmospheric chemistry has improved as we  
18 successfully fought to reverse photochemical smog,  
19 stop acid rain, and reverse the thinning of the  
20 ozone layer.

21 As the oil industry, politicians, and  
22 others invest --- other invested interests worked to  
23 oppose reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, the  
24 scientists who study climate change continued to  
25 improve and refine their models and understanding of

1 our planet.

2                   We do not know with absolute certainty  
3 what will happen in the future. But the underlying  
4 science of global warming is real and scientists  
5 have been working for over 100 years to understand  
6 the details. I have watched over the past 30 years  
7 we have added more and more detail into climate  
8 models, models that continue to show we are on a  
9 path that is not sustainable.

10                   This is not a Chinese hoax. The  
11 threat to climate change poses throughout to  
12 humanity is real. The danger of inaction may be one  
13 of the greatest threats we have faced. The longer  
14 we wait, the more difficult it becomes to make a  
15 difference.

16                   In my lifetime, we have listened to  
17 science about the threat of acid rain, the dangers  
18 of photochemical smog, and the hazards of a thinning  
19 ozone layer. As a society, we used science to guide  
20 our decisions and worked together to address these  
21 challenges. We need to do the same now to confront  
22 climate change.

23                   RGGI is a step in that direction, and  
24 it deserves our support. Given the complete absence  
25 of federal leadership in addressing climate change,



1 our state needs to do its part. RGGI is not the  
2 final solution. It is a step, a step that we need  
3 to take now.

4 Thank you.

5 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Scott.

6 Our next speaker, number 35, is Austin  
7 Orth.

8 MR. ORTH: Hello.

9 Can you hear me?

10 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can, Austin.

11 Please go ahead.

12 MS. GRIFFIN: Great.

13 Thank you, Secretary McDonnell and  
14 Board, for the opportunity to share today.

15 My name is Austin Orth, A-U-S-T-I-N,  
16 O-R-T-H. The thoughts I share today are my own and  
17 come from my perspective as both a Christian and a  
18 private citizen residing in the North Hills of  
19 Pittsburgh.

20 Though I now live in Pittsburgh, I am  
21 originally from Meyersdale, Pennsylvania, in  
22 Somerset County, and attended Waynesburg University  
23 in Waynesburg, Pennsylvania, in Greene County. One  
24 thing these counties have in common is coal mining.  
25 And both growing up and as a college student, I

1 experienced the tension in the communities I was a  
2 part of between the jobs and the health issues ---  
3 heavy metals in the water, pollution in the air,  
4 that coal brought to these communities.

5                   Now in Pittsburgh, I realize how  
6 dangerous pollution is in our cities. I have  
7 experienced firsthand the thick, fume-filled air in  
8 Oakland, when temperature inversions pull pollution  
9 down into the streets and many days in the Strip  
10 District when my coworker, who has asthma, is unable  
11 to be outside for more than five minutes and not  
12 start wheezing.

13                   In addition, Pittsburgh's history of  
14 red-lining has placed my black friends and their  
15 communities in the most polluted neighborhoods,  
16 making their experience even worse.

17                   In light of these experiences, and  
18 compelled by the words of Christ to love my neighbor  
19 as myself, I wholeheartedly support the Department  
20 of Environmental Protection's proposed standard to  
21 join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative and cut  
22 carbon and other pollutants from electric power  
23 generation. The people of my hometown, my city, and  
24 my state, and future generations, will all have  
25 healthier lives if we join it.

1 I must also address the needs of my  
2 coal mining neighbors, though. It hurts to know  
3 that jobs will be lost. But the economy is  
4 changing. And whether we join RGGI or not, coal  
5 jobs are disappearing. That is why I am calling for  
6 at least 50 percent of all RGGI proceeds to go  
7 directly to job creation and transition assistance  
8 for coal miners to not be left behind.

9 A portion of the proceeds should also  
10 go to serving people living in the most polluted  
11 areas of our state, particularly black communities  
12 that have been red-lined.

13 In your deliberation, I humbly ask  
14 that each of you look not only to his own interests,  
15 but also to the interests of others, as Paul and  
16 Timothy say in scripture.

17 Thank you for your time.

18 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Austin.

19 Our next speaker, number 36, is  
20 Michael Coblenz

21 DR. COBLENZ: Hi.

22 My name is Doctor Michael Coblenz.  
23 I'm speaking as a resident of Pittsburgh, 15217.  
24 Thank you for hearing my testimony.

25 When I was a child, I learned to hike

1 and camp outdoors through Scouting, which developed  
2 my appreciation for the wonder of the natural world.

3           You already know about the seriousness  
4 of the climate emergency. We are causing an  
5 unprecedented mass extinction event and making it  
6 harder for our children to live healthy, productive  
7 lives. We are increasingly contributing to hunger  
8 around the world, as food crops become less  
9 productive and are threatened by extreme weather  
10 events. These events are driven by climate change  
11 caused by our emissions of greenhouse gases.

12           Part of my obligation as a scientist  
13 is to encourage others to attend to the research  
14 coming from my colleagues in climatology. But my  
15 testimony today is driven by my moral imperative to  
16 my children. I have two daughters, from whom I  
17 borrow this planet. What kind of world will they  
18 inherit?

19           When my wife and I bought our house in  
20 Pittsburgh six years ago, we made concrete changes  
21 to substantially reduce our greenhouse gas  
22 emissions. We did this as a matter of both  
23 environmental and fiscal responsibility. We  
24 insulated and air-sealed, reducing our natural gas  
25 consumption and cost by a factor of two. We

1 installed solar panels, which generate most of the  
2 electricity we need. I hope to some day terminate  
3 our reliance on natural gas for heating. But my  
4 house is just one of thousands of buildings  
5 throughout Pennsylvania, all of which are  
6 contributing to climate change.

7                   Membership in the Regional Greenhouse  
8 Gas Initiative will provide critically-needed funds  
9 for energy efficiency retrofits. In 2018, RGGI  
10 invested \$29 million in energy efficiency out of  
11 \$248 million of investment funds. These investments  
12 will save taxpayers \$2 billion in energy bills and  
13 avoid the emission of 4.6 million tons of CO2  
14 pollution.

15                   In addition, these investments are  
16 efficient. Each dollar of RGGI investment  
17 stimulates \$2.52 of additional private investment.  
18 These funds can reduce energy bills, particularly of  
19 low-income residents.

20                   I spent 11 years as a student at  
21 Carnegie Mellon University. That's a bachelor's,  
22 master's, and a Ph.D. And I saw countless students  
23 paying huge energy bills for their rental  
24 apartments, which they could scarcely afford because  
25 the Pittsburgh housing stock is very old and many

1 landlords have not invested in efficiency  
2 improvements. Investments in energy efficiency that  
3 are stimulated by RGGI will enable countless  
4 students and low-income Pennsylvania residents to  
5 spend their money on things that help them build  
6 better lives for themselves and their families,  
7 recreation in Pennsylvania parks, buying healthy  
8 food from Pennsylvania farms, and supporting local  
9 businesses such as restaurants and, some time soon,  
10 theaters.

11           Reducing emissions from fossil fuel  
12 plants will have the ancillary benefit of reducing  
13 particulate nitrous oxide and other pollution. In  
14 Pittsburgh, there are beautiful, sunny days when I  
15 can't let my kids play outside because the air is  
16 too polluted. The nearby Cheswick coal power plant  
17 emits over 4,000 tons of nitrous oxide emissions  
18 every year, as well as 180 pounds of mercury, which  
19 is a neurotoxin.

20           If you recall warnings to not eat too  
21 much of certain kinds of seafood, this is because  
22 the seafood is contaminated by mercury emitted into  
23 the atmosphere by coal power plants. The mercury  
24 then falls in rain and accumulates in fish through  
25 the food chain. The reductions in fossil fuel

1 combustion provided by RGGI will have surprisingly  
2 broad environmental health implications.

3                   Joining RGGI will enable  
4 Pennsylvanians and people around the world to live  
5 healthier, happier lives. It will be a step toward  
6 fulfilling our responsibility to our children to  
7 provide a safe planet, which they will some day  
8 inherit. I urge Pennsylvania to join the Regional  
9 Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

10                   MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Michael.

11                   Speaker number 37 was not able to join  
12 us.

13                   Speaker number 38 is Carolin  
14 Schellhorn.

15                   Are you there, Carolin?

16                   MS. SCHELLHORN: I'm muted.

17                   MS. GRIFFIN: There you are. We can  
18 hear you now.

19                   Please go ahead.

20                   MS. SCHELLHORN: Great. Okay.

21                   Well, thank you for this opportunity  
22 to speak.

23                   My name is Carolin Schellhorn,  
24 C-A-R-O-L-I-N, and the last name is  
25 S-C-H-E-L-L-H-O-R-N. I live in Ardmore, and I work

1 at St. Joseph's University as a finance professor.  
2 I speak today as a parent and as a community member.  
3 I am testifying to share my deep concerns about  
4 accelerating climate change and the importance of  
5 timely and effective action to mitigate it.

6           The timing of climate action matters  
7 because scientists tell us that the planetary  
8 processes that have been set in motion by our  
9 actions may trigger tipping points which may lead to  
10 irreversible changes to climate patterns and  
11 ecosystems. This is a crisis that threatens our  
12 lives and health.

13           We knew this a long time ago, and we  
14 should have acted then. We cannot turn back the  
15 clock, but we can act now.

16           Human-induced climate change is a  
17 global problem, but we here in Pennsylvania share a  
18 significant part of the responsibility for this  
19 because our state emits more greenhouse gas  
20 emissions than most nations and our electricity  
21 sector is a major source.

22           To avert the worst consequences of  
23 climate change, we must cut greenhouse gas emissions  
24 significantly and quickly, 50 percent by 2030 and  
25 100 percent by 2050. And that means leaving fossil



1 fuels in the ground.

2                   Joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas  
3 Initiative is an effective step on the road to a  
4 net-zero carbon economy. The RGGI Regulation sets  
5 limits on carbon emissions on power plants that  
6 reduce the allowed emissions over time. States  
7 auction off allowances that are purchased by power  
8 plants so the power plants effectively pay for the  
9 pollution and global warming they create.

10                   This is a bipartisan, market-based  
11 solution. The revenue the states receive can be  
12 reinvested in communities to address inequities.  
13 Some groups and communities are much more exposed to  
14 pollution and the increased frequency of severe  
15 weather events created by our consumption of fossil  
16 fuels than others, and they suffer more from the  
17 associated health problems as many have testified.

18                   Also, some people will face greater  
19 economic and employment risks during our transition  
20 away from fossil fuels. The revenue from RGGI can  
21 help address some of this injustice.

22                   The states that have been  
23 participating in RGGI over the past decade have been  
24 able to significantly cut pollution and greenhouse  
25 gas emissions while their economies have continued

1 to grow. The revenue generated from the initiative  
2 has resulted in thousands of new clean energy jobs,  
3 investments in energy efficiency, consumer savings,  
4 and assistance with retraining workers to help with  
5 the transition. All of these are benefits that  
6 Pennsylvanians can enjoy as well. Perhaps most  
7 importantly, concerning our health, by reducing the  
8 pollutants in the air we breathe, we reduce asthma,  
9 other respiratory illnesses, cardiac problems,  
10 cancer risks, and also medical bills.

11 When it comes to supporting and  
12 securing our lives and health, there are few actions  
13 we can take that are as impactful as joining the  
14 RGGI and responsibly investing the proceeds.

15 Thank you for your time.

16 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Carolin.

17 Our next speaker, number 39, is Sydney  
18 Ziatek.

19 MS. ZIATEK: Hello.

20 I'm Sydney Ziatek, Z as in Zebra,  
21 I-A-T-E-K. I'm a private citizen from Cranberry  
22 Township. I'd like to thank you for providing the  
23 space for members of the general public to speak on  
24 this topic although, I would imagine, the making of  
25 this decision would ultimately turn on the input of

1 experts.

2                   That's a lesson we learned the hard  
3 way from COVID. Listening to expert opinions saves  
4 lives. With the tragic and preventable COVID  
5 disaster still unfolding around us, I felt moved to  
6 speak to you all today about another preventable  
7 disaster, the ramifications of which will dwarf  
8 COVID and that we have already begun to face.

9                   I'll lead with my main message for the  
10 testimony, which is this: I implore you to listen  
11 to the experts, the scientists, and the economists  
12 who have dedicated their lives to understanding  
13 these issues and suggesting policy changes.

14                   The experts say that RGGI works. With  
15 that in mind, the experts also say that we have  
16 already begun our descent into climate catastrophe.

17                   The experts say that we need decisive action now to  
18 prevent the out worst outcomes. Although the stakes  
19 are extremely high for Pennsylvania and its global  
20 economy, RGGI is still a good step in the right  
21 direction.

22                   There's a popular proverb that says,  
23 "The best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago. The  
24 second best time is now." It is the right time for  
25 Pennsylvania to get on the RGGI bandwagon after 12

1 years of abstaining. Here are a few reasons why:

2 RGGI can help to correct the much  
3 larger hidden costs beyond what it costs to actually  
4 produce electricity. Not capping and investing  
5 carbon effectively acts as a subsidy for fossil fuel  
6 because the real cost of its production and use is  
7 much higher. And we see that cost show up in other  
8 sectors.

9 With only an average increase of two  
10 degrees Fahrenheit, not even two degrees Celsius,  
11 which is what we expect to see in the future, we are  
12 already seeing changes in Pennsylvania industries,  
13 such as less productivity in agriculture; increased  
14 need for weather-resistant infrastructure, and  
15 therefore increased construction costs; and higher  
16 costs to human health.

17 According to the EPA, IPTBTP model,  
18 produced by the Pennsylvania Department of  
19 Environmental Protection to predict the health  
20 benefits from RGGI, just the reduction in SM2 and  
21 NOX will save somewhere between 2.8 to 6.3 billion  
22 dollars in health-related costs by 2030. And that  
23 calculation doesn't even include the health benefits  
24 or savings related to the reduction of CO2.

25 RGGI saves us money and, dramatically

1 enough, lives. So while the reduction in pollution  
2 would benefit the health of Pennsylvanians, the  
3 reinvestment portion of RGGI could be a huge boom to  
4 Pennsylvania's economic health. It is predicted  
5 that PA would see \$300 million in revenue in just  
6 the first year with an average of 260-ish million  
7 every year after that. If we take a look at the  
8 balance approach reinvestment scenario, it would  
9 take --- it would create about --- pardon me ---  
10 30,000 jobs, increase our energy efficiencies, and  
11 develop our investments into cleaner sources of  
12 energy, which Pennsylvania is very much capable of  
13 producing, not to mention the chunk of money we also  
14 see from savings in other industries. The private  
15 sector would also have its chance to compete and  
16 subsequently drive innovation.

17 I'm sure that the main technical  
18 documents available and the speakers who have gone  
19 before me have already offered you a very technical  
20 look at RGGI. I'd like to offer you a more personal  
21 perspective. Though this is a global issue, let's  
22 talk about the changes that have already come to our  
23 backyard and those that will be coming soon. I had  
24 only the first half year of my life in 1997. That  
25 wasn't one of the hottest years on record ever

1 globally. 103, more than half of Pennsylvania's  
2 bird species, are at risk just from changing  
3 temperatures alone. Pennsylvania, even with  
4 mitigation efforts, is looking at having the  
5 temperature of Alabama within the lifetime of  
6 children already born. Is hearing that as shocking  
7 to you as it was for me?

8                   This is a crisis that requires  
9 immediate action. This isn't just a time sensitive  
10 issue. Many argue that this is in fact a race  
11 against time. We are barreling towards a future  
12 that none of us want. It is already too late to  
13 prevent many outcomes that may have seemed  
14 unthinkable in the past. RGGI is a reasonable,  
15 proven, time-tested, cost effective way for us to  
16 start making the progress we desperately need to  
17 prevent disaster.

18                   Please consider joining RGGI. We  
19 cannot wait another 12 years to plant the tree.

20                   I will be submitting my citations in  
21 the written version of this testimony. Thank you  
22 again for your time and consideration.

23                   MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Sydney.

24                   Speaker number 40 is Chloe Sellis.

25                   MS. SELLIS: Hi, this is Chloe Sellis.

1                   MS. GRIFFIN: Please go ahead, Chloe.

2                   MS. Chloe: Thank you.

3                   Good afternoon. My name is Chloe  
4 Sellis. And thank you for the opportunity to  
5 testify today.

6                   I'm a resident of Harrisburg, a  
7 dedicated advocate for climate action, a person of  
8 faith, and a concerned community member. I have  
9 chosen to testify today on behalf of myself and my  
10 community because I care about Pennsylvania's  
11 people. I am testifying in support of Pennsylvania  
12 joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative and  
13 for DEP to sign onto the proposed rulemaking without  
14 major provisions.

15                   As others have already mentioned,  
16 climate change is not a future possibility. It is a  
17 present reality devastating the lives and  
18 livelihoods of communities across the globe,  
19 including those right here in Pennsylvania.

20                   Before my time, the City of Harrisburg  
21 was hit by environmental disasters like the Three  
22 Mile Island meltdown in 1979 and Hurricane Agnes in  
23 1972. Both of these disasters left their mark.  
24 Hurricane Agnes, for example, flooded and destroyed  
25 the homes of hundreds of families and dislocated

1 entire neighborhoods. Climate change comes as a  
2 steady increase of these events. How many more  
3 disasters can communities like Harrisburg sustain?

4                   Just a hundred feet from my door flows  
5 the polluted waters of the Susquehanna River. an  
6 incredible and historic river that has been trashed  
7 with sewage, storm water runoff, and abandoned mine  
8 drainage.

9                   In a desperate attempt to fund a  
10 restoration of our outdated infrastructure, the  
11 mayor of Harrisburg made notice last summer that he  
12 was looking to privatize the city's water, selling  
13 access to public drinking water and all other  
14 waste-water assets to a private company.

15                   An outcry arose from residents because  
16 we know what privatization means. Time and time  
17 again, we've seen that it means more, not less, of a  
18 financial burden on people already struggling. It  
19 means more, not less, pollution. And clean water,  
20 like clean air, is a human right.

21                   Since the outbreak of the pandemic,  
22 many have been confined to their homes and too many  
23 have lost their homes altogether because they  
24 couldn't pay rent. We've seen that access to  
25 electricity is as necessary as clean water and clean



1 air. And how can we have access to clean water and  
2 clean air when we rely on a dirty, outdated,  
3 inefficient, and unsustainable energy system, a  
4 system that we are barely functioning with, one that  
5 does not serve the low-income families struggling to  
6 pay rising costs of housing and healthcare on a  
7 stagnant minimum wage?

8                   In the same way, it does not serve  
9 coal workers facing the inevitable closing of their  
10 plants. No less than 18 coal fired plants in the  
11 state have already closed or transitioned to gas in  
12 recent years. And there is no protection for these  
13 workers. We need funds to invest in energy  
14 efficiency to help struggling families, and we need  
15 funds to protect jobs and provide retraining for  
16 workers facing unemployment. We need these as much  
17 as we need to invest in the 21st century clean  
18 energy system that won't leave anyone in the dark.

19                   For these reasons, I urge you to sign  
20 onto RGGI without major revisions to the rules as  
21 proposed.

22                   Thank you.

23                   MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Chloe.

24                   The next speaker, number 41, is Ray  
25 Roberts.

1                   MR. ROBERTS: Hi.

2                   Can you hear me okay?

3                   MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can, Ray.

4 Please go ahead.

5                   MR. ROBERTS: Okay. Great.

6                   My name is Ray Roberts. I'm a private  
7 citizen and 18-year resident of Pittsburgh. My ZIP  
8 is 15206. And I've lived in Pittsburgh long enough  
9 to have developed asthma. I want to thank you for  
10 holding these hearings, and I hope you'll extend the  
11 opportunity for others to have their chance to be  
12 heard, maybe by having additional hearings.

13                   But today I want you to hear me as I  
14 speak in the strongest possible terms in favor of  
15 Pennsylvania joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas  
16 Initiative. The other RGGI member states have  
17 proven it is effective and it benefits those  
18 citizens. It will change the rules of our economy  
19 so that the true externalized costs of pollution  
20 become visible and will lead to an economy that  
21 protects Pennsylvanians, grows more jobs, and means  
22 we will become more responsible contributors to  
23 solving this global crisis instead of making it  
24 worse.

25                   I recommend RGGI revenue be used to

1 buy out and close fracking wells in addition to help  
2 --- helping fund installation, energy efficiency,  
3 rooftop solar, and electrification of our transport  
4 sector. We will enjoy, as Pennsylvanians, an added  
5 bonus by joining an already established trading  
6 market, meaning we gain the benefits without having  
7 to pay the upfront startup costs to create that  
8 market.

9                   The voices opposing our Commonwealth  
10 joining RGGI are those of greed, corruption, and  
11 irresponsible and willful ignorance, people who do  
12 not want to believe that their actions have  
13 consequences which are threatening our civilization  
14 with blood. I wish these accusations were  
15 hyperbolic; however, they are the painful truth.  
16 And Pennsylvania is familiar with these bad  
17 neighbors, having a long history of the corrupt  
18 extractive industries that take our lumber, coal,  
19 oil, and now frack gas, who irresponsibly destroy  
20 our common home, purchase politicians, run away with  
21 the profits, then declare bankruptcy and leave  
22 Pennsylvania taxpayers to clean up their mess. We  
23 have gotten used to this boom and bust cycle and  
24 have a familiarity of the legacy of cleaning up  
25 afterwards.

1                   Now, I've actually read the National  
2 Academy of Science's and the ITCC reports from the  
3 world's best climate scientists, and they are clear  
4 and unequivocal in their consensus. We must make  
5 every effort, starting immediately, to work at  
6 achieving pollution cuts that lead to no more than  
7 1.5 degrees Celsius of global overheating. And  
8 we're already at 1.1 degrees.

9                   The corrupt and the irresponsible  
10 opponents of RGGI want to sow doubt and claim that  
11 their jobs and profits do not directly affect others  
12 in spite of all scientific evidence to the contrary.

13                  The greatest dangers are from climactic tipping  
14 points, which you can visualize as a row of  
15 dominoes, where when one falls, it knocks the next  
16 one over and the next, all the way down the line.

17                  Climate scientists publishing in the  
18 National Academy of Sciences warn us that the arctic  
19 sea ice and the albedo effect is the first tipping  
20 point, which we know the most about and which is  
21 most in danger of falling first. And I will gladly  
22 submit the evidentiary documents that I'm referring  
23 to.

24                  This year continues a shrinking trend,  
25 which terrifies the climate experts. We can also

1 see another falling domino in the extreme wildfires  
2 in the Amazon rainforest burning, in Australia  
3 burning, in Siberia burning, and now our American  
4 West burning. In the mid-1980s, a western  
5 record-setting wildfire burned around 200,000 acres.

6 This year, the western wildfires have burned over  
7 7,000,000 acres, which is over 35 times bigger than  
8 when I was a teenager.

9           The smoke from the 2020 fires was so  
10 great, it reached us in Pittsburgh. If these  
11 tipping points continue to fall without us working  
12 to halt their fall, then the harm to our food and  
13 water systems can become too great to maintain.

14           Now, the military leaders in our  
15 country call climate overheating a threat  
16 multiplier, which destabilizes government and leads  
17 to war and millions of refugees. We who listen to  
18 science understand we have a single decade time  
19 limit on our ability to hold these dominoes back and  
20 avoid irreversible runaway damages, damages that are  
21 impossible to clean up later.

22           This goes beyond a simple question of  
23 policy yes or policy no. It becomes a moral  
24 question: Do you love your children? Do you love  
25 your spouse? This moral question facing our common

1 home has already been answered by Pope Francis and  
2 also every other major religion in the world.

3 Now, RGGI is not going to solve  
4 everything. But it is a significant, responsible,  
5 and ethical step forward. And it is what you have  
6 the power to contribute. The economic benefits from  
7 joining RGGI are great, and the catastrophic costs  
8 are immoral to ignore. So what will your answer be?

9 And that's my testimony. Thank you.

10 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Ray.

11 The next speaker, number 42, is Brook  
12 Lenker.

13 Are you with us, Brook?

14 Darek, is Brook in the Webex?

15 MR. JAGIELA: She's unmuted. I'm not  
16 sure what's going on.

17 MS. GRIFFIN: Okay.

18 Can we go to the next person and then  
19 Brook can work out her technical difficulties with  
20 you, please?

21 MR. JAGIELA: Yes.

22 MS. GRIFFIN: Our next speaker, number  
23 43, is Carl Gershenson.

24 MR. GERSHENSON: Hi.

25 I'm Carl. My name is Carl Gershenson,

1 that's C-A-R-L, G-E-R-S-H-E-N-S-O-N. And I am  
2 talking today from Philadelphia 19146. And I will  
3 be representing 5th Square, an urbanist group here  
4 in Philadelphia. And we give our strongest  
5 recommendation that Pennsylvania join the Regional  
6 Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

7 RGGI is a modest but necessary step  
8 toward addressing the climate crisis. PA will not  
9 be taking any risks by joining RGGI. We have  
10 already seen what a success RGGI has been in the ten  
11 other states that have joined, where climate  
12 pollution has dropped by half while the initiative  
13 has raised nearly \$3 billion to invest in clean  
14 energy and other worthwhile programs.

15 The experience of these states shows  
16 there is no tradeoff between decarbonization and  
17 economic growth. And this will be true in PA, too.  
18 Our Department of Environmental Protection has  
19 confirmed that joining RGGI will lead to a net  
20 increase of over 27,000 jobs and could add \$1.9  
21 billion to the economy.

22 And I think it's vital that we talk  
23 about the hundreds of millions of dollars that RGGI  
24 could raise, because these funds will be key to  
25 ensuring a just transition toward a cleaner economy.

1 I'm particularly concerned that these funds go to  
2 the frontline communities that have suffered the  
3 worst health effects from power plant emissions and  
4 also to communities that have historically depended  
5 on coal mining for economic success.

6 Like many Pennsylvanians, much of my  
7 family comes from coal country. I know how much  
8 coal production has been hurting, mostly due to the  
9 growth of natural gas also in our state. But I  
10 think that the money raised by RGGI can be used to  
11 help these communities transition to more  
12 sustainable industries.

13 Joining RGGI can also help the  
14 frontline communities that have suffered poor health  
15 outcomes because of exposure to power plant  
16 emissions.

17 It has been shown that power plants  
18 have disproportionately sited next to poor and  
19 minority communities.

20 It is estimated that participation in  
21 RGGI will produce \$6 billion in health benefits  
22 through 2030, lead to 45,000 fewer asthma attacks  
23 per year and more than 1,000 fewer cases of  
24 childhood bronchitis. As a father raising two  
25 children in a South Philly neighborhood that was



1 literally shook by the explosion of the Philadelphia  
2 Energy Solutions refinery, reducing harms to my  
3 children, to my neighbors' children, and to children  
4 like mine across our Commonwealth is especially  
5 important to me.

6                   There is no good reason for  
7 Pennsylvania not to join RGGI. Polls find that  
8 seven in ten Pennsylvanians support joining RGGI.  
9 80 percent of Pennsylvanians support placing a limit  
10 on carbon pollution. There is growing support for  
11 addressing climate change among independents and  
12 even among republicans, especially the youngest  
13 republican. Major businesses here in PA, from MARS  
14 to Schneider Electric, support the state joining  
15 RGGI. And even oil companies like BP America are  
16 urging that legislators support RGGI.

17                   I am --- I was born in Pennsylvania,  
18 raised in Pennsylvania. I love Pennsylvania, and I  
19 hate seeing our state lag instead of lead. We have  
20 the 5th dirtiest power sector, and it is clear we  
21 can do a lot better. It's clear the state is  
22 warming, and it's clear that the energy sector is  
23 going to undergo massive transformations in the  
24 upcoming decades regardless of whether we join RGGI.

25                   However, RGGI will allow our state to

1 raise funds and collectively control our own fate as  
2 we transition towards a cleaner, more just, and more  
3 prosperous future.

4 Thank you.

5 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Carl.

6 Our next speaker, number 44, is Tracy  
7 Viola.

8 MS. VIOLA: Yes.

9 Can you hear me?

10 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can hear you,  
11 Tracy.

12 Please go ahead.

13 MS. VIOLA: Thank you so much.

14 I just want to thank everyone that has  
15 also gone before me as well. It's been really nice  
16 to listen to these voices. Sometimes I feel like  
17 I'm an island fighting this fight. And so I just  
18 want to shout out to all of you, thank you so, so  
19 much for being here and for your time and for you  
20 for listening to me.

21 Again, Tracy Viola, that's T-R-A-C-Y,  
22 V-I-O-L-A. And I'm from Wayne, Pennsylvania. I'm  
23 commenting as a private citizen and as a parent, a  
24 very scared person, a very scared parent. Truly  
25 scared and sad for the future of all of us, I'm

1 thinking about everyone here in our Commonwealth and  
2 on our Earth.

3 I have two young daughters that I  
4 worry often about how their future, safety, and  
5 health and how it's going to be impacted if we  
6 continue to not act, if we continue to let a few  
7 politicians make decisions for all of our futures  
8 here in the Commonwealth and around the planet.

9 In regards to our specific discussion  
10 today, I am deeply concerned about the particulate  
11 pollution and air quality impacting our citizens.  
12 These PA power plants are not just polluting with  
13 carbon dioxide and operating with no regard for  
14 their greenhouse gas emissions. As others have  
15 mentioned, there is a lot more to it.

16 Where there is one pollutant, there is  
17 another. Sulfur dioxide, nitric oxide, soot,  
18 mercury, and other heavy metals are also being  
19 released into our Pennsylvania air and going into  
20 our waters. Not a surprise here, but all of this  
21 becomes damaging, sickening particulate matter.

22 RGGI is unique. It would cap and  
23 reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from these  
24 disappointing PA power polluters and brings millions  
25 and millions of dollars back into the PA economy. I

1 just think that's awesome. What a win-win.

2                   Additionally, joining RGGI would  
3 improve air quality, leading to cleaner water both  
4 air and water quality directly impacting the health  
5 of our PA citizens. What happens when people are  
6 healthier? A reduction in healthcare costs for both  
7 adults and children in our state, reduced sick  
8 missed work and school days. Now we have a  
9 win-win-win situation, and that's just the health  
10 benefits and reduced healthcare costs for our  
11 Pennsylvania community.

12                   Furthermore, I've learned that over  
13 27,000 jobs will be created. We know this based on  
14 the studies and experience communicated to us by  
15 from the other ten states that have been in this  
16 program for some time. Now we're up to four wins,  
17 win-win-win-win.

18                   With all these benefits in mind, why  
19 is moving forward with RGGI even a discussion? Let's  
20 listen to the other states who are already involved  
21 with RGGI and hear about all the benefits they have  
22 observed. It's proven.

23                   This is one step we can take. I hope  
24 it's not the only step. But at least in joining the  
25 Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, we are moving

1 forward in addressing both climate change and the  
2 safety and health of our Pennsylvania citizens, both  
3 current and future citizens.

4 I'd like to close with a quote from  
5 Drew Dellinger, who said, "My great, great  
6 grandchildren ask me, what did you do while the  
7 planet was plundered? Surely you did something.  
8 What did you do once you knew?"

9 I urge you to please, please support  
10 the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative for  
11 Pennsylvania today.

12 Thank you for your time.

13 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Tracy.

14 Our next speaker, number 45, is  
15 Shannon Gorrity.

16 Hold on a second.

17 Are we ready for Brook Lenker, number  
18 42? No?

19 Okay.

20 We'll try Brook in a second.

21 Number 45, Shannon Gorrity.

22 MS. GORITY: Good afternoon, and thank  
23 you for the opportunity to participate in this  
24 hearing.

25 As mentioned, I'm Shannon Gorrity,

1 S-H-A-N-N-O-N, G-O-R-I-T-Y. I'm the executive  
2 director for the Pennsylvania Office of the  
3 Chesapeake Bay Foundation in Harrisburg,  
4 Pennsylvania.

5 On behalf of our Pennsylvania members,  
6 the Chesapeake Bay Foundation strongly supports the  
7 proposed regulation, known as the Carbon Dioxide  
8 Budget Training Program, which seeks to reverse the  
9 trajectory of climate change related damage to our  
10 shared planet.

11 Climate change is already rearing its  
12 ugly head in our beautiful Commonwealth with higher  
13 temperatures and extreme weather events. Heavy  
14 rains, flooding, drought, heat waves, and high winds  
15 are degrading our water quality, decreasing the  
16 availability of clean water supplies, increasing  
17 disease and pests that impact our agricultural  
18 community, killing off our needed trees and plants,  
19 degrading soil health, and much more.

20 For purposes of this hearing, I will  
21 not repeat the valuable sentiments of other  
22 testimonials with respect to the numerous benefits  
23 of Pennsylvania entering into RGGI, including human  
24 health improvements and a reversal of socioeconomic  
25 injustices.

1                   Instead, I'll focus on the  
2 intersections of climate change and the work we do  
3 at the Chesapeake Bay Foundation to improve the  
4 quality of water that passes through our local  
5 communities on its way to the Chesapeake Bay.

6                   Without making changes in greenhouse  
7 gas emissions in this Commonwealth, water quality  
8 will be greatly impacted. For example, climate  
9 change leads to increased flooding. Flooding leads  
10 to nutrients rushing into our local waters. Those  
11 nutrients then lead to harmful algal blooms that  
12 decimate the biology of our aquatic ecosystems that  
13 support our economy and quality of life.

14                   These impacts will continue to  
15 increase if changes do not take place to mitigate  
16 the harm. These proposed regulations provide the  
17 change that is needed.

18                   Of particular importance to the  
19 Chesapeake Bay foundation and our Pennsylvania  
20 membership is the opportunity for these regulations  
21 to help accelerate Pennsylvania's progress in  
22 meeting its obligations to restore the Chesapeake  
23 Bay.

24                   With only four years left to meet  
25 these obligations, the state remains significantly

1 behind in meeting its commitments. And  
2 Pennsylvania's most recent plan has a  
3 self-identified \$324,000,000 annual shortfall.

4                   However, Pennsylvania's plan to save  
5 the bay relies on two practices that are widely  
6 recognized for their ability to sequester carbon:  
7 tree planting and the improvement of agricultural  
8 soil health.

9                   Our state has 33,500 farms spanning  
10 3,000,000 acres in farmland in the Chesapeake Bay  
11 watershed alone and has committed to implementing  
12 soil health practices on approximately 40 percent of  
13 this farmland.

14                   Soil health is defined as the  
15 continued capacity of soil to function as a vital  
16 living ecosystem that sustains plants, animals, and  
17 humans. When soils are healthy, nutrients,  
18 sediments, and carbon are kept on the land instead  
19 of in the water and in the air.

20                   Based on recent research by the Rodale  
21 Institute and others, if the base state's commitment  
22 to soil health are realized, it could result in  
23 roughly 2.7 million to 3.4 million tons of carbon  
24 sequestered into farm soil annually.

25                   By changing the trajectory of climate



1 change, we can help our agricultural community to  
2 sequester this carbon while improving food security  
3 in the Commonwealth. As noted, climate change is  
4 upending normal weather patterns, leading to periods  
5 of both intense precipitation and drought, both of  
6 which pose great difficulties for Pennsylvania  
7 farmers.

8                   The plan for the bay also calls for  
9 implementing over 85,000 new acres of streamside  
10 forests, commonly referred to as red forest and  
11 riparian buffers. This equates to planting 17  
12 million trees alongside streams that flow to the  
13 bay. If achieved, these trees may sequester almost  
14 60,000 tons of carbon a year, totaling 8.1 million  
15 tons over the average lifespan of those trees.

16                   Despite their capacity for carbon  
17 sequestration, these forests and plants can become  
18 overwhelmed and stressed, especially in their early  
19 life. Higher temperatures and ground level ozone  
20 contribute to the destruction of chlorophyll,  
21 reducing survivability. Before they meet the needs  
22 of the day, planted trees need to reach maturity.  
23 The Commonwealth simply cannot afford to --- cannot  
24 afford to forego this opportunity to mitigate the  
25 impacts of climate change through practices that

1 restore and protect the local streams and bay.

2                   The proposed rulemaking will not  
3 only combat climate change and support the  
4 achievements of bay obligations, but will provide  
5 economic value. I will discuss more of that in our  
6 written statements.

7                   The indirect and direct positive  
8 impact this proposed regulation has on our  
9 Commonwealth is extensive, and for these reasons and  
10 more, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation supports  
11 finalizing the proposed rulemaking.

12                   Thank you.

13                   MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Shannon.

14                   Our next speaker, number 46, is Rabbi  
15 Nathan Kamesar.

16                   RABBI KAMESAR: Yes.

17                   My name is Nathan Kamesar. That's  
18 K-A-M-E-S-A-R. I'm the rabbi of Society Hill  
19 Synagogue in Center City, Philadelphia, but I'm  
20 speaking as a private citizen.

21                   I'm a resident of the Graduate  
22 Hospital neighborhood of Philadelphia, where I live  
23 with my wife and 18-month-old daughter. Thank you  
24 for the opportunity to speak on this matter of  
25 urgent importance. Democracy is a beautiful, holy

1 thing.

2                   So I'm here to speak in favor of  
3 Pennsylvania establishing regulations that would  
4 enable it to join the Regional Greenhouse Gas  
5 Initiative. I see this as a moral issue, I see it  
6 as an environmental issue, I see it as a public  
7 health issue, and I see it as an issue of justice.

8                   Placing a price on carbon emissions  
9 reduces emissions directly. That's straightforward.  
10 And it also has a compounding effect by sending a  
11 signal to businesses to invest in cleaner  
12 technologies here and now.

13                   We've already seen dramatic reductions  
14 in carbon emissions by states participating in RGGI.  
15 And that means those states are already contributing  
16 to the fight to lessen the effects of climate  
17 change, effects which include extreme weather events  
18 like hurricanes, droughts, heat waves, and floods.

19                   We Pennsylvanians have to do our part  
20 in that fight to limit the deaths, the suffering,  
21 and the human and economic toll that is registering  
22 across the globe. We know that reducing carbon  
23 emissions leads to positive health effects. One  
24 report notes that RGGI has helped state residents  
25 avoid asthma attacks and pre-term births and reduced

1 cases --- and reduced cases of low birth weight and  
2 autism spectrum disorder in kids. So it really,  
3 really is a moral issue.

4                   Joining RGGI entails economic  
5 benefits. One report notes that RGGI-funded  
6 investments in energy efficiency and other clean  
7 energy measures in one year alone will save families  
8 more than two billion dollars on their energy bills  
9 in the years ahead. And a report from State Impact  
10 Pennsylvania notes that RGGI netted about \$1.4  
11 billion in economic value among the states that  
12 participated between 2015 and 2017. It said RGGI  
13 compliance led to overall job gains, not losses.  
14 These jobs include workers who perform efficiency  
15 audits and who install energy efficiency measures in  
16 residences and commercial buildings and also jobs in  
17 staff performing training on energy issues. So the  
18 economic benefits are significant.

19                   Of course, there will be some side  
20 effects of this regulation, and they deserve our  
21 attention as well. It's important that we tend to  
22 the effects that this regulation will have on  
23 displaced coal workers, if that takes place, and  
24 ensure that they, just like everyone else in  
25 economic need, are provided with the resources they

1 need to empower themselves to work and to live out  
2 the American dream for themselves and their  
3 families.

4                   And we need to make sure these  
5 regulations do not result in neighborhoods primarily  
6 inhabited by people of color and by low-income  
7 people seeing emissions increases while other  
8 neighborhoods see emissions decreases. Trends of  
9 that sort are all too common in our history. Any  
10 effective regulation will have these concerns front  
11 and center.

12                   But meanwhile, without a carbon cap  
13 and invest program like RGGI, we as a society are  
14 paying the price for high-carbon emissions through  
15 the devastating effects of climate change, through  
16 public health effects like those discussed earlier,  
17 asthma, pre-term births, and so a failure to be  
18 looking ahead economically by investing now in  
19 businesses based around renewable energy sources.

20                   The time has come for Pennsylvania to  
21 partner with surrounding states and commit to making  
22 this planet and this region safer, healthier, more  
23 prosperous, and more vibrant. Joining RGGI is an  
24 important step in bringing that to fruition.

25                   Thank you.

1                   MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Rabbi  
2 Kamesar.

3                   We're going to try speaker 42 again,  
4 Brook Lenker.

5                   Are you with us, Brook?

6                   MR. LENKER: Can you hear me?

7                   MS. GRIFFIN: Yes.

8                   MR. LENKER: Oh, great. Okay.

9                   MS. GRIFFIN: Please go ahead.  
10 Thank you for waiting.

11                   MR. LENKER: Yeah, no problem.

12                   My name is Brook Lenker. And that's  
13 spelled B-R-O-O-K and L-E-N-K-E-R. I reside in Camp  
14 Hill, Pennsylvania, and am the executive director of  
15 FracTracker Alliance, a Pennsylvania-based nonprofit  
16 organization that maps, analyzes, and communicates  
17 the risks of oil, gas, and petrochemical  
18 development. We do this to advance just energy  
19 alternatives that protect public health, natural  
20 resources, and the climate.

21                   Climate change is the paramount issue  
22 of our times, unleashing worsening impacts on  
23 agriculture, human health, forest health,  
24 infrastructure, waterways, and wildlife. From  
25 pervasive droughts to erratic floods, the evidence

1 is irrefutable. The cost to cope and adapt to these  
2 grievous effects will only compound straining public  
3 coffers and private checkbooks. Adaptation is  
4 unavoidable; mitigation is essential. Accelerating  
5 and prioritizing renewable energy and energy  
6 efficiency is both a moral imperative and a most  
7 prudent investment.

8           It's past time for Pennsylvania to  
9 join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. As  
10 fossil fuel employment wanes in the state, clean  
11 energy jobs multiply. The 2020 Pennsylvania Clean  
12 Energy Industry Report found that between 2017 and  
13 2019, clean energy job growth accounted for 7  
14 percent of all new jobs created in the Commonwealth.

15           Over this same time period, the clean  
16 energy industry grew faster than the overall  
17 statewide labor market. The same report found the  
18 clean energy economy to be, quote, a good source of  
19 jobs for veterans and Hispanic or Latinx  
20 communities, end quote. That is encouraging and  
21 ironic, since the vagaries of climate change and  
22 fossil fuel pollution and production dole out their  
23 poisons most egregiously on lower-income, non-white  
24 neighborhoods.

25           Pennsylvania can be leader or a

1 laggard. I hope we choose the former. Joining RGGI  
2 positions the state for success building synergies  
3 that foster prosperity, cleaner air, and a healthier  
4 population, paying untold dividends immediately and  
5 for generations to come. That's not cliché. It's  
6 quite true. And we must act now.

7                   Carbon dioxide is the nutrient of  
8 atmospheric heating; methane pollution is the  
9 steroid. Particulates exacerbate asthma as well as  
10 other serious ailments. Severe storms and flash  
11 flooding destroy lives and property. If polluter  
12 fees are questioned, despite their modest levy,  
13 think about the costs of sea level rise and the  
14 other liabilities of inaction.

15                   By reasoned calculus, RGGI membership  
16 is a practical and positive measure. It's not the  
17 leap we need, but it is a very wise step and  
18 absolutely needed.

19                   Thank you.

20                   MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Brook.

21                   Our next speaker, number 47, is Hilary  
22 Schenker.

23                   MS. SCHENKER: Hello.

24                   MS. GRIFFIN: Hello, Hilary.

25                   MS. SCHENKER: Okay.



1 Thank you for hearing my testimony.

2 My name is Hilary Schenker. I am a  
3 small business owner and mother of twin  
4 seven-year-old daughters living in Pittsburgh.

5 I am taking the time to testify today  
6 because of the existential threat that climate  
7 change poses to all of us. Joining RGGI, the  
8 Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, would help put  
9 Pennsylvania on the path to a stable sustainable  
10 future. And that's why I'm testifying in strong  
11 support of allowing Pennsylvania to join RGGI.

12 We know that to address the climate  
13 crisis, we need to limit carbon pollution. Burning  
14 fossil fuels continues to increase carbon dioxide in  
15 the earth's atmosphere, causing catastrophic warming  
16 and tipping points that Ray Roberts mentioned  
17 earlier. But our economic system has failed to take  
18 into account the series of adverse effects of the  
19 pollution.

20 Joining RGGI would help us create an  
21 incentive for cleaner energy by allowing energy  
22 companies to develop sustainable, low-carbon energy  
23 solutions. As the largest energy producing state to  
24 join RGGI and currently the fifth dirtiest energy  
25 producing state in the country, Pennsylvania has the

1 opportunity to be a leader in the United States'  
2 path toward a reasonable future.

3           Pennsylvania needs to join RGGI.  
4 Addressing climate change is not an abstract issue.  
5 It touches each of us personally. As my daughters  
6 grow, they become more and more curious about the  
7 world around them. They are learning about hemlock  
8 trees and the life cycle of monarch butterflies.  
9 They're also learning about coral reefs and  
10 glaciers. And it hurts me that they're also  
11 beginning to learn how these things are dying and  
12 shrinking due to our unchecked global warming. It  
13 hurts me that they will grow up to a world that's so  
14 much poorer than the world we know and have. But  
15 this hearing, the opportunity for Pennsylvania to  
16 join RGGI, gives me hope because it's not too late  
17 to act.

18           In Pittsburgh, we have some of the  
19 worst air quality in the country, and because of it,  
20 alarmingly high asthma rates. My daughters were  
21 born prematurely and so are at a greater risk of  
22 respiratory infections. One recent study showed 22  
23 percent of children in some Pittsburgh schools with  
24 asthma compared with the national average of 10  
25 percent.

1                   Joining RGGI would help reduce the air  
2 pollution that oppresses our region. And in  
3 addition to improving our health and saving lives,  
4 as if that weren't enough for our neighboring RGGI  
5 states, reduction in pollution due to RGGI has  
6 allowed for nearly \$11 billion in health savings.

7                   Meanwhile, my daughters have also  
8 experienced the first school heat days where their  
9 schools are forced to close due to excessive heat.  
10 At the same time, snow days, that singular joy of  
11 youth, are disappearing.

12                   Global warming is increasing rainfall  
13 here in Pennsylvania. The increased rainfall almost  
14 flooded our basement and made mold an issue. In our  
15 110-year-old house full of lead paint with no  
16 central air, all these issues are compounded to our  
17 health. But for many of our neighbors, it is much  
18 worse. Low income and communities of color are at  
19 the greatest risk from health burdens of dangerous  
20 air pollution.

21                   Climate change is now. It's a threat  
22 to all of us. Pennsylvania must take the first  
23 major step and join RGGI. My daughters and I do our  
24 part. We reduce, reuse, recycle, turn off lights,  
25 and a lot of work. But to solve the climate crisis,

1 we need action from you, our legislators. Our  
2 generation is the only generation that has the  
3 opportunity to solve this crisis. We're the only  
4 generation that can see the effects of climate  
5 change and take action before it's too late.

6                   When my daughters are adults, it will  
7 be too late. As our legislators, you have the power  
8 and the responsibility to act now with urgency.  
9 Please allow Pennsylvania to join RGGI.

10                   As everyone testifying at this hearing  
11 has shown, I'm not alone. Pennsylvanians are  
12 demanding that our legislators do more. The 2019  
13 Yale Climate National Survey showed that 67 percent  
14 of Pennsylvanians believe climate change is  
15 happening and 72 percent of Pennsylvanians support  
16 regulating CO2.

17                   Please extend the period for public  
18 testimony so that more of us can speak on this  
19 issue. The time to act is now. Please allow  
20 Pennsylvania to join RGGI.

21                   Thank you for the chance to give this  
22 testimony.

23                   MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Hilary.

24                   I just want to thank everybody. It is  
25 3:55 p.m. We still have 14 people left who signed

1 up to testify. We are going to continue on past  
2 4:00 p.m. to make sure everyone has an opportunity  
3 to be heard, but I do want to thank everyone so far  
4 for your patience in staying with us while we get  
5 through, like, 62 speakers. So I don't want to hold  
6 us up any more.

7 The next speaker is number 48, Peggy  
8 Hartzell.

9 MS. HARTZELL: Yes.

10 Good afternoon, everyone.

11 My name is Peggy Hartzell. And I live  
12 in Glenmoore in Southeastern, Pennsylvania. And  
13 I'll keep this short.

14 So as a retired high school teacher  
15 and a grandmother of five grandchildren, I would  
16 advocate for RGGI in regards to creating cleaner air  
17 and jobs that will support a sustainable future and  
18 protect the environment.

19 Over ten years ago, our West Chester  
20 Henderson High School students conducted energy  
21 audits at small businesses in our community for two  
22 years that showed their employees and their owners  
23 how they could save energy and money. This was part  
24 of an EPA climate showcase communities grant to  
25 expand an existing energy conservation effort in

1 schools.

2                   With access to funds from RGGI,  
3 students in communities across the state could help  
4 their local businesses and farms save energy and  
5 money while they learn practical skills and further  
6 their own education.

7                   Programs could be set up in schools  
8 across the state where students would learn about  
9 efficient use of energy that could also be practiced  
10 at home. Reducing energy use in schools also saves  
11 taxpayers money while educating the students and  
12 maybe the teachers. Our schools could become the  
13 centers of sustainable environmental practices in  
14 the areas of energy efficiency, solar training,  
15 rainwater conservation, and healthy food production  
16 for the health and welfare of the whole community,  
17 making the commonwealth of Pennsylvania a healthier  
18 place to live.

19                   For these reasons, I urge you to  
20 support RGGI without major revisions to the rules as  
21 proposed.

22                   Thank you.

23                   MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Peggy.

24                   Our next speaker, number 49, is Jeanne  
25 Zang.

1                   MS. ZANG: Hello.

2                   My name is Jeanne Zang, J-E-A-N-N-E, Z  
3 as in Zebra, A-N-G.

4                   I live in Sewickley, 12 miles down the  
5 Ohio River from Pittsburgh. I wholeheartedly  
6 support and encourage Pennsylvania's participation  
7 in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

8                   This initiative is a win-win situation  
9 for the state of Pennsylvania and, indeed, for the  
10 entire world. It is a win in that it will be an  
11 important step towards fighting climate change by  
12 significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions and  
13 it will encourage clean energy instead of dirty coal  
14 and natural gas, which threaten our health.

15                   From an economics perspective, it is a  
16 win because it will create jobs and add almost \$2  
17 billion to the state economy. Participation in RGGI  
18 would transform Pennsylvania from the fourth largest  
19 emitter of carbon dioxide in the nation to a leader  
20 in the growing clean energy economy.

21                   I am testifying today not as an expert  
22 or as a representative of an organization, rather I  
23 come here to testify as a mother and grandmother. I  
24 am the mother of two adult sons and the grandmother  
25 of four beautiful grandsons aged four to ten. I

1 love these little boys with all my heart, and I will  
2 do everything in my power to fight to mitigate  
3 climate change so that they have the chance to grow  
4 up in a world that is not devastated by climate  
5 catastrophes.

6 I am also teaching them that they,  
7 along with many others in their generation, will  
8 change the world. We must all act with a great  
9 sense of urgency since we are seeing the effects of  
10 climate change far sooner than scientists had  
11 predicted.

12 What we do in Pennsylvania affects not  
13 just our own state, but the whole nation, and indeed  
14 the whole world. My oldest son and his wife and two  
15 of my grandsons live near Los Angeles. This  
16 summer's wildfires, which are increasingly frequent  
17 due to climate change, were terrifying. Even though  
18 my son and his family were not directly threatened  
19 by fire, there was a two-week period when they were  
20 unable to leave their house due to the poor air  
21 quality.

22 Here in Pennsylvania, we are already  
23 seeing climate change in the form of higher  
24 temperatures, stronger storms, and more flooding.  
25 These changes will strain our infrastructure and



1 emergency services. In 2018 alone, PennDOT spent  
2 more than \$125 million to repair flood and landslide  
3 damage.

4                   In addition to climate change, as many  
5 other speakers have noted, the Pittsburgh area  
6 suffers from some of the worst air quality in the  
7 nation. By participating in RGGI, reduced pollution  
8 will lead to \$6 billion in health benefits through  
9 2030, more than 45,000 fewer asthma attacks, and  
10 more than 1,000 fewer cases of childhood bronchitis  
11 among children.

12                   I repeat: RGGI is a win-win  
13 opportunity. Through this initiative, Pennsylvania  
14 could receive hundreds of millions of dollars in  
15 proceeds annually. These funds would be invested in  
16 targeted efforts to eliminate air pollution, promote  
17 job creation, support working Pennsylvanians, and  
18 help boost the state's long-term economic recovery  
19 from the COVID-19 pandemic.

20                   RGGI is overwhelmingly supported by  
21 the citizens of Pennsylvania. In September, a poll  
22 found that over seven in ten Pennsylvania voters  
23 support participation in RGGI. We need to take bold  
24 actions immediately to mitigate the harmful effects  
25 of climate change around the world. Fossil fuels

1 are the energy of the 20th century. We are now 20  
2 years into the 21st century, and it is beyond high  
3 time to move into the new clean energy world.

4 I urge you to make Pennsylvania a  
5 leader in clean energy by becoming a key participant  
6 in RGGI, thereby reducing our carbon pollution,  
7 improving our air quality, and creating thousands of  
8 new jobs.

9 Thank you. It has been an honor to be  
10 one among so many eloquent and passionate speakers  
11 here today.

12 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Jeanne.

13 Speaker number 50 informed us they  
14 would not be able to attend.

15 So our next speaker is number 51,  
16 Frank LeFay.

17 MR. LEFAY: Hello.

18 Can you hear me okay?

19 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can, Frank.

20 Please go ahead.

21 MR. LEFAY: Very good.

22 I must say with truth and energy and  
23 climate. I'm from Mount Pleasant, Wisconsin. And  
24 first off, I'd like to say that I believe in clean  
25 water and environment --- and clean environment and

1 that historically, only people who have the economic  
2 means and are well off really can clean up their  
3 environment and keep it clean. People don't  
4 understand and I've heard a lot of testimony that  
5 the United States, including Pennsylvania, air,  
6 water environment are cleaner now than 20 years ago.

7           And the major motivation for RGGI that  
8 was stated --- joining RGGI --- is that there's a  
9 lot --- we have a climate emergency going on. And  
10 the climate has always changed. And it has been  
11 changing since we came out of the little ice age in  
12 1750. It's been warming ever since.

13           Something people need to understand is  
14 that energy, all sources of energy, whether its  
15 fossil fuel, wind or solar, they all come with  
16 positive and negative trade offs. And 80 percent of  
17 all of the energy used in the low, including  
18 Pennsylvania and Wisconsin and United States, are  
19 provided by fossil fuels.

20           So it's a very big thing we're doing  
21 to change over to another --- other energy options.

22           The energy options have been stated that everyone  
23 has been talking about are wind power, solar panels,  
24 electric cars, electric car batteries, which all  
25 will take many times over more mining than we have

1 today in our trade offs.

2                    Pennsylvania, as they move forward, as  
3 are other places in the United States are going to  
4 require more --- they're going to require tens of  
5 thousands of acres or even more in wind and solar  
6 installments, trading out one large one thousand  
7 megawatt for a natural gas plant requires tens of  
8 thousands of other acres. And that does add up.

9                    Another consideration that people  
10 don't think about is China burns 4.6 of the 8.5  
11 billion tons of coal burned every year for energy.  
12 China produces 30 percent of the world's man-made  
13 CO2, double the United States. And they're  
14 continuing to increase their emissions. And right  
15 now, they're building more than 160 coal-fired power  
16 plants. India is also creating --- building more  
17 coal-fired power plants. In the world right now,  
18 there are about 360 more coal-fired power plants  
19 building --- being built right now and there more  
20 than 200 in the planning stages and permitting  
21 stages after that.

22                    As to the temperature, this is NOAA  
23 temperature records and precipitation records for  
24 Pennsylvania. The maximum monthly temperatures in  
25 Pennsylvania between 1995 and 2020 have not changed.

1 They're remaining at an average of 59.6 degrees  
2 Fahrenheit. The average monthly temperature has  
3 increased by .25, or one quarter, of a degree in the  
4 last 25 years. And again, this is from NOAA data on  
5 Pennsylvania. Over the past 100 years, warm months  
6 and spring in Pennsylvania have increased by  
7 seven-tenths of one degree. And winters have warmed  
8 by a whopping 2.2 degrees.

9                   Participation is up by about a third  
10 of an inch in the last 100 years to an average of  
11 about 3.55 inches per month. Flooding of the  
12 Susquehanna --- Susquehanna in 2018 was mentioned as  
13 another reason of increased floods. Actually, that  
14 was 31st on the list of greatest floods in  
15 Harrisburg and it was about half of the record set  
16 by Tropical Storm Agnes in 1972.

17                   And factually, using NOAA's data  
18 again, the heaviest times for rain were in the '40s  
19 and '50s in Pennsylvania for consecutive days with  
20 one inch or more of rain. We've actually been  
21 coming down in the recent years. They are nowhere  
22 near at all those records set --- set in the '40s  
23 and '50s.

24                   We have warmer winters, which in  
25 Pennsylvania and elsewhere throughout the United

1 States, something we don't talk about is there are  
2 record harvests of crops right now. Last year ---  
3 This year, 2020, Pennsylvania experienced a winter  
4 wheat harvest of record levels. 2019 was one of the  
5 best years for corn, soybeans, wheat yields. Prior  
6 to 2018, which was a down year because of a little  
7 bit too much rain, other records were being set on  
8 area's harvests of all kinds of food crops.

9                   There's a tradeoff with the CO2, a  
10 little wetter, a little bit warmer world than we  
11 have has been a positive for the food supply, which  
12 is really, really very important.

13                   One second. Something we take for  
14 granted that fossil fuels allow us to do is it  
15 provides 80 percent of our world's energy we need in  
16 the car to drive where we need to. Out all those  
17 crops that I told you about, throughout the world,  
18 there are record harvests. That energy that's  
19 needed to plant those crops, process those crops,  
20 bring them from food to table, and allow all of us  
21 to eat very well are right now fossil fuel-generated  
22 and are going to take a long time to change. It  
23 will be very difficult to change, but, you know,  
24 keep working in that direction.

25                   Right now, technology for wind and

1 solar, because they're ---

2 MS. GRIFFIN: I'm sorry to interrupt  
3 you, Frank, but we've actually exceeded your time.

4 Please make sure you submit your  
5 written testimony. That way, we have it in the  
6 record in addition to the transcript.

7 MR. LEFAY: I most certainly will.  
8 And thank you.

9 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Frank.  
10 Our next speaker is number 52, Joline  
11 Price.

12 MS. PRICE: Good afternoon.  
13 Can you hear me?

14 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can, Joline.

15 MS. PRICE: Good afternoon.

16 My name is Joline Price, J-O-L-I-N-E,  
17 last name Price, P-R-I-C-E. I am a supervising  
18 attorney in the Energy Unit at Community Legal  
19 Services of Philadelphia. Thank you for the  
20 opportunity to testify today regarding the CO2  
21 Budget Trading Program.

22 CLS is a non-profit organization that  
23 provides free legal services to low income  
24 Philadelphians. The Energy Unit advocates so that  
25 people can have access to affordable water, heat,

1 and electricity in their homes. We provide direct  
2 representation to low income Philadelphians  
3 struggling to maintain affordable utility service  
4 and advocate for policies and programs that will  
5 make utilities more affordable and accessible.

6           Frequently, our clients' high bills  
7 and high usage are driven not by their own actions,  
8 but by the inefficiencies of the houses and  
9 buildings that they live in. Home repair and energy  
10 efficiency programs may be available for some, but  
11 even then can be difficult to access, have long  
12 waiting lists, or provide only short-term, shallow  
13 efficiency measures such as replacing lightbulbs.  
14 Some of our clients who live in homes they may have  
15 inherited or arranged to purchase may not be  
16 eligible for the weatherization and repair  
17 assistance that is necessary for an energy efficient  
18 home. In both cases, the need for deep efficiency  
19 measures is more often than not unresolved.

20           It is also well documented that low  
21 income and minority communities are  
22 disproportionately impacted by climate change. One  
23 example is the heat island effect in Philadelphia.  
24 Certain Philadelphia neighborhoods can be as much as  
25 20 degrees hotter in the summer. Rising



1 temperatures, caused by climate change, are  
2 exacerbating this problem. The warmest  
3 neighborhoods in Philadelphia are also the most  
4 economically stressed and are more often than not  
5 majority black or Hispanic.

6           Households in these same neighborhoods  
7 are most likely to have unaffordable energy bills,  
8 in some cases exceeding 30 percent of their income.

9           These concerns are amplified by the  
10 current COVID-19 crisis in Philadelphia and across  
11 the Commonwealth, where families must stay home and  
12 kids attend school virtually, leading to higher  
13 energy use and more time spent in homes that may not  
14 be safe or healthy.

15           At the same time, low income  
16 households are also least able to absorb the costs  
17 associated with solutions and mitigation of climate  
18 change. This financial burden can lead to  
19 difficulty maintaining utility service, food  
20 insecurity, housing instability, and health issues.

21           The Department appropriately  
22 recognizes that energy efficiency is a vital area  
23 for investment. We urge the Department to  
24 prioritize investment in programs that will directly  
25 reduce energy costs for low income and other

1 marginalized communities, including home repair,  
2 energy efficiency, and weatherization. There are  
3 many programs already serving thousands of  
4 low income families across Pennsylvania, but more  
5 investment is critical. Such investment should be  
6 thoughtful and targeted to supplement and strengthen  
7 already existing programs.

8                   In particular, programs should expand  
9 to meaningfully serve tenant properties and family  
10 homes that may have tangled titles. Strong  
11 investment in home repair, weatherization, and  
12 energy efficiency would help to improve  
13 Pennsylvania's housing stock and the health and  
14 economic stability of hundreds to thousands of low  
15 income families.

16                   In addition, we join the Pennsylvania  
17 Utility Law Project in recommending two amendments  
18 to the rulemaking to fully address economic and  
19 localized impacts of the program on low income and  
20 minority communities:

21                   First, DEP should be required to  
22 conduct a triennial assessment of the economic and  
23 environmental impacts of the program and issue a  
24 public report including recommendations to improve  
25 outcomes. After the release of each report, public

1 comment should be gathered, with targeted notice and  
2 outreach in impacted communities to facilitate  
3 authentic engagement in the review process.

4                   Second, the rulemaking should  
5 establish a roadmap to reinvestment of auction  
6 proceeds and should include specific language that  
7 prioritizes reinvestment in locally administered  
8 programs that provide direct energy and economic  
9 benefits in low income and minority communities. It  
10 should be clear that this reinvestment will be used  
11 to expand existing programs, not supplant or replace  
12 them.

13                   Thank you.

14                   MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Joline.

15                   Our next speaker, number 53, is Rachel  
16 Gleason.

17                   MS. GLEASON: I'm here, Laura.

18                   MS. GRIFFIN: Okay.

19                   Please start, Rachel.

20                   MS. GLEASON: Good afternoon.

21                   My name is Rachel Gleason, and I am  
22 the Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Coal  
23 Alliance.

24                   PCA has serious concerns regarding the  
25 proposed CO2 Budget Trading Program tying

1 Pennsylvania to RGGI and doing so with the absence  
2 of economic modeling for all communities and  
3 industries impacted. DEP has yet to present any  
4 information from PJM that details state-specific  
5 impacts to electric generation in each PJM state,  
6 with and without PA RGGI participation, including a  
7 projection of state-by-state CO2 emissions, which  
8 would allow for the assessment of overall regional  
9 emission impacts or leakage, the likelihood that  
10 generation and emissions will leak from PA to  
11 non-RGGI PJM states.

12 DEP also has yet to present any  
13 evidence that it has even consulted with the  
14 Independent Market Monitor, which is responsible for  
15 promoting a competitive and nondiscriminatory  
16 electric power market in PJM.

17 The virtual hearings being held in  
18 response to the proposed regulation, which limits  
19 testifiers to five minutes and requires a  
20 complicated two-step online registration process, is  
21 in direct violation of the Air Pollution Control Act  
22 (APCA). The APCA requires that public hearings be  
23 held in any region of the Commonwealth affected  
24 before any rules or regulations are adopted for that  
25 region or subregion. This has not occurred.

1                   Moreover, while 24 coal mines from 12  
2 Pennsylvania counties sent coal to Pennsylvania's  
3 EGUs in 2019, the majority of the coal comes from a  
4 Pennsylvania county extremely disenfranchised by  
5 this process. Greene County, located in the very  
6 southwestern corner of Pennsylvania, couldn't be  
7 more different from the majority of the testifiers I  
8 have listened to over the past few days who hail  
9 from Philadelphia and its neighboring suburban  
10 counties.

11                   Of Greene County's over 2,300  
12 bituminous coal essential employees, many are  
13 underground right now mining a resource that  
14 generates power being sent to the hospitals serving  
15 over 65 million people on PJM's grid, and therefore  
16 do not have access to a telephone, computer, or  
17 internet.

18                   Greene County's residents, schools,  
19 and small businesses will be adversely impacted by  
20 PA joining RGGI. And yet, by insisting on a complex  
21 registration process that can only be done via the  
22 internet, where even the telephone information is  
23 located, and without public notice by advertisement  
24 in a newspaper of general circulation as required by  
25 the APCA, PA DEP discriminates against Greene

1 County's over 12,000 residents who have no access to  
2 reliable broadband internet or have no internet  
3 access at all.

4                   Pennsylvania's participation in the  
5 PJM Interconnection is significant, as Pennsylvania  
6 is a net exporter of electric generation.  
7 Considering this, data shows that states that  
8 participate in RGGI subsequently experience a  
9 decrease in their generation. According to EIA,  
10 RGGI states decreased their generation by over 46  
11 million megawatt hours in 2019 compared to 2008, the  
12 last non-RGGI year, while maintaining close to the  
13 same electricity consumption. During that same time  
14 period, the same RGGI states imported 503,228,271  
15 megawatt hours of their electricity. That's over 500  
16 gigawatts of imported generation since RGGI  
17 compliance start date. And from where? Non-RGGI  
18 states like Pennsylvania, hydro operations in  
19 Canada, and oil tankers from Russia.

20                   RGGI's program history proves that  
21 participation will generate less electricity and  
22 import more out-of-state or out-of-region power.  
23 This is leakage.

24                   Joining RGGI will result in the  
25 premature shuttering of coal and some natural gas

1 plants in PA and will strengthen fossil fuel power  
2 generation in non-RGGI PJM states. Generation and  
3 jobs and emissions will simply shift to resources  
4 located in PJM states where RGGI is not adopted,  
5 such as West Virginia, Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky.

6           While DEP's ICF modeling is arguably  
7 flawed, with over-projected generation data in  
8 Pennsylvania and inflated CO2 reduction numbers, it  
9 still supports the leakage of generation to other  
10 states, as the CO2 emissions projected in 2030 in  
11 PJM and the Eastern Interconnection remain nearly  
12 unchanged. Shutting down fossil fuel-fired  
13 generation may be a good talking point, but in  
14 reality, RGGI states simply take from others.

15           The absence of a just transition for  
16 industry is also concerning. Prematurely shuttering  
17 Pennsylvania's remaining coal plants will  
18 significantly impact Pennsylvania's coal supply  
19 chain. Not only will coal-fired electric generation  
20 in many of our neighboring PJM states benefit from  
21 Pennsylvania joining RGGI, but mining operations in  
22 those same states will benefit too, as those states  
23 have high concentrations of river-served plants as  
24 opposed to rail-served plants that are supplied by  
25 nearby, logistically advantaged mines.

1            Pennsylvania should be working within and  
2            adapting to what has been a changing market and  
3            recognize the need to develop a transition to carbon  
4            controlled, coal-fired EGUs. One Pennsylvania coal  
5            operator recently embarked on a project focused on  
6            designing a 300MW power plant with CO2 capture and  
7            storage that is located in close proximity to  
8            existing transmission lines. Exciting projects like  
9            this should be supported in our changing energy  
10           landscape, but instead may be compromised with the  
11           immediate impacts RGGI will have on PA's coal supply  
12           chain.

13                            Overall, joining RGGI makes no logical  
14                            or environmental or economic sense.

15                            Thank you for the brief opportunity to  
16            testify. And I will be submitting lengthier, more  
17            detailed comments prior to the close of the comment  
18            period.

19                            MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Rachel.

20                            Our next speaker, number 54, is Carl  
21            Marrara.

22                            MR. MARRARA: Yeah.

23                            Am I loud enough?

24                            MS. GRIFFIN: Please go ahead, Carl.

25                            MR. MARRARA: Great.



1                   Good afternoon, and thank you for the  
2 opportunity to participate in this session.

3                   I'm Carl A. Marrara, vice president of  
4 government affairs for the Pennsylvania  
5 Manufacturers Association, a non-profit statewide  
6 trade organization representing the manufacturing  
7 sector, its 570,000 employees on the plant floor,  
8 millions of additional jobs in supporting  
9 industries, and more than \$93 billion in gross state  
10 product in Pennsylvania's public policy process.

11                   Let's begin by establishing a  
12 commonsense baseline. Everyone wants a clean,  
13 healthy, and sustainable environment. Because your  
14 hands, whether or not a particular government  
15 program that will undoubtedly have substantial costs  
16 to Pennsylvania's electricity consumers, is the best  
17 mechanism to achieve the cleanest, healthiest, and  
18 most sustainable environment possible. It's clear  
19 that the answer to this question is that RGGI does  
20 not accomplish this end goal, but the program will  
21 negatively impact Pennsylvania's economy in a  
22 punishing way.

23                   According to research published by the  
24 CATO Institute on the impacts of RGGI in  
25 participating states, it's been proven that --- and

1 this is a direct quote:

2 RGGI allowance costs added to already  
3 high regional electric bills. The combined pricing  
4 impact resulted in a 12 percent drop in goods  
5 production and a 34 percent drop in the production  
6 of energy-intensive goods.

7 Comparison states increased goods  
8 production by 20 percent and lost only 5 percent of  
9 energy-intensive manufacturing. Power imports from  
10 other states increased from 8 percent to 17 percent,  
11 end quote.

12 Most ironically, one of the states  
13 where the production moved due to the impacts of  
14 RGGI was Pennsylvania. Moreover, as an electricity  
15 exporter, the increase of power imports RGGI states  
16 depended on came from our Commonwealth. By entering  
17 into RGGI, the shift would just continue but to  
18 other PGM Interconnection states such as West  
19 Virginia, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, and no emissions  
20 will actually be reduced.

21 Returning to the original premise of  
22 wanting a clean, healthy, and sustainable  
23 environment: Governor Wolf proposed targeted  
24 emission reductions on 26 percent by the end of the  
25 year 2025, and that is well within striking

1 distance, some four years away. The private sector  
2 has actually led the way and is doing what the  
3 private sector does best, by inventing, innovating,  
4 and forging a better future for all of us.

5 Energy-related CO2 emissions have decreased 22  
6 percent from 2005 to 2017. And with more natural  
7 gas-fired power plants coming online, that  
8 percentage will be even more favorable.

9                   Moreover, Pennsylvania's coal industry  
10 has invested hundreds of millions of dollars in  
11 capital improvements to make this electricity source  
12 cleaner than ever before. Reclamation projects  
13 utilizing coal are re-greening Pennsylvania's  
14 mountain sides and are revitalizing our  
15 once-abandoned mining communities.

16                   Governor Wolf's goals are being met  
17 today without entering Pennsylvania into a regional  
18 accord that will extinguish private sector  
19 innovation and causing immediate layoffs of  
20 thousands of our Commonwealth's workers and putting  
21 our economy into a tailspin as entire communities  
22 will be negatively impacted.

23                   You'll hear from others today, like  
24 Rachel, about the importance of coal in our  
25 Commonwealth's electricity market. But the

1 premature shuttering of coal and waste coal  
2 facilities could have an even larger impact.  
3 Consider the fact that Pennsylvania steel makers  
4 require coal to make coke and coke to make steel.  
5 Coke and coal, more specifically known --- or  
6 scientifically known as metallurgical coal, is a  
7 necessary ingredient to produce steel. There is no  
8 substitute.

9                   Many of the same mining operations  
10 that extract coal for power generation also have  
11 operations that mine metallurgical coal. If the  
12 power plants shut down, this will surely impact the  
13 mining jobs that supply the coal to the power  
14 plants. If those mining operations have to shutter,  
15 Pennsylvania's steel industry will be impacted, and  
16 the stock for their product will be more difficult  
17 and more expensive to obtain. This regional accord  
18 threatens entire industries well outside of the  
19 realm Governor Wolf has aimed at and put  
20 Pennsylvania's manufacturers at a unique competitive  
21 disadvantage.

22                   Make no mistake that Pennsylvania's  
23 manufacturers do care deeply about our environment,  
24 which is why we actually want them to go through  
25 activity to happen here in Pennsylvania than

1 elsewhere in the world. We benefit from the jobs  
2 and economic activity, but we also benefit from the  
3 fact that Pennsylvania has some of the strictest  
4 regulations when it comes to emissions standards,  
5 oil and gas drilling, and mineral extraction. From  
6 an environmental standpoint, we would rather that  
7 activity happen here where companies are good  
8 stewards of the environment and there is strict  
9 oversight rather than in Russia, where environmental  
10 regulations are skirted, or in China, where there is  
11 serious human rights violations, worker  
12 exploitation, and heavy, heavy pollution.

13                   By entering into RGGI, industrial  
14 activity will simply be relocated. And who knows  
15 where it's going to go. Let's not drive that  
16 activity back across our state borders into  
17 neighboring states, or worse, foreign countries.  
18 It's not a stretch to say that by supporting RGGI,  
19 you're supporting Russian and/or Middle-Eastern  
20 global energy leadership and the Chinese dumping of  
21 steel. Let's work with our industries here to  
22 invent, to innovate, to forge a clean and healthy  
23 sustainable environment, not over-regulate our many  
24 vital industries out of existence.

25                   We have an opportunity to be a leader

1 on the world stage, showing how Pennsylvania  
2 industry can do it better, safer, and cleaner. We  
3 can do this without prematurely shutting down entire  
4 industries and negatively impacting other industries  
5 that rely on this power and speed stock.

6 RGGI is a solution in search of a  
7 problem. It's a perceived solution that weakens our  
8 business competitiveness and thwarts our national  
9 security for no environmental benefit.

10 Thank you.

11 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Carl.

12 Our next speaker, number 55, is Vince  
13 Brisini.

14 MR. BRISINI: Hello.

15 Can you hear me?

16 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes. Yes, we can.

17 Please go ahead.

18 MR. BRISINI: Good afternoon.

19 My name is Vince Brisini, spelled  
20 B-R-I-S-I-N-I. I'm the director of environmental  
21 affairs for Olympus Power and a former deputy  
22 secretary for Waste, Air, Radiation, and  
23 Remediation. I'm testifying on behalf of Olympus  
24 Power and myself, a lifelong resident of Cambria  
25 County Pennsylvania.

1                   Based upon my analyses, it's highly  
2 unlikely that RGGI participation by Pennsylvania  
3 will result in pollutant reductions that provide  
4 meaningful impacts on climate, air quality, health  
5 benefits, or produce the amount of RGGI tax  
6 revenues that have been claimed.

7                   Consequently, Pennsylvania's  
8 participation in RGGI is simply a symbolic gesture,  
9 albeit one with dire consequences. History shows us  
10 that RGGI participation typically results in less  
11 in-state electric generation and the increased use  
12 of electricity from non-RGGI areas. That's how  
13 the historic RGGI states avoid the negative effects  
14 of RGGI participation.

15                   In the case of Pennsylvania, non-RGGI  
16 electric generation would likely come from  
17 Ohio and West Virginia.

18                   To understand RGGI's impact, it's  
19 necessary to engage PJM and the PJM Independent  
20 Market Monitor. Their analysis should include  
21 detailed, state-specific operations impacts for all  
22 of the electric generation units in all of the PJM  
23 states, assuming New Jersey and Virginia join RGGI  
24 and with or without Pennsylvania's participation in  
25 RGGI. This must include the generation already

1 coming on line through 2022 and 2023 and expected to  
2 be on line prior to 2030, a list of electric  
3 generating units that are likely unable to compete  
4 in the PJM market due to their unit-specific RGGI  
5 allowance price adder, projected electricity pricing  
6 for each year, and a projection of state-by-state  
7 carbon dioxide emissions for each scenario. Absent  
8 this analysis, it's impossible to accurately  
9 determine the overall impacts of Pennsylvania's RGGI  
10 participation.

11           The presentation made by PJM to the Air  
12 Quality Technical Advisory Committee on October 15,  
13 2020, was described by PJM as having been cobbled  
14 together. That effort did not provide the  
15 information necessary to assess the impacts of RGGI  
16 participation. That presentation was simply to  
17 check a box that the Department had engaged PJM in  
18 some fashion

19           What have I learned from the extensive  
20 review of the ICF modeling and electricity  
21 generation and sales in the historic RGGI states and  
22 Pennsylvania? I know that RGGI participation will  
23 accelerate the retirement of Pennsylvania's  
24 coal-fired units, which will likely be retired  
25 before 2030 without RGGI. I know it will affect the



1 economic viability of Pennsylvania's natural  
2 gas-fired units. I know it will reduce the amount  
3 of electricity generated in and exported from  
4 Pennsylvania. I know lost Pennsylvania generation  
5 will be replaced by either coal-fired or natural  
6 gas-fired electric generation in other PJM states.  
7 I know RGGI doesn't cause a shift to renewable  
8 electric generation; the historic RGGI states  
9 continue to legislate to incentivize or mandate  
10 investments in renewables.

11 I know RGGI doesn't help nuclear  
12 generation. If it did, New York, Connecticut, and  
13 ISO-New England wouldn't have had to provide  
14 economic support to their nuclear plants.

15 I know RGGI will result in companies  
16 moving their development of new natural gas-fired  
17 electric generating units to non-RGGI PJM states.  
18 And I know that any RGGI tax will be borne  
19 disproportionately by residential customers.

20 But nobody knows how much, if any,  
21 regional emissions reductions will occur.  
22 Consequently, nobody knows what health benefits will  
23 occur. Further, nobody knows how much Pennsylvania  
24 RGGI tax revenue will be collected.

25 I do want to support the Department's

1 and Administration's recognition of the great value  
2 provided by the coal refuse to energy plants. I  
3 have witnessed the great transformations that have  
4 occurred because of these facilities. I've  
5 experienced stream recoveries where there is now  
6 flourishing aquatic life. I've experienced  
7 reclaimed mining-affected lands. I've experienced  
8 the elimination of toxic air pollution from coal  
9 refuse piles in engulfed communities.

10                   And these don't include the additional  
11 safety and health benefits resulting from  
12 the removal of coal refuse. Without the coal refuse  
13 to energy plants, these activities will no longer  
14 occur in the area where I live.

15                   As a resident of coal country, that is  
16 an outcome I am not willing to accept. Come to coal  
17 country and conduct a meeting to talk to the people  
18 whose lives have been made better because of these  
19 facilities rather than those who have  
20 never seen a coal refuse pile, let alone lived in  
21 the vicinity of coal refuse piles and  
22 stained and dead acid mine drainage affected  
23 streams.

24                   Perspective is a wonderful thing. But  
25 if you haven't personally experienced these

1 sad circumstances, you don't have perspective. All  
2 you have is an opinion.

3 Thank you for the opportunity to  
4 testify this afternoon.

5 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Vince.

6 Our next speaker, number 56, is Paul  
7 Cameron.

8 MR. CAMERON: Thank you, Laura.

9 MS. GRIFFIN: All right.

10 MR. CAMERON: My name is Paul Cameron,  
11 C-A-M-E-R-O-N. I am speaking on behalf of the  
12 International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers  
13 Local 459. Our union hall is located in Johnstown,  
14 Pennsylvania.

15 We'd like to thank the Environmental  
16 Quality Board for the opportunity to provide  
17 testimony.

18 Like I have in the past --- today is  
19 no different --- I'm speaking in opposition of  
20 Pennsylvania joining RGGI and the lack of  
21 legislative involvement and no consideration to the  
22 effect on workers in communities.

23 I'm speaking on behalf of myself, a  
24 30-year employee at the Keystone Station, and, more  
25 importantly, for all of the union members that I

1 represent as business manager of Local 459 of the  
2 IBEW. The workers I represent work 24/7, 365 days a  
3 year at the Keystone, Conemaugh, Homer City, Seward,  
4 and Shawville power plants. For decades, this  
5 workforce has operated and maintained plants to  
6 provide a source of electricity that is second to  
7 none for reliability. Obviously, that reliability  
8 and the sacrifice of my union members is taken for  
9 granted by most.

10 Those in favor of RGGI should realize  
11 that Ohio and West Virginia will never join RGGI and  
12 Pennsylvania's generation is going to be made up to  
13 the west of us, mostly by plants that are not as  
14 clean or as efficient as ours.

15 With the crushing impact that RGGI  
16 will have on thousands of family-sustaining incomes,  
17 I am respectfully asking for the following details  
18 concerning my members in the process of how RGGI is  
19 going to provide for a just transition for the  
20 workforce when their jobs are eliminated:

21 Number one: How will this carbon tax  
22 financially benefit the plant workforce?

23 Number two: Newer energy technologies  
24 may lead to new jobs, but not necessarily in the  
25 same geographic locations or for the same people or

1 at comparable wages and benefits. What has the  
2 state done to prepare to deal with these job losses?

3           Number three: Does the proposed  
4 rulemaking document have any guidelines or procedure  
5 that will provide for seamless transition from plant  
6 closure to retraining and, ultimately, to a  
7 newly-created job?

8           Number four: Could the committee  
9 please provide me with the results of any reports or  
10 studies that support the statement regarding the new  
11 job creation benefit in the proposed rulemaking  
12 document and specifically list what jobs will be in  
13 demand?

14           Number five: Finally, how much  
15 priority was given towards preserving the livelihood  
16 of the plant workers in securing future employment  
17 for those adversely affected due to RGGI?

18           Thank you for the opportunity to  
19 testify.

20           MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Paul.

21           Our next speaker, number 57, is Lois  
22 Campbell.

23           MS. CAMPBELL: Can you hear me?

24           MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can, Lois.

25           Please go ahead.

1                   MS. CAMPBELL: Good afternoon, and  
2 thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

3                   My name is Lois Campbell. I live at  
4 153 Lloyd Avenue in Edgewood, a first ring suburb of  
5 Pittsburgh.

6                   Although I speak today as a private  
7 citizen, I am here primarily as a person of faith.  
8 I am a member of St. Mary Magdalene Parish in the  
9 East End of Pittsburgh and the former director of  
10 the Pittsburgh Interfaith Impact Network.

11                   My work in faith-based organizing and  
12 my Catholic faith both challenge me to pay attention  
13 to the many ways we need desperately to change the  
14 way we care for each other, for our communities, and  
15 for our earth.

16                   I have lived in Pennsylvania for 33  
17 years, 26 of those in Pittsburgh, a great city, a  
18 city I love, but in a region with some of the worst  
19 air quality in the country and with growing  
20 problems, many of them named today, resulting from  
21 climate change.

22                   I have listened and appreciated  
23 hearing over 50 powerful testimonies before mine.  
24 They have named the stories, the specifics, and the  
25 urgency of taking action, and some of the

1 challenges, so I will be brief.

2 I am here to speak in favor of PA  
3 joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.  
4 RGGI membership is only one, but an important step  
5 toward carbon reduction and the reduction of other  
6 toxic gases and particulates that damage our climate  
7 and hurt our children and other vulnerable members  
8 of our community.

9 And RGGI has already been effective in  
10 its current ten states. I was excited to learn that  
11 it has cut carbon pollution by more than half since  
12 2009 in those states. Other toxic pollutants like  
13 --- linked to asthma, cancer, and other diseases  
14 have also been reduced. 45,000 jobs and billions in  
15 economic activity have been created. And consumers  
16 have saved more than a billion dollars. These are  
17 results we need in my community in Pennsylvania.

18 I support joining the Regional  
19 Greenhouse Gas Initiative without any major changes,  
20 but do ask you to invest RGGI income into  
21 economically and environmentally disadvantaged  
22 communities, both urban and rural, and to monitor  
23 the impact on those communities and make adjustments  
24 when they are negatively impacted.

25 In closing, Pope Francis calls all

1 people to care for our common home. The Earth is  
2 the only home we have. Pennsylvania, our particular  
3 piece of that common home, is our responsibility.  
4 Please take this opportunity to care for its present  
5 and its future.

6 Thank you.

7 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Lois.

8 I've been informed speaker number 58  
9 is not able to join us.

10 Speaker number 59 is next, Martin  
11 Williams.

12 MR. WILLIAMS: Hi, and good afternoon.

13 And thank you for the opportunity to testify.

14 My name is Martin Williams. I live in  
15 Harrisburg. And I am the national coordinator of  
16 state legislative affairs for the International  
17 Brotherhood of Boilermakers. On behalf of our  
18 thousands of hard-working members from Pittsburgh to  
19 Philadelphia who labor to maintain our  
20 Commonwealth's power generating capacity and provide  
21 millions of Pennsylvanians with affordable and  
22 reliable electricity, I would like to express our  
23 strong opposition to the proposed regulations  
24 seeking to establish Pennsylvania's participation in  
25 the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, more



1 commonly known as RGGI. It is our intent to submit  
2 more detailed comments for the record before the  
3 expiration of the comment period.

4           To be clear, the Boilermakers have  
5 long acknowledged the realities of climate change.  
6 We have been fierce advocates of carbon capture  
7 technology for over ten years and actively work with  
8 groups like the Center for Climate and Energy  
9 Solutions, the Global CCS Institute, and the Carbon  
10 Capture Coalition to advance pro-CCUS policies. We  
11 advocate for the expansion of carbon capture because  
12 it represents a sensible approach to mitigating the  
13 effects of climate change, allows for the continued  
14 use of abundant, affordable resources, and will  
15 create thousands of jobs.

16           What we do not support are  
17 cost-prohibitive environmental policies that provide  
18 minimal benefit at the expense of good middle-class  
19 jobs.

20           Pennsylvania's participation in RGGI  
21 will be as injurious and brutally consequential to  
22 our members as anything previous experienced. Every  
23 year, thousands of boilermakers are employed to  
24 provide maintenance at Pennsylvania's fossil power  
25 plants and depend on this work to maintain their

1 careers.

2                    Pennsylvania boilermakers typically  
3 work over one million man hours each year in the  
4 fossil power sector, earning family-sustaining  
5 wages, health care, and retirement benefits. More  
6 broadly, Pennsylvania's coal industry supports close  
7 to 18,000 jobs, including operations and maintenance  
8 jobs held by our fellow building trades members,  
9 provides over \$4 billion to the state's economy, and  
10 contributes millions of dollars in state and local  
11 taxes, revenue critical to so many communities and  
12 school districts across the Commonwealth.

13                    Participation in RGGI threatens to  
14 cripple an important part of the state's economy and  
15 jeopardize the retirement security of thousands of  
16 our members.

17                    However, for the Board, the main  
18 question under consideration is whether RGGI will  
19 achieve its goals of meaningfully lowering statewide  
20 CO2 emissions. And the answer lies in DEP's own  
21 modeling.

22                    DEP's modeling shows little difference  
23 in the amount of statewide CO2 emissions reductions  
24 by 2030 between Pennsylvania joining RGGI and not  
25 joining RGGI. The main difference between the two

1 cases is when emissions reductions occur. DEP's  
2 modeling shows sharp emissions reductions occurring  
3 in the first year of joining RGGI, which suggests  
4 swift, multiple power plant closures. In contrast,  
5 by not joining RGGI, statewide CO2 emissions are  
6 expected to gradually decline.

7           With respect to regional emissions,  
8 again, DEP's modeling shows participation in RGGI  
9 will not result in any significant CO2 reductions  
10 across the PJM region. And why is this? Because  
11 emissions leakage is a known problem with the RGGI  
12 framework. It is the inconvenient truth that so  
13 many supporters of RGGI are unwilling to  
14 acknowledge.

15           DEP's modeling suggests that as  
16 generation and emissions in Pennsylvania decrease,  
17 generation and emissions in bordering, non-RGGI PJM  
18 states, will increase. It is analogous to pushing  
19 on a balloon. Without a level playing field, an  
20 attempt at containment in one area will cause a  
21 bulge in another.

22           So then the question becomes: If RGGI  
23 will only provide marginal benefit over the status  
24 quo and fail to lower regional emissions, all while  
25 unleashing severe economic disruption to the

1 Commonwealth, is it worth it? We say the answer is  
2 no.

3 RGGI is a severely flawed policy that  
4 will prematurely close the state's remaining  
5 coal-fired power plants, cost thousands of jobs,  
6 devastate communities, provide minimal environmental  
7 benefit, and, given the current process with which  
8 consideration of the regulations is proceeding, is  
9 arguably unconstitutional. Despite all of the  
10 claims from those who cite the state constitution  
11 and other statutes and infer the state has a duty to  
12 protect the environment by whatever means necessary,  
13 ultimately, RGGI is a revenue-raising measure. And,  
14 unequivocally, taxation and revenue is the  
15 jurisdiction of the General Assembly.

16 Earlier this year, three advisory  
17 committees voted not to recommend advancing DEP's  
18 draft regulations to the EQB because they recognized  
19 participation in RGGI is not in Pennsylvania's  
20 interest. We couldn't agree more.

21 We ask the Environmental Quality Board  
22 to reject DEP's proposed regulations that would  
23 authorize Pennsylvania's participation in RGGI.

24 Thank you for considering our  
25 position.

1                   MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Martin.

2                   Our next speaker, number 60, is  
3 Senator Joe Pittman.

4                   SENATOR PITTMAN: Can you hear me?

5                   MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can hear you,  
6 Senator.

7                   SENATOR PITTMAN: Okay. Thank you.

8                   Fourteen months ago, Governor Wolf  
9 issued his executive order to unilaterally join  
10 Pennsylvania into the Regional Greenhouse Gas  
11 Initiative. The stated intent is to reduce carbon  
12 emissions from electric generation facilities while  
13 affixing a price for the privilege of emitting  
14 carbon in the process of generating power. In other  
15 words, the Governor wants to tax carbon-emitting  
16 power plants in Pennsylvania and reduce carbon  
17 emissions while using the proceeds to address  
18 impacts in affected communities.

19                   As the senator representing power  
20 plants with the capacity to produce nearly 6,000  
21 megawatts of carbon-emitting electricity, there are  
22 no communities in this Commonwealth more affected by  
23 this proposed carbon tax than those I represent.

24                   This scheme is counter intuitive. For  
25 RGGI to produce revenue, carbon must be emitted.

1 Yet the proposed tax will make our power plants  
2 uncompetitive in the marketplace, causing them to  
3 close. Therefore, carbon emission taxes won't be  
4 paid, the power plants will shutter, and the revenue  
5 for affected communities will be a mirage.

6                   If Pennsylvania's fleet of carbon  
7 emitting power plants, both coal and natural gas,  
8 become uncompetitive and close, the economic  
9 devastation to the region I represent will be  
10 massive. We are part of a 13-state power grid. And  
11 every megawatt of power that we take offline gets  
12 produced by another state not in RGGI, mainly Ohio  
13 and West Virginia.

14                   Trade unions who rely on power  
15 generation to employ their members point to other  
16 carbon-emitting facilities in states to the west of  
17 us that are making significant investments to  
18 replace the supply of electricity RGGI will cause us  
19 to forfeit. Ceding our status as an exporter of  
20 electricity to other states is nonsensical. The  
21 obvious impacts of not producing power in  
22 Pennsylvania are the loss of thousands of  
23 family-sustaining jobs at power plants that will  
24 cease operation, especially in Armstrong and Indiana  
25 County.

1                   The less obvious impacts are the loss  
2 of thousands of family-sustaining jobs in mining,  
3 transportation, and skilled trades that supply these  
4 plants with fuel and provide maintenance. These job  
5 losses will span across Western Pennsylvania,  
6 extending the economic devastation of this carbon  
7 tax, and it will be borne largely by blue collar,  
8 union wage workers.

9                   The power plants I represent also pay  
10 nearly \$5 million annually in property taxes. If  
11 these plants are prematurely retired by RGGI, school  
12 districts in my area will be forced to make  
13 significant cuts in educational opportunities. This  
14 will be the most devastating impact of RGGI, as it  
15 will serve to deny students I represent of a free  
16 and equal education compared to their peers in the  
17 rest of the Commonwealth.

18                   These devastating impacts are why all  
19 three of DEP's advisory committees rejected this  
20 regulation. And despite words of concern from the  
21 Governor, the regulation before you has gone  
22 unchanged since the time it was first presented.  
23 There has been no sincere and concerted effort to  
24 address the economic impacts of this regulation.

25                   The perception by those I represent is

1 that the Governor has not taken seriously our  
2 concerns about the livelihoods jeopardized by RGGI.  
3 Based on the way this regulation is being fast  
4 tracked and how the comments of the three advisory  
5 committees have been ignored, I can only conclude  
6 the perception of my constituents is the sad  
7 reality.

8                   The most impacted communities are in  
9 rural areas with limited internet access. The most  
10 impacted residents are those with full-time jobs  
11 that require them to be at work during the times and  
12 dates of these hearings. Yet there has been no  
13 effort during this public comment process to allow  
14 those most impacted by this regulation to have their  
15 voices heard in a format that would allow them to be  
16 presented at a public hearing in the most affected  
17 communities.

18                   The pandemic has created challenges in  
19 receiving testimony. The pandemic has also created  
20 economic hardship. Given those factors, the  
21 Governor's approach should not be to jam this  
22 regulation through. Instead, he should take a step  
23 back, address the concerns each advisory panel  
24 brought forward, hear personally from the  
25 constituents most impacted, and work to come up with



1 real and concrete plans to replace thousands of jobs  
2 and the loss of funding to public schools before its  
3 submission for approval.

4 Words of support are not enough. And  
5 this regulation needs redrawn to address these  
6 issues in collaboration with the elected officials  
7 who represent affected communities.

8 Thank you.

9 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Senator  
10 Pittman.

11 Our next speaker, number 61, is  
12 Barbara Arrandale.

13 Do we have Barbara?

14 MR. JAGIELA: I do not see Barb on the  
15 line or the phone number she provided us.

16 MS. GRIFFIN: Okay.

17 Barbara, if you happen to be  
18 listening, please call in on the phone number that  
19 you provided us and we'll check back one last time  
20 before this ends.

21 So our next speaker, then, is number  
22 62, Evan Midler.

23 MR. MIDLER: Hi.

24 Can you hear me? Hello?

25 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can, Evan.

1                   Please go ahead.

2                   MR. MIDLER: Thank you.

3                   Good evening and thank you.

4                   My name is Evan Midler, and I reside  
5 in Avella, Washington County, Pennsylvania. I come  
6 to you today and submit testimony as a private  
7 citizen of the Commonwealth.

8                   For background, I am a member of the  
9 board of supervisors of Cross Creek Township located  
10 in Washington County. In addition, I professionally  
11 hold a management position with Alliance Coal, which  
12 operates a mining concern also in Washington County.

13                   My testimony today is to urge a  
14 complete cessation of the Commonwealth joining the  
15 Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, also referred to  
16 as RGGI.

17                   In these condensed comments, I would  
18 like to identify three areas of this initiative that  
19 would impact or harm Pennsylvania and our residents:

20                   First, I would like to highlight the  
21 regional and economic impact. RGGI will increase  
22 energy costs through the imposition of a carbon tax  
23 and create an unreliable energy generation portfolio  
24 for Pennsylvania. Increasing energy costs is the  
25 ticket to economic failure. Since every industry

1 uses energy, the higher cost Pennsylvania energy is,  
2 the higher cost every product made and service  
3 provided in Pennsylvania will be. A carbon tax  
4 means industry is less competitive. Joining RGGI  
5 will result in manufacturing leaving the state in  
6 favor of regions with more favorable energy prices.

7           Moreover, with the joining of RGGI,  
8 direct Pennsylvania jobs will be lost in the mining,  
9 drilling, transportation, and electricity-generating  
10 sectors from the closure of coal and natural gas  
11 plants and their subsequent supply chains.  
12 Thousands more indirect jobs will also be lost.

13           With regards to direct local government  
14 impact, RGGI will reduce fossil fuel production in  
15 the western part of Pennsylvania, destroying local  
16 and regional economies and adversely affecting many  
17 municipalities finances where reliable and cheap  
18 bituminous coal and shale gas production will  
19 diminish in Pennsylvania and shift to Ohio and West  
20 Virginia. As a result, Act 32 impact fees will  
21 inevitably contract due to the reduction in  
22 production coming from the now diminished  
23 consumption of gas. This will result in financial  
24 harm to already struggling municipalities who rely  
25 on these fees to balance their budgets and to

1 improve their local infrastructure.

2                   Moreover, local governments and school  
3 districts will lose millions in local property and  
4 wage taxes from the closure of active coal mines and  
5 the loss of property taxes with the corresponding  
6 reserves.

7                   If the Commonwealth is permitted to  
8 move forward in joining RGGI, all of these  
9 family-sustaining jobs and economic contributions  
10 will be lost in our region, devastating our  
11 communities. Western Pennsylvania has already  
12 suffered a multiple-decade depression due to the  
13 devastation of the steel industry. Our region was  
14 able to emerge out of that depression and thrive due  
15 to the coal and natural gas jobs this region yields.

16                   RGGI will thrust communities, school  
17 districts, and counties back into depression and  
18 erode the ability of local government and school  
19 districts to operate.

20                   With regards to individual impact,  
21 individual and household consumer electricity rates  
22 will increase. Simply put, RGGI is a massive tax on  
23 power plants that will get passed on to Pennsylvania  
24 ratepayers. How big? It starts at \$2.4 billion.  
25 That's \$500 for every household and grows from

1 there.

2                   Which individuals are harmed the most?  
3 By increasing the monthly cost of electricity on  
4 families, this initiative will be attacking the most  
5 vulnerable amongst us. I ask you, as a public  
6 servant, please do not allow this initiative to move  
7 forward, which will drastically increase the cost of  
8 electricity, harming our low-income residents across  
9 the Commonwealth.

10                   If Pennsylvania joins RGGI, what does  
11 this get us as Pennsylvanians?

12                   First, I note that DEP's own modeling  
13 also shows that carbon dioxide reductions from plant  
14 closures in Pennsylvania will simply shift to  
15 neighboring, non-RGGI states like Ohio and West  
16 Virginia. Those states will also take the related  
17 jobs and economic benefits of fossil fuel  
18 generation. As a result, carbon dioxide emissions  
19 will increase in those states, which will offset any  
20 emission reductions in Pennsylvania. Simply put,  
21 the RGGI tax punishes Pennsylvania and drives  
22 business to states smart enough not to have a RGGI  
23 tax. Ultimately, this won't lower CO2 emissions, it  
24 will just move them to a different place.

25                   Supporters of the RGGI tax state that

1 the tax will increase new wind and solar jobs.  
2 However, wind and solar have proven to be unreliable  
3 and expensive wherever they are tried. Expensive  
4 electricity destroys jobs in every industry that  
5 uses massive amounts of energy.

6           For example, the state of California,  
7 by design, transitioned on a massive scale to wind  
8 and solar only to find that these forms of  
9 generation are unreliable and non-resilient when  
10 needed the most. The result, which we all witnessed  
11 this summer, was rolling brownouts and the begging  
12 for coal-fired generation to be imported from  
13 neighboring states to supplement California's failed  
14 energy policies.

15           So with the loss of the fossil fuel  
16 electricity generation within the Commonwealth, this  
17 begs the question: Where will Pennsylvania obtain  
18 its needed electricity?

19           The answer is that Pennsylvania will  
20 now have to adopt the California model and pay a  
21 premium to import out-of-state fossil fuel-generated  
22 electricity or face California-like rolling  
23 brownouts.

24           In addition, Pennsylvanians will have  
25 to contribute out of pocket financially towards

1 energy subsidies of renewables for in-state  
2 generation. This means not only will low and fixed  
3 income families have to spend more of their  
4 disposable income towards servicing higher  
5 electricity costs, but also now additional taxes  
6 will inevitably be enacted on Commonwealth residents  
7 to subsidize wind and solar power generation,  
8 further harming the residents of the Commonwealth.

9 In concluding my remarks, moving  
10 forward with joining RGGI will have disastrous  
11 consequences. I thank you for your consideration,  
12 and I will submit the rest of my comments in  
13 writing.

14 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Evan.

15 Okay.

16 So going back to speaker 61.

17 Is Barbara Arrandale either the Webex  
18 or on the phone?

19 MR. JAGIELA: Not from what I can  
20 tell.

21 MS. GRIFFIN: Okay.

22 One final note as one more reminder,  
23 if you intend to, please do remember to submit your  
24 written testimony to us by e-mail at  
25 regcomments@pa.gov.

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Thank you all for your patience today.  
It's been four hours, but we thank you all for  
taking the time to provide testimony today.

With no other commenters present, on  
behalf of the EQB, I hereby adjourn this hearing at  
4:55 p.m.

\* \* \* \* \*

HEARING CONCLUDED AT 4:55 P.M.

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CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing proceeding was reported by me on 12/14/2020 and that I, Bernadette M. Black, 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 22<sup>nd</sup> day of January, 2021

Bernadette M. Black

Bernadette M. Black,  
Court Reporter