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COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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IN RE: CO2 BUDGET TRADING PROGRAM

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BEFORE: DAREK JAGIELA, Host
LAURA GRIFFIN, Regulatory Coordinator
HAYLEY BOOK, Panelist
ALLEN LANDIS, Executive Director
JESSICA SHIRLEY, Panelist
JENNIFER SWAN, Panelist

HEARING: Wednesday, December 9, 2020
1 p.m.

LOCATION: Via WebEx

Reporter: Patrick Troy

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1 WITNESSES: Drew Harris, Mordechai Liebling, Ingrid
2 Lakey, Audra Wolfe, Senator Katie Muth, Charles
3 Reeves, Joan Sabatino, Evelyn Talbott, Tamela
4 Trussell, Joy Bergey, Sandy Field, Karen Frock, Sam
5 Titus, Steve Harvey, Robert McKinstry, Paul Spiegel,
6 Jeaneen Zappa, John Walliser, Vanessa lynch, Liz
7 Robinson, Tom Jenik, Barbara Benton, Steven
8 Greenspan, Diane Nissen, Tiffany Taulton, Henry
9 McKay, Jonathan Warnock, Hugh Taft-Morales, Dwayne
10 Royster, Allen Drew, Jim Wylie, Thomas Au, Anisa
11 George, Jose Aviles Velez (interpreter - Pam
12 Rodriguez), Sharon Pillar, Represntative Dianne
13 Herrin, Judy Morgan, David Foster, Nick Favorito,
14 Andrew Shumacher, Mario O'Matz, Kindra Mohr, Brenda
15 Smith, Vanessa Nelson, Jerod Brouger

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MS. GRIFFIN: I'd like to welcome you to the Environmental Quality Board for EQB public hearing on the proposed rule making for the Pennsylvania Carbon Dioxide Budge Training 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 Allen Landis, Executive Director of The Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority, Darek Jagiela who is our host and Jennifer Swan who most of you corresponded with already 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. Traditionally, a stenographer will be transcribing the hearing.

The purpose of this hearing is to formally accept testimony on the proposed rule making. This proposed rule making was adopted by the EQB at its meeting on September 15, 2020.

It proposes to establish a program to

1 limit carbon dioxide or CO2 emissions from fossil
2 fuel fired power plants located in Pennsylvania with
3 an electricity generation capacity equal to or
4 greater than 25 megawatts.

5 The purpose of this proposed rule
6 making is to reduce carbon dioxide emissions which
7 is a greenhouse gas and major contributor to climate
8 change impacts and to do so in a manner that
9 protects public health, welfare and the environment.

10 Under the authority of Pennsylvania's
11 Air Pollution Control Act the proposed rule making
12 will establish Pennsylvania's participation in the
13 Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative or RGGI, a
14 regional carbon dioxide budge trading program.

15 In addition to reducing carbon dioxide
16 emissions, Pennsylvania will also see a decrease in
17 harmful NOX, sulfur dioxide and particulate matter
18 emissions as well as ground level ozone pollution.

19 Human exposure to these air pollutants
20 contributes to respiratory and cardiovascular health
21 problems including asthma, bronchitis, heart attacks
22 and strokes.

23 By participating in RGGI, DEP
24 estimates that Pennsylvania will see carbon dioxide
25 emission reductions of around 188 million tons by

1 2030.

2 This concludes the summary of the rule
3 making. If you like to access a more detailed
4 explanation of regulatory amendments including this
5 rule making, you can visit eComment on DEP's web
6 page and select regulations.

7 In order to give everyone an equal
8 opportunity to comment on this proposal I would like
9 to establish the following ground rules.

10 Allen is going to provide some of this
11 information in the Q&A box or the chat box so you
12 don't need to write everything down.

13 I will call upon the witnesses who
14 have signed up to testify at this hearing. All who
15 signed up were assigned a number indicating the
16 order in which witnesses will be called to speak.
17 Only those who signed up by contacting Jennifer Swan
18 as indicated on the EQB web page will be called upon
19 to provide testimony.

20 Testimony is limited to five minutes
21 for each witness and I will have a timer on the
22 screen. You should be able to see it on the right
23 hand side right now.

24 We do have one commenter today who is
25 being assisted by an interpreter. To allow for

1 sufficient time to translate, that witness will have
2 ten minutes. Please note that written and spoken
3 testimony both carry the same weight.

4 If you should run out of time for your
5 spoken testimony we will read the rest of your
6 comments from your written testimony. As advised in
7 registration correspondence, please provide a copy
8 of your written testimony to regcomments@pa.gov,
9 that's regcomments@pa.gov.

10 Your email must note that you are
11 submitting testimony for proposed rule making CO2
12 budget trading program along with the following
13 information, A first and last name, mailing
14 address, email address and if you're commenting on
15 behalf of an organization.

16 Testimony is not required to be five
17 minutes long. If others who provide testimony
18 before you are making similar statements to yours,
19 you are free to shorten or summarize your verbal
20 testimony and it's time and still provide your full
21 testimony by email. This will allow us to hear from
22 more commenters at this hearing.

23 During the signup process, prospective
24 commenters were requested to designate one witness
25 to present testimony on behalf of the organization.

1 Please state your name, address, your
2 city and state are sufficient, and affiliation if
3 you have one for the record prior to presenting your
4 testimony. The EQB would appreciate your help by
5 spelling out your name and terms that may not be
6 generally familiar so that the transcript can be as
7 accurate as possible.

8 Because the purpose of this hearing is
9 to receive comments on the proposal, EQB members and
10 DEP staff cannot address questions about the
11 proposal making 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 final
17 examination of this proposed rule making.

18 All testimony and comments provided
19 become a part of the official public record. All
20 comments must be received by the EQB on or before
21 January 14th, 2021. There are a few different ways
22 to submit written comments which is separate from
23 testimony.

24 Comments may be submitted online
25 through eComment which is accessible on DEP's

1 website by clicking on the eComment icon near the
2 top of DEP's homepage which is www.dep.pa.gov or
3 comments may be submitted by email at
4 regcomments@pa.gov.

5 All comments are entered into eComment
6 and are accessible to the public. The subject
7 heading of the proposed rule making and the return
8 name and address must be included in each email.
9 Comments may also be sent through U.S. postal mail
10 addressed to the environmental quality board, P.O.
11 Box 8477, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 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 be
15 included in a comment and response document which
16 will be prepared by DEP and reviewed by the EQB
17 prior to the board taking its final action on this
18 regulation.

19 I would now like to call the first
20 commentary, that's Drew Harris with us and ready.

21 MR. HARRIS: Good afternoon. Can you
22 hear me okay?

23 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes we can. Please go
24 ahead Drew.

25 MR. HARRIS: Good afternoon. My name

1 is Drew Harris. My professional experience is in
2 public health, disaster preparedness and clinical
3 medicine.

4 Most importantly I live in
5 Pennsylvania and care deeply about the legacy I will
6 leave to my two daughters and generations yet to be
7 born.

8 I am here to encourage you to adopt
9 the proposed RGGI regulations and suggest that the
10 EQB amend those regulations to strengthen the
11 provisions to protect health in vulnerable
12 communities.

13 Philadelphia like so many parts of
14 this state is a tale of two cities when it comes to
15 education, economics and especially health outcomes.

16 Imagine you are the child fortunate
17 enough to be born in one of the ZIP codes where life
18 expectancy can be as much as 20 years lower than a
19 more affluent neighborhood a few miles away.

20 The legacy of racial injustice traps
21 that child's family in a place where environmental
22 conditions loom large as determinants of adverse
23 health outcomes.

24 Just one example, Pennsylvania summers
25 are hot and getting hotter. DEP reports that

1 average temperatures in the Commonwealth have
2 increased 1.8 degrees Fahrenheit over the past 110
3 years. This seemingly small change has had a large
4 impact in all areas of the state. But the burden is
5 not borne equally.

6 Low income and minority communities
7 suffer more. Poor neighborhoods of Philadelphia can
8 be as much as 22 degrees hotter than wealthier ones.
9 A child living in these communities is more likely
10 to suffer severe asthma putting them at risk for
11 hospitalization and countless missed school days.

12 Low income seniors are particularly at
13 risk from heat waves when air conditioning and easy
14 access to shady green spaces are costly amenities.
15 These communities are also at risk, at a much higher
16 risk for natural disasters exacerbated by climate
17 change.

18 While excess atmospheric carbon is a
19 global problem, some pollutant released in the
20 burning of fossil fuels directly harm people
21 downwind of these generating facilities. Nitrogen
22 oxide and sulfur dioxide emissions exacerbate lung
23 conditions like asthma, COPD and other chronic
24 diseases.

25 Like excess heat, the burden is

1 greater for people living in marginalized
2 communities where these facilities are often
3 located.

4 Lung damage from chronic exposure to
5 these airborne pollutants is thought to make Covid-
6 19 more deadly. Another blow for people already at
7 high risk for the disease.

8 The burden of these and other
9 pollution related diseases is a barrier that limits
10 success, imposes avoidable health care costs on
11 everyone and is a drag on the entire Commonwealth.

12 While the health challenges are great,
13 a remedy is before you. RGGI should be praised as a
14 free market innovation for pricing in the true cost
15 of greenhouse gas initiatives, not a rigid
16 regulatory approach.

17 Without RGGI, power plants are free to
18 emit unlimited amounts of CO2. The science is
19 clear. CO2 emissions are driving the climate change
20 crisis and fossil fuel power plants are a major
21 source of this greenhouse gas. RGGI will require
22 utilities to factor in the cost of the damage done
23 in their pricing.

24 The RGGI rules you are considering
25 will address historic and ongoing racial injustices

1 by helping to slow and reverse future greenhouse gas
2 and other pollution related harms and provide a new
3 source of revenue and will mitigate past injuries.

4 However, you should strengthen the
5 proposed regulations by preventing regulators - by
6 preventing generators from building new plants that
7 already burden the amenities.

8 RGGI is a rare win win opportunity for
9 the Commonwealth. For a small increase in rates we
10 will see a decrease in the economic burden these
11 emissions cause, a new source of revenue for
12 mitigating pollution-related harms especially in
13 adversely impacted communities and a stimulus for
14 creating a green-based economy. RGGI is an
15 investment in future generations. Thank you very
16 much for your time.

17 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Drew.

18 And speaker number two today is
19 Mordechai Liebling.

20 MR. LIEBLING: Good afternoon. Shalom
21 Salaam. This is Rabbi Mordechai Liebling
22 representing the Shalom Center in Philadelphia,
23 Pennsylvania.

24 I am not a scientist nor a public
25 health expert. I want to speak about this from a

1 moral point of view as a, as, as a rabbi. In my
2 tradition there's been commentary on the Bible.
3 It's a commentary that oh about 2,000 years old in
4 which in the commentary God says to Adam if you
5 destroy the Earth, there is nobody after you to take
6 care of it.

7 And maybe that was a precedent
8 commentary because we are certainly on the verge of
9 destroying the human habitat. We are a unique
10 species that is destroying our own home. And I am
11 calling on you to help preserve our moral heritage
12 here which is to preserve the Earth as a place
13 that's habitable for human beings.

14 Our Native Americans who have taken
15 care of this land for so many years teach us that we
16 have to think seven generations in advance. That at
17 every decision-making table there should be somebody
18 speaking for the seventh generation. And I hope
19 that at your table you will hear the voice of the
20 seventh generation so that those children to be will
21 have clean air to breathe and clean water to drink
22 and an earth with soil that will be generative
23 enough to bring about health crops. So I think that
24 is your moral responsibility.

25 In addition, we are - we believe that

1 all of us are equal. We believe that is part of the
2 American way of life and our religious traditions
3 until we have equality. And as the previous person
4 testified, our current situation is that the burden
5 of pollution is not equal.

6 People of color in our Commonwealth
7 suffer much more greatly from the effects of
8 pollution than other folks. And if you take this on
9 the larger climate scale and environmental scale, we
10 know that ecological destruction leads to more and
11 more diseases.

12 Covid-19 arose from contact with wild
13 animals. And we know that since World War II 50
14 percent of all new viruses come from contact with
15 animals in the wild. And that contact we know is
16 greatly increased because of all of the ways that we
17 degrade the environment.

18 And we know that from Covid-19 how
19 disproportionately people of color are affected by
20 it. Not all of us are equally affected by the, by
21 the virus, by disease and all the statistics show
22 how disproportionate the effects are.

23 So yet - so climate pollution does not
24 affect all of us equally. So in your
25 responsibilities to make sure that all human beings

1 are treated equally, the funds generated by RGGI
2 should be used to remedy the effects of
3 environmental injustice that we have seen in the
4 Commonwealth.

5 So in closing, I call on you to think
6 of the seventh generation who will come after us as
7 you make your decisions. Thank you very much.

8 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Rabbi
9 Liebling.

10 Our third speaker today is Ingrid
11 Lakey.

12 MS. LAKEY: Thank you.

13 Good afternoon. My name is Ingrid
14 Lakey. I live in West Philadelphia just five blocks
15 from the house I grew up in where my father still
16 lives.

17 I'm a proud Pennsylvanian. My
18 father's great grandparents came to this country and
19 settled upstate in Northampton County where the men
20 in his family became slate miners.

21 I saw this because I understand that
22 Pennsylvania has been rich in resources and that the
23 state and country have been profiting off of
24 hundreds of years of extraction, whether it has been
25 slate, oil, coal or natural gas. Many jobs have

1 been created. But there has also been a tremendous
2 cost to us particularly in how we have relied on
3 fossil fuels which have been polluting our air and
4 water, making people sick and massively contributing
5 to climate change.

6 Our over reliance on oil, coal and
7 natural gas has slowed our embrace and development
8 of renewable energy sources and the job creation
9 that goes with it.

10 I am not proud that Pennsylvania is
11 the third dirtiest state in the country in terms of
12 carbon pollution. Joining the Regional Greenhouse
13 Gas Initiative gives us a real opportunity to change
14 direction because right now, we're heading full
15 steam ahead off a cliff of climate disaster and
16 economic polarization.

17 We as Pennsylvanians have an
18 opportunity and responsibility to address the
19 disproportionate and devastating impact of decades
20 of pollution on low-income families and on
21 communities of color who have been left out of the
22 profits of the fossil fuel economy but left with
23 increased rates of asthma and, and the other health
24 and economic impacts of environmental racism.

25 While I believe that we should join

1 RGGI, it must include protections by not allowing
2 the power producers to increase emissions in these
3 communities and electricity rates cannot be allowed
4 to go up for low income households.

5 RGGI also has the potential to be a
6 jobs creator. An analysis for the PA DEP show that
7 we can stand - that we stand to gain more than
8 27,000 jobs. I ask that those workers from former
9 coal tower electric plants get the training they
10 need to move into the green jobs sector.

11 There is nothing inherently true about
12 the idea that working people have to decide between
13 good paying jobs and the climate. This is only true
14 when we have engineered it to be this way.

15 RGGI gets us a step closer to a
16 thriving green economy for this state that has been
17 in the hands of the fossil fuel industry for too
18 long. For hundreds of years the fossil fuel
19 industry has never paid the true cost of extraction.

20 Climate change is already here and
21 already making life harder for everyone across our
22 state from farmers, to city dwellers. Temperatures
23 in Pennsylvania are projected to increase 5.4
24 degrees by 2050 and the number of days with a heat
25 index above 90 degrees will increase dramatically

1 from 8 to 40 per year.

2 Just this past summer Philadelphia
3 recorded 36 days of 90 plus readings. The health
4 and economic impacts of this must be included when
5 we consider the true cost of a fossil fuel driven
6 economy.

7 If this year has taught us anything,
8 it is that the status quo is unacceptable and we
9 must find new ways to deal with the triple threats
10 of climate change increasing economic stratification
11 and racial injustice.

12 We've watched California burn, racial
13 justice uprisings around the country and the
14 disparities in how the Coronavirus pandemic has
15 affected black, brown, indigenous and low income
16 people in our communities. What else needs to
17 happen before we are ready to act on behalf of
18 ourselves and our neighbors?

19 In closing, I ask that the
20 Environmental Quality Board affirm RGGI to pass onto
21 the governor and make modifications to the rule
22 making to incorporate inclusion in equity and
23 environmental justice principles. Thank you for
24 your time and consideration.

25 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Ingrid.

1 Speaker four today is Audra Wolfe.

2 MS. WOLFE: Good afternoon.

3 My name is Audra Wolfe, A-U-D-R-A,
4 W-O-L-F-E and I am a resident of Philadelphia,
5 Pennsylvania. Thank you for the opportunity to
6 speak at this virtual public hearing.

7 In Philadelphia where I live, we
8 routinely breathe in some of the dirtiest air in the
9 country. We know that air pollution
10 disproportionably affects black, brown and low
11 income communities and that emissions affect workers
12 as well as residents.

13 We know the polluting industries take
14 advantage of racism, apathy and economic desperation
15 to locate their facilities in areas that don't have
16 the political power to stop them.

17 Many if not most of these polluting
18 sites are the legacies of Pennsylvania's fossil fuel
19 economy. Ever since Edwin Drake drilled the first
20 oil well in Titusville in 1859, the state's approach
21 to regulating fossil fuels has shown an alarming
22 willingness to sacrifice the long-term welfare of
23 its inhabitants in exchange for short-term boost to
24 its economy.

25 I experienced this first hand in the

1 summer of 2019 when the boom and the light from the
2 explosion at the PES Refinery woke me up and filled
3 my bedroom with an eerie light.

4 Today, Pennsylvania is the second
5 largest producer of energy in the country. While
6 joining RGGI will not solve all of Pennsylvania's
7 pollution problems, joining the bipartisan program
8 would be an important first step in cutting the
9 state's pollution.

10 It would also raise hundreds of
11 millions of dollars that the state could use to
12 address the environmental and social harm created by
13 more than a century and a half of fossil fuel
14 extraction.

15 In Pennsylvania our state constitution
16 grants citizens the right to clean air. But access
17 to this right is uneven. One specific way that the
18 regulatory system fails our citizens is by relying
19 on the very companies that pollute as the primary
20 source of air quality monitoring data.

21 In January of this year NBC News
22 reported that the PES Refinery had been releasing
23 extraordinarily high levels of benzenes for all the
24 12 weeks between January 2018 and September 2019.
25 During a two week period in July of 2019 after the

1 explosion, the readings were literally off the
2 charts showing benzene levels more than 21 times
3 higher than the EPA's recommendations.

4 I live less than two miles from the
5 refinery's north gate. Like so many Philadelphians,
6 I have asthma. It's usually controlled. But for
7 most of the summer of 2019 I simply couldn't catch
8 my breath.

9 The terror of the refinery explosion
10 and the trickle of information afterward highlights
11 two things that are relevant to the rule making
12 process for RGGI. First, that the current
13 regulatory environment put the public safety in the
14 hands of people whose very operations threaten our
15 health.

16 Second, the risk is not distributed
17 equally. A 2017 report from the NAACP and the clean
18 air task force showed that African-Americans are 75
19 percent more likely than other Americans to live in
20 fence line communities. And Philadelphia's refinery
21 is a classic case of this phenomenon.

22 The RGGI program offers and
23 opportunity for Pennsylvania to begin righting some
24 of these wrongs, even those that are not directly
25 related to electricity generation. The program must

1 be implemented with care so that emissions
2 allowances do not disproportionately end up in the
3 hands of dirty plants which may themselves be
4 disproportionately located in disadvantaged
5 communities that host other polluting facilities
6 that may or may not be covered by RGGI.

7 I urge the DEP to use the funds
8 generated by the auction fees to address the harms
9 of a century and a half of environmental racism in
10 Pennsylvania. As a starting point, environmental
11 justice communities who do not see an immediate
12 decrease in emission levels should receive no less
13 than 20 percent of the funds earned from RGGI to
14 fund environmental and health mitigation projects.

15 For example funds could be used for
16 energy benefits for low income homeowners in
17 environmental injustice communities which would have
18 the simultaneous effect of lowering their energy
19 costs and lowering emissions by reducing energy
20 demands.

21 The funds also present an opportunity
22 for the DEP to invest in a more robust air
23 monitoring system that would allow the state to
24 protect its citizens without relying so heavily on
25 reporters from polluters. RGGI and its associated

1 funds offer an opportunity for the state to fill its
2 constitutionally mandated responsibility to ensure
3 clean air and clean water for all of it's residents.

4 Implemented properly, RGGI can help
5 Pennsylvania begin to understand the legacy of its
6 fossil fuel economy and repair the damage it has
7 caused. Thank you for hearing my testimony today.

8 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Audra.

9 Our next speaker five is Senator Katie
10 Muth. Is Senator Muth with us?

11 I understand she was in the process of
12 wrapping up a meeting. If she's not with us yet we
13 can come back to her.

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

16 MS. GRIFFIN: Okay.

17 We'll check back with the Senator.
18 Okay.

19 Then our next speaker of the moment is
20 number six Charles Reeves.

21 MR. REEVES: Good afternoon.

22 My name is Charles Reeves and I am a
23 resident of Philadelphia in this great city. It is
24 a prime example of an environmental injustice - it's
25 a prime example of the environmental injustice we

1 give it.

2 I want to take this time to thank
3 Clean Air Counsel, Governor Wolf and the Department
4 of Environmental Protection for putting this
5 together.

6 I want to start by saying I am here
7 because I believe that climate change is the biggest
8 threat we face and will face in the future.
9 Pennsylvania emissions from fossil fuels has gone
10 unchecked for far too long. The RGGI is a major
11 step in reduction of carbon print.

12 I want to make sure that - I want to
13 make sure that people who suffered the most from our
14 CO2 emissions benefit from the funds that are going
15 to be made in this initiative.

16 I personally grew up across the street
17 from one of the world's oldest and largest oil
18 refinery. Sunoco produced fuels many of which went
19 to dirty oil plants across Pennsylvania.
20 Communities like mine have suffered and continue to
21 suffer from the toxic air coming from electric -
22 from electric industry.

23 As a frontline survivor we pay and
24 continue to pay the price for everyone to turn on
25 their lights. Asthma and cancer are just some of

1 the daily struggles. Generations of neighbors have
2 been poisoned and disadvantaged.

3 The funds generated from these offices
4 need to focus on helping communities like mine,
5 especially those of color across the state of
6 Pennsylvania. Our kids and their schools need new
7 curriculums to address the technology and energy and
8 pollution and environment and the future that they
9 will be living.

10 These - this is just one example of
11 those - of how those resources can be directed to
12 vulnerable and ailing communities like mine. Again
13 I want to thank you for your time and I want to ask
14 everybody to, to consider the funds coming to the
15 communities that suffer the most. Thank you again
16 and may God be with you.

17 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Charles.
18 Okay.

19 Is Senator Muth with us yet?

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

21 MS. GRIFFIN: Okay. Our next - okay.

22 I'm sorry. What was that Darek?

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

24 MS. GRIFFIN: Okay.

25 Then we'll go to number seven, Joan

1 Sabatino.

2 MS. SABATINO: Good afternoon and
3 thank you for this opportunity to speak with you
4 today.

5 I am a Unitarian Universalist
6 Minister. After 20 plus years as a parish minister,
7 I now serve as the director of UU Justice PA, a
8 statewide advocacy organization representing 5,300
9 Unitarian Universalists across the state.

10 I live in Harrisburg and pre-Covid I
11 was a frequent visitor to legislator's offices in
12 our PA Capitol. I hope to get back there soon.

13 We Unitarian Universalists live by a
14 set of principles. The first and the seventh, the
15 foundations of our faith. We covenant to affirm and
16 promote the current worth and dignity of every
17 person and we covenant to affirm and promote the
18 interconnected web of all existence.

19 I believe that this blue green ball
20 from which we come and to which we will return at
21 the end of our lives is a blessing, a gift, given
22 with the understanding that our God-given human
23 capacity for justice, for compassion, for equality,
24 for intelligence is supposed to lead to a
25 corroboration between all existence and the Creator

1 to make this world our home.

2 A home we are meant to care for,
3 respect and maintain. And we in our country and in
4 our state are doing a very poor job in all of these
5 areas. We are abusing our natural resources,
6 polluting the air, water and ground that is meant to
7 sustain us. It makes no sense. It's like not
8 putting oil in your car or not cleaning your home
9 each week, not mowing your lawn, not taking out the
10 trash.

11 We are not taking care of our
12 environment. I have two daughters both in their
13 30s. Both married over the last year and both
14 pregnant with their first child. Each in their own
15 way has expressed concerns about bringing another
16 life into this world.

17 They worry about what climate change
18 is going to do over the next decades. They believe
19 we have to pay attention to the signs. Severe
20 weather and eroding coastlines as examples. What
21 will this world be like for my children and my
22 children's children they have each lamented.

23 They are aware of the presence of
24 asthma and autism and cancer in Pennsylvania
25 children. We have friends, a two year old with

1 liver cancer, a five year old and a seven year old
2 with autism and my youngest daughter suffers from
3 severe allergies and asthma. And young people with
4 these ailments in Pennsylvania carry them - carry
5 these ailments with them throughout their lives.

6 My oldest daughter in particular has
7 told me that she and her wife are committed to
8 raising an environmentally statute and dedicate it
9 RRR, recycle, reduce, reuse in exchange for their
10 self-indulgence in bringing another person onto this
11 plant. Another person to use our valuable
12 resources.

13 But where are we headed she screamed
14 frustratingly one day. Hazmat suits for our
15 children to go out and play. That is what young
16 parents today worry about. I claim we are not doing
17 a good job carrying for our natural resources and I
18 believe that the root of this problem is our focus
19 on corporate money rather than people.

20 Two more brief points I'd like to
21 make. There are no barriers separating our states,
22 highway tolls in some places but no walls. There
23 are no walls high enough to separate the air. No
24 walls deep enough to curb the flow of streams and
25 rivers. No one has figured out how to dam up the

1 ocean. So a regional collaboration between states
2 makes sense.

3 And secondly, participation in RGGI
4 will foster new economies. New economies bring hope
5 for a cleaner and more livable environment. We
6 cannot resist this reality and why would we.
7 Participation in RGGI will reduce carbon emissions
8 while bringing jobs to Pennsylvania residents.

9 We must invest in clean jobs. Clean
10 jobs will restore our environment and bring a
11 higher, brighter, healthier life to PA residents. I
12 honestly don't understand the debate. Joining RGGI
13 is a win win for Pennsylvania and for all
14 Pennsylvania residents. Thank you for listening.

15 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Joan.

16 Our next speaker number eight is
17 Evelyn Talbott.

18 MS. TALBOTT: Hello. Can you hear me?

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

21 MS. TALBOTT: Thank you so much.

22 My name is Dr. Evelyn Talbott and I'm
23 a professor at the University of Pittsburgh. I'm an
24 environmental epidemiologist and I'm also a resident
25 of Pittsburgh and have conducted health effects

1 resources for the past 25 years. And, and I support
2 the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

3 I think addressing the global climate
4 crisis is one of the most important and critical
5 challenges that we face. I should say that I
6 submitted an article - a paper yesterday where I
7 looked at 181,000 emergency visits for Allegheny
8 County from 1999 to 2011 and we link them to SO2,
9 sulfur dioxide, NO2 ozone and PM2.5 and - and the
10 Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative and, and
11 awareness of coal-fired power plants and their - and
12 being able to meter them and reduce them is, is
13 helping in that we noted that from '99 to 2011 there
14 was a 28 percent drop in PM2.5, a 57 percent drop in
15 SO2 and a 41 percent drop in nitrogen dioxide but
16 ozone has remained constant, probably because of the
17 increased number of cars.

18 So we are, we are making progress here
19 but we have much progress to make even with the,
20 particularly even with the air pollution levels
21 going down an association was still seen with PM2.5
22 and NO2 and cardiovascular emergency room visits.

23 And that persisted over the entire
24 earlier and later years of our exposure timeframe.
25 Ozone NO2 were related to the increased risk of all

1 cardiovascular diseases and has - and what has been
2 mentioned of course is that we've done research on
3 low birth weight from PM2.5, COPD and asthma which
4 was just mentioned and expanded on and we also know
5 that there are neurotoxic and neurodevelopmental
6 effects that go along with the volatile organics
7 that are part of fossil fuels.

8 So I would just say that I think as we
9 said earlier, this - this is not a question of if we
10 should do this but why, why, why wouldn't be doing
11 this. Because I think we are making progress but we
12 have much more progress to be made. Thank you.

13 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Evelyn.

14 Our speaker number nine is Tamela
15 Trussell.

16 MS. TRUSSELL: Yes, hello.

17 My name is Tamela Trussell and I'm
18 from Carlisle, Pennsylvania and my name is spelled
19 with a T as in Tom. And I'm a founder of TLC
20 Education, a climate reality reader, master
21 watershed steward, committee member of the Carlisle
22 Action Commission and a board member of the
23 Conodoguinet Creek Watershed Association, a non-
24 profit organization of stewards of the 90 mile long
25 Conodoguinet Creek and larger watershed of which is

1 a part including the Chesapeake Bay.

2 I support the creation of regulations
3 to joint the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. My
4 three children and I began taking care of the
5 Conodoguinet Creek with cleanups to collect tons of
6 trash along half mile stretches.

7 In doing so, I've become and aware and
8 shocked by the harmful unseen pollutants that have
9 invaded our watershed. I'm particularly saddened by
10 the disproportionate financial help and social
11 impacts these toxins have on our minority
12 communities and economically disenfranchised
13 communities.

14 Fish are not safe for human
15 consumption in half of the acres of public lakes.
16 Thirty (30) percent of the 85,000 plus miles of
17 streams in Pennsylvania are impaired.

18 Over the past two years over 5,500
19 miles have been added to this status. Greenhouse
20 gas emissions play a large role in poor health of
21 Pennsylvania and our watersheds.

22 Currently the electric power sector
23 contributes one-third of the Pennsylvania greenhouse
24 gas emissions. The entire power sector from
25 extractions to consumption and disposal also

1 contributes over 100 known toxic chemicals and
2 radiations into our watershed.

3 These greenhouse gases and other toxic
4 chemicals bring imbalances, hazards and health
5 concerns on human beings and ecosystems. The
6 increased gas emissions have caused a 70 percent
7 increase in the frequency of severe storms in the
8 Northeast since 1958.

9 In 2018 severe storms caused \$125.7
10 million in replaced infrastructure. These large
11 storms also caused extensive runoff of urban and
12 agriculture areas into our waterways. This runoff
13 ends up killing aquatic plants and animal life and
14 is consumed by humans.

15 Erratic severe weather negatively
16 impacts agriculture by losing precious topsoil that
17 took millions of years to accumulate. The soil also
18 ends up polluting our creeks. The increased
19 temperature, decreased air production and increased
20 pests and disease damaging crops and orchards and
21 livestock.

22 Projected crop loss could cost
23 Pennsylvania \$150 million per year. One-third of
24 the nitrogen loads in the bay come from air sources
25 from other greenhouse gases such as NOx and sulfur

1 dioxide.

2 Curbing atmospheric greenhouse gases
3 will drastically help the waterways and the bay
4 employing agriculture in urban and force best
5 practice management practices will prevent numerous
6 pollutants from entering our waterway.

7 Linking to RGGI has the potential to
8 balance natural systems that we're a part of and
9 have grossly brought out of balance. Unfortunately
10 the use of fossil fuels has put many contaminants
11 into our environment such as excessive amounts of
12 CO₂, methane, sulfur dioxide, nitrous oxide, ozone,
13 ammonia, benzene, toluene and hundreds of other
14 chemicals. These are dangerous to our environment
15 and our health.

16 And like many Pennsylvania citizens
17 who have poor health, four out of five members of my
18 family have eczema. My daughter suffers from
19 asthma. My son suffers from severe allergies.

20 If we reach the projected decreased in
21 greenhouse gas emissions by joining RGGI there will
22 be more than 45,000 fewer asthma attacks and more
23 than 1,000 fewer cases of childhood bronchitis.
24 Failing to curb greenhouse gas emissions is
25 irresponsible and will hinder the legacy of our

1 present and future life.

2 If mind - if used mindfully,
3 participants in RGGI is just one tool in the toolbox
4 we can employ to bring balance back to the ecosystem
5 equation we are as part of.

6 For these and many reasons I urge the
7 Environmental Quality Board to move quickly to
8 implement RGGI in Pennsylvania.

9 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Tamela.

10 I'm told that Senator Muth has been
11 able to join us.

12 Are you with us Senator Muth?

13 SENATOR MUTH: Yes, I am.

14 MS. GRIFFIN: Excellent.

15 Please go ahead.

16 SENATOR MUTH: Thank you very much and
17 I apologize for being late.

18 My name is Senator Katie Muth. I'm
19 here today to express my strongest support for the
20 proposed rule-making for the CO2 Budget Trading
21 Program before the Environmental Quality Board.

22 After I reviewed this proposed rule in
23 very thorough detail, I found the benefits, you
24 know, are unquestionable and that risks associated
25 with the delay are really unconscionable at this

1 point in our time with climate crisis.

2 I urge the approval and implementation
3 of the provisions presented. If enacted, RGGI is
4 expected to reduce our CO2 emissions by over 188
5 million tons over the course of the next decade.
6 This reduction will have a substantial and immediate
7 impact on our Commonwealth's overall contribution
8 for global climate change caused by greenhouse gas
9 emissions.

10 Here in our state we have witnessed a
11 long-term warming of over 1.8 degrees Fahrenheit
12 over the past century directly due to greenhouse gas
13 emissions. This is not sustainable, as increased
14 temperatures are known to be direct contributors to
15 significant changes in precipitation and extreme
16 weather events such as flooding, heavier snowfalls,
17 heat waves, droughts.

18 We know that studies show climate
19 change and its impact to public health such as our
20 impacts on clean air, safe drinking water,
21 sufficient food, secure housing will result in
22 increased of childhood asthma, pre-term births and
23 low birth weight. Also illnesses caused by
24 influenza outbreaks and disease carriers such as
25 mosquitoes and ticks. All of this can be

1 exacerbated by a continued climate crisis that is
2 not met with solutions.

3 We have the opportunity to avoid these
4 impacts and in one step in a positive direction by
5 enacting this necessary and needed rule ensuring our
6 participation in RGGI and engaging as a true partner
7 in fighting climate crisis for the current and our
8 future generations.

9 We know that overall states that have
10 joined RGGI have benefited not only with improved
11 air and water quality but also economically.
12 Studies reviewing economic outcomes of RGGI
13 participating states report that they have added
14 between 1.3 and 1.6 billion dollars net economic
15 value during the study period.

16 Further, RGGI is a cap-and-invest
17 program that reduces carbon emissions and invests in
18 energy efficiency measures, renewable energy
19 technology and CO2 emissions abatement technologies
20 focus on the future of clean and renewable energy.
21 These are the family-sustaining jobs of the future
22 that will provide stable employment opportunities,
23 economic security without destroying our environment
24 and damaging public health.

25 Further, independent studies estimate

1 that industry jobs such as coal energy generation
2 will continue to decrease from 47 percent in 2010 to
3 just three percent by 2030. I'd like to take a note
4 to add in that while we talk about clean and green
5 jobs that could be part of Pennsylvania's economic
6 future, one of the suggestions I would have to
7 include on this rule-making is to request both not
8 just in writing but effort to make sure that the,
9 the jobs of those who are in these fossil fuel
10 entities are taken care of, that those workers are
11 not left out or left behind and that their economic
12 stability is a part of, of this effort as well.

13 So with RGGI we do have this
14 opportunity to benefit economically while investing
15 in employment opportunities for future generations.
16 But let's take care of those future generations and
17 our workers here in Pennsylvania now.

18 During this period of economic
19 uncertainty, especially since Covid-19 it would be
20 foolish and physically irresponsible to ignore the
21 significant economic investment in our Commonwealth
22 future. However, while the economic and public
23 health cost savings are unquestionable, my focus and
24 primary motivation for supporting this proposed rule
25 and our involvement in RGGI is the environmental

1 crisis that is unfolding before us.

2 We have a limited window to act in
3 order to actually have a shot at making
4 unprecedented harm to our Commonwealth, our country
5 and our planet. Joining RGGI now is an important
6 and significant step in combating global climate
7 change. As an elected member of the Pennsylvania
8 State Senate, serving constituents in Chester,
9 Montgomery and Berks Counties, it's my
10 responsibility for the - to advocate for the
11 approval and immediate implementation of this
12 important rule.

13 I would add that also that air, water
14 and land are all interconnected. So while I
15 represent just this one district of 50 in our
16 Commonwealth, I think it's important to note that we
17 have an obligation to do what's right for our state
18 as a whole and that I am really willing to work with
19 anyone on this because our state has already been
20 plagued by legacy pollution that has harmed many
21 families and we have a lot of work to do when it
22 comes to making our state economically sustainable
23 and also investing in our people. And that includes
24 public health.

25 I want to thank the Environmental

1 Quality Board for the opportunity to submit this
2 public comment in support of this rule and look
3 forward to working towards Pennsylvania's
4 participation as a full and active member of RGGI.

5 Thank you very much.

6 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Senator Muth.
7 Speaker number 10 is Joy Bergey.

8 MS. BERGEY: Good afternoon. My name
9 is Joy Bergey. A lifelong resident of Pennsylvania,
10 I live in Springhill Township, Montgomery County.

11 I'm speaking today about the
12 importance of swiftly implementing the Regional
13 Greenhouse Gas Initiative from two perspectives, as
14 a private citizen committed to fighting climate
15 change and environmental injustice and as Vice-Chair
16 of Springhill Township's Environmental Advisory
17 Commission.

18 We, Pennsylvanians, have an outsized
19 footprint in our responsibility for climate change.
20 Pennsylvania's electric power sector is currently
21 the fourth dirtiest in the nation. We are a third
22 worst state in terms of greenhouse gas pollution.
23 We are the second largest producer of natural gas
24 and the third largest producer of coal.

25 The good news is that Pennsylvania can

1 move forward with RGGI with assurance about the
2 benefits we're likely to reap based on the
3 successful experience of the other RGGI states. The
4 participating RGGI states have cut carbon pollution
5 by a remarkable 47 percent in the last 12 years
6 outpacing the rest of the country by 90 percent.

7 And there's very encouraging news from
8 the Acadia Center. Economic growth in the RGGI
9 states has outpaced the rest of the country by 31
10 percent during this. So it's not surprising that
11 RGGI is projected to deliver the following benefits
12 to Pennsylvania by 2030. An addition of 1.9 billion
13 with a B dollars to our economy, more than 27,000
14 new jobs and \$6.3 million in health benefits. So
15 much for that tired old chestnut of economy versus
16 environment.

17 RGGI will give us a stronger and
18 clearer economy better for our children and
19 grandchildren in so many ways.

20 Let's take a look at 6 plus billion
21 dollars in projected benefits. This would result
22 from 30,000 fewer hospital visits due to asthma and
23 other respiratory diseases, heart attacks, stroke,
24 diabetes and high blood pressure.

25 But it's equally important to

1 understand how cleaning up our dirty power plants is
2 a matter of social equity and fairness. Think about
3 where those dirty power plants are built. Almost
4 always they're in low income areas which are
5 disproportionately inhabited by black and brown
6 people.

7 Dirty power plants don't get built in
8 places like Springhill Township where I live. That
9 doesn't free us of our personal responsibility,
10 however, to recognize that the electricity we use in
11 our homes is hurting others who live near those
12 dirty power plants but can't readily get out of
13 harms way.

14 RGGI goes after the environmental
15 racism that is baked into our electricity system at
16 large. RGGI doesn't solve the whole problem but it
17 takes an important step towards social justice.

18 I'll say a few words on behalf of what
19 our elected leaders are doing in Springhill Township
20 here in Montgomery County. Our township
21 commissioners unanimously passed a resolution almost
22 two years ago that we aim to use 100 percent clean,
23 renewable electricity by 2035 and 100 percent clean
24 building heat and vehicles by 2050 both in our
25 municipal operations and in the broader community.

1 We are working hard to achieve these goals because
2 our leaders in Springfield know that this is the
3 best path to a better, more secure economy and
4 climate.

5 All seven of our Springhill Township
6 Commissioners are in full support of the swift
7 implementation of RGGI. I'm proud to live here.

8 In closing I thank Governor Wolf, the
9 Department of Environmental Protection and the
10 Environment Quality Board for their leadership in
11 promulgating this rule. I support not just RGGI but
12 its rapid implementation in Pennsylvania so that our
13 citizens can start to reap the benefits from a
14 cleaner, more stable atmosphere and a stronger
15 economy as quickly as possible.

16 Thank you.

17 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Joy.

18 Speaker 11 today is Sandy Field.

19 MS. FIELD: Yes.

20 My name is Sandy Field. I'm a
21 resident of Lewisburg, Pennsylvania and I'm here
22 today representing the Susquehanna Valley
23 Pennsylvania Chapter of The Climate Reality Project.

24 Thank you for hearing my testimony
25 today. My name is Sandy Field and I'm the chair of

1 Susquehanna Valley Pennsylvania Chapter of The
2 Climate Reality Project, a global organization
3 dedicated to communicating about the urgency of
4 taking action on the climate crisis.

5 I'm speaking today on behalf of our
6 chapter which includes 30 members. I'm also a
7 freelance science and medical writer and a mom, and
8 I have lived in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania for the last
9 18 years and spent many happy days camping, skiing,
10 biking and boating with Pennsylvania's forest, parks
11 and waterways. I have a deep appreciation for the
12 valuable air, water and forest resources in our
13 state.

14 I am speaking today in support of the
15 Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative as one of the
16 programs the governor has undertaken to reduce
17 carbon emissions in our state. As a major energy
18 producing state and fifth highest producer of carbon
19 dioxide emissions in the country, it is imperative
20 that Pennsylvania uses emissions because we are
21 currently facing the effects of a climate crisis.
22 And the time to act is now.

23 Waiting any longer will result in
24 terrible costs in terms of lives, property and
25 livelihood. Data from Pennsylvania DEP show that 56

1 percent of electricity generated in our state comes
2 from the burning of fossil fuels. And this accounts
3 for 29 percent of the state's total greenhouse gas
4 emissions.

5 Another 31 percent of our emissions
6 comes from industrial practices relating to
7 obtaining coal and gas. This means that 60 percent
8 of the greenhouse gas emissions in Pennsylvania are
9 directly related to two sectors focused on the
10 acquisition or burning of fossil fuels making
11 reductions of these sectors critical - is critical
12 to meeting our shared goal in reducing carbon
13 emissions.

14 I fully support the plan to reduce
15 Pennsylvania's emissions and electricity generation
16 using the proven market-based solution outlined in
17 the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. One of the
18 main reasons to support RGGI is that it will reduce
19 greenhouse gas emissions in a way that will benefit
20 Pennsylvania's economy.

21 States that have been in the program
22 since it started in 2009 report a wide range of
23 benefits including health savings from reduced
24 pollution, increased funding for green energy and
25 energy efficiency project that create good local

1 jobs and the availability of funding to offset
2 potential electrical increases associated with
3 paying the true cost of fossil fuel electricity
4 generation.

5 The program is estimated to generate
6 about \$20 million per year. Current RGGI states use
7 some of their money to support energy efficiency
8 programs such as modernization. They also use the
9 money to help low income home owners make green
10 energy improvements that they would otherwise not be
11 able to afford.

12 This further lowers the emissions of
13 member states and can provide real benefits to
14 vulnerable communities who are often the most
15 impacted by extreme weather events caused by climate
16 crises.

17 We support RGGI because it is a proven
18 method of Pennsylvania to reduce it's greenhouse gas
19 emissions in a way that will allow our economy to
20 thrive a transitional way for fossil fuel energy
21 sources that have served us well in the past but are
22 now literally -. Pennsylvania can still be an
23 energy leader with some foresight and careful
24 planning and RGGI is a good start. Thank you very
25 much.

1 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Sandy.

2 Number 12 is Karen Frock.

3 MS. FROCK: Yes.

4 Can you hear me?

5 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes we can Karen. Go
6 ahead.

7 MS. FROCK: Thank you.

8 My name is Karen Frock. I live north
9 of Williamsport, Pennsylvania and am speaking as a
10 property owner, business owner and Pennsylvania
11 native.

12 Breathing issues are more important
13 now than ever. Some of the same comorbidities
14 helping Covid-19 kill people are directly caused or
15 made worse by air pollution that we can reduce by
16 joining RGGI.

17 Right now I am in no mood to tolerate
18 people or regulations that will bring illness,
19 disability and death as statistics and risk benefit
20 analysis. I am in no mood for citizens or
21 legislatives who say things like wearing a mask will
22 not completely prevent Covid-19 transmissions so why
23 bother doing something uncomfortable that in itself
24 will not completely solve the problem.

25 Because it will help. Because it will

1 protect others from harm. Because we have a
2 responsibility to step up and do whatever we can to
3 reduce CO2 emissions just as we have a
4 responsibility to reduce Covid-19 transmission.

5 RGGI is bigger than our Commonwealth
6 as the problems of climate change and public health
7 are far bigger than any state, region or country.
8 RGGI demonstrates our commitment to join the
9 patriotic effort to bring about global impacts for
10 good. Advancing renewable energy and energy
11 efficiency also creates good paying jobs and boosts
12 economic development.

13 The job killing market is the same
14 tired tarnished false claim made every time we try
15 to move forward as a nation toward new technologies.
16 I'm sure it was made as we previously destroyed
17 large parts of the Commonwealth who extracted energy
18 practices of the 19th and 20th centuries.

19 But now we must move ahead and meet
20 our responsibilities to create an economy that works
21 for everybody and for the future, to create and
22 support manufacturing technologies emerging and
23 already here to replace our complete dependence on
24 fossil fuels with something sustainable. Those
25 resources should remain untapped or to be used as

1 part of the larger picture to provide backup only
2 during certain events such as during a solar eclipse
3 when Germany needed to fall back on it's power
4 plants for a period of time and as a national
5 security reserve.

6 Natural gas power plants are not a
7 replacement or permanent solution because what we
8 overlook while we are here talking about carbon is
9 the impacts of natural gas extraction and the CO2
10 emissions it does still generate that will
11 perpetuate the carbon problem while greatly
12 exacerbating greenhouse gas emissions from methane
13 through the entire lifecycle of natural gas
14 extraction production and transmission.

15 Natural gas also puts people, homes
16 and businesses at risk from faulty pipelines cited
17 in construction and the extreme weather events
18 caused from climate change such as we experience
19 here in the Loyalsock Creek Valley.

20 If this sounds extreme I point to the
21 Beaver County Revolution Pipeline explosion of 2018.
22 That occurred to people living in conditions very
23 similar to your residence where Pennsylvania Energy
24 now wants to run a pipeline rim to rim across the
25 steep forested exceptional value Loyalsock Creek

1 Valley to transport gas that may well end up being
2 exported.

3 This is in a place where we have
4 suffered increasingly frequent catastrophic flooding
5 and the solar climate change and is among the last
6 remaining gas and foresting areas in our
7 Commonwealth that have not yet been irreparably
8 damaged by natural gas development.

9 So we and our lives and futures have
10 been put at direct risk so legislature can blatantly
11 promote the gas use for its supposed benefits while
12 ignoring the risks. I'm especially appalled at the
13 biased, hostility anti-environmental and propagandas
14 nature of the newsletter Senator Yaw just sent me on
15 the eve of my testimony to try and discredit this
16 very initiative and our Commonwealth's potential
17 participation while supposedly soliciting my comment
18 on it.

19 This is the tactic Senator Yaw should
20 not be using on his constituents and reveals the
21 arrogance of this continuing attitude towards these
22 issues. I will skip those specifics because I'm
23 going to run out of time.

24 I just want to say I don't subscribe
25 to - well I will quote it. He says RGGI is a tax

1 scheme and that anyone who thinks windmills with
2 solar panels miraculously appearing on the
3 mountainside clearly ignore and misunderstand the
4 manufacturing process.

5 I don't know who he thinks says that
6 but I don't. I've served manufacturing companies
7 for more than 40 years. I've helped achieve green
8 manufacturing goals. I've helped the scientists
9 using massive data gleaned with reality-based data
10 driven urgency to local community groups.

11 We need to do our part in the regional
12 initiative that promises significant returns to
13 Pennsylvania while helping the country and the world
14 from the grips of this problem which is truly a life
15 or death situation. Thank you.

16 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Karen.

17 And speaker 13 is Sam Titus.

18 MR. TITUS: Good afternoon. Thank you
19 for giving me the opportunity speak today. My name
20 is Sam Titus and I am testifying here today as a
21 resident of North Philadelphia.

22 As a person with asthma, I believe
23 strongly that clean air is a human right. For too
24 long the government has not taken this issue
25 seriously and I have seen first hand how terrible

1 the air quality is in Philadelphia.

2 People living in Philadelphia are
3 suffering due to air pollution and it is up to you
4 to help. That's why I believe that Pennsylvania
5 should link to the Regional Greenhouse Gas
6 Initiative, a cap-and-invest program which will help
7 to reduce emissions while strengthening our economy.

8 I am originally from a small town in
9 Connecticut and came to Philadelphia to go to Temple
10 University to study political science and sociology.
11 I've been living in Pennsylvania for roughly two and
12 a half years now and Pennsylvania has some of the
13 worst air quality in the country. And I have
14 personally witnessed a huge difference in air
15 quality between my home state of Connecticut and a
16 RGGI - and a non-RGGI state Pennsylvania.

17 My father has been a respiratory
18 therapist for many years and he has asthma. Some of
19 my closest friends have asthma. Programs like RGGI
20 give me hope that we as a state and as a nation
21 address climate change and pollution while also
22 addressing economic and job concerns.

23 This program will directly affect my
24 health in the future as well as the health of my
25 family and my friends. A recent study completed by

1 Columbia University researchers on the air pollution
2 reductions generated by RGGI have reduced impacts to
3 children's health including asthma, pre-term births
4 and low birth weights. Researchers conservative
5 estimate this avoided health costs of up to \$350
6 million.

7 The amount of children in Pennsylvania
8 living with asthma has increased dramatically over
9 the past years, especially hurting people living in
10 cities and low income communities, particular
11 affecting the brown and black communities of
12 Philadelphia. This initiative can help to reduce
13 those numbers and can help children living with
14 asthma.

15 Other analysis of RGGI shows that
16 residents in the Northeast including some of my
17 family members who are living in these states are
18 now experiencing significantly fewer premature
19 deaths, heart attacks and respiratory illnesses.
20 Reducing greenhouse gas emissions is critical to
21 addressing and combating climate change, reducing
22 air pollution that hurts those with asthma like
23 myself, my family and my close friends.

24 States participating in RGGI have
25 reduced power plant carbon emissions by 47 percent

1 since 2009 and that's both a victory for combating
2 climate change and for public health concerns like
3 asthma and other respiratory illnesses.

4 I am very grateful that Governor Wolf
5 has acted as a strong political leader on this issue
6 and has taken steps to address climate change and
7 pollution. It is crucial that the state act with
8 urgency and speed on this matter cause it truly
9 affects all Pennsylvanians.

10 Linking with this initiative will
11 prove that Pennsylvania takes clean air seriously
12 and is working towards a meaningful and real climate
13 action. Thank you very much for your time.

14 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Sam.

15 Speak 14 is Steve Harvey.

16 MR. HARVEY: Good afternoon. My name
17 is Steve Harvey. I'm an attorney in Philadelphia.
18 I own my own law firm so I'm a small business owner
19 and I have family here too.

20 And in 2014 I along with some other
21 lawyers in the area started working on an
22 organization that eventually became Lawyers For
23 Climate Action which is a group of lawyers including
24 some of the people who care about climate issues
25 speak after me and then several of the other people

1 who will speak over the next few days who I have met
2 during this process of working with Lawyers For
3 Climate Action.

4 We've had national conferences,
5 several of them and we've had numerous meetings to
6 talk about the urgent problem of climate change. We
7 all know it's a huge problem. It's really becoming
8 - now starting to become closer and closer to that
9 point where it won't be able to effectively arrest
10 by our efforts. And so the urgency is very great, a
11 moral case. The case for environmental justice is
12 very strong and we need to do something.

13 In 2015 we were successful in
14 convincing the Pennsylvania Bar Association, we
15 being - being myself and other lawyers, and the
16 House of Delegates attended the Pennsylvania Bar
17 Association on November 20th, 2015 adopted a
18 resolution on acknowledging the reality of climate
19 change and calling for timely action to mitigate.

20 It's arm by acknowledging the threat
21 of climate change, adopting laws and policies that
22 lead to substantial reduction of greenhouse gas
23 emissions, promoting alternative energy sources and
24 technologies and taking other reasonable measures to
25 focus government at the international, national

1 state and local levels on climate change and the
2 need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

3 One of the - this - there's a limited
4 number of ways it turns out to reduce greenhouse gas
5 emissions and some of the most attractive options
6 are what are known as carbon pricing or, or building
7 the price of carbon somehow in the emissions so that
8 given all of our conduct and behavior so as to act
9 in such a way that we reduce emissions.

10 This can be done in any number of
11 ways. It can be done nationally, it can be done by
12 the state level, you can have it taxed or you can
13 have a dividend program or you can have what this
14 is, it's essentially cap and train program. And it
15 is a very efficient and effective, the regional
16 greenhouse gas - RGGI is a very efficient and
17 effective way. As a, as a lawyer we're crying out
18 for laws and policies that lead to substantial
19 reductions. RGGI would not be - obviously would not
20 take care of all the greenhouse gas emissions for
21 the entire country or even for Pennsylvania but it
22 would be a really good start.

23 There is another proposal that's been
24 proposed by the Clean Air Counsel for the
25 Environmental Quality Board that would result in

1 even greater reductions and raise more revenue for
2 the Commonwealth. And I believe is an extremely
3 worthy idea. But RGGI - it doesn't - you don't have
4 to pick and choose. RGGI is an excellent first step
5 for Pennsylvania to take on the road to substantial
6 climate reductions.

7 The revenues from the RGGI program can
8 be used in all kinds of ways that would be good for
9 the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and so while we
10 have always in my organization, the organization
11 I've worked with, we've always said we don't - we
12 don't really care which option is chosen as long as,
13 as choices are made by government officials like the
14 one I'm - the ones I'm speaking to. But RGGI
15 clearly would be an excellent first step for
16 Pennsylvania. And I, I sincerely hope that the
17 Commonwealth - and I complement the governor for
18 taking us down this road.

19 Thank you very much.

20 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Steve.

21 Number 15 Robert McKinstry.

22 MR. MCKINSTRY: Good afternoon. As an
23 attorney with 40 years of experience in practicing
24 and teaching climate and environmental law in
25 Pennsylvania, I come before you in my personal

1 capacity and as chair of the East Marlboro Township
2 Chester County Board of Supervisors to voice my
3 strong support for the swift adoption of the
4 proposed RGGI regulation.

5 Pennsylvania joining the RGGI program
6 is long overdue. As I and a group of other senior
7 environmental practitioners and lawyers will set
8 forth in greater detail in our written comments,
9 adoption of the proposed regulation is a necessary
10 but still insufficient first step in addressing what
11 has now become a true climate emergency.

12 The department's arguments for
13 adopting this regulation are sound. It's opponent's
14 arguments are not. Adoption of this regulation is
15 not only authorized by Pennsylvania law, it is
16 required. Article one section 27 of the
17 Pennsylvania constitution requires that each unit of
18 Pennsylvania's government take all actions within
19 its power to protect the Commonwealth's climate from
20 disruption due to greenhouse gas pollution.

21 The Pennsylvania Air Pollution Control
22 Act authorizes cooperation with other states in the
23 adoption of regulation to reduce emissions by way of
24 a regulation that puts a declining cap on emissions,
25 options allowances equal to that cap, and through

1 trading ensures the lowest cost productions are made
2 first.

3 This mechanism has been used before in
4 Pennsylvania and elsewhere. It works. States who
5 have participated in the RGGI cap-and-reinvest
6 program have reduced their greenhouse gas emissions
7 while increasing their gross state product and
8 creating good jobs. Pennsylvania can do the same by
9 directing the greenhouse gas option revenues to the
10 clean air fund as DEP proposes.

11 If these funds are then used to assist
12 or leverage the finance of non-emitting energy
13 generation technology, energy efficiency, energy
14 storage and energy conservation as the RGGI states
15 have done, Pennsylvania's program will have the same
16 results at increasing our economy and growing jobs.

17 Directing funds to municipal
18 sustainable energy utilities will be a particularly
19 effective mechanism for achieving these results
20 while also helping our local governments do the same
21 for their residents including their low income
22 residents.

23 Philadelphia has already created a
24 sustainable energy utility based on the model of
25 efficiency Vermont and Delaware sustainable energy

1 utility. As a township supervisor, I know there is
2 a demand for this.

3 RGGI can be only the first step as
4 others have said. The electricity generation sector
5 produces less than a third of Pennsylvania's
6 greenhouse gas emissions. We must achieve emissions
7 neutrality by 2050 in all sectors of our economy.
8 President-elect Biden has name the science-based
9 goal of achieving net zero emissions by 2050 part of
10 his platform for the entire nation. And I
11 anticipate that moving in that direction will put
12 Pennsylvania ahead in meeting what I am sure will be
13 its future obligations under the clean air act.

14 Although there are more than 1,000
15 policy mechanisms for achieving this type of
16 decarbonization, the board should take the first
17 step in this journey by adopting the proposed
18 regulation. The next step should be the adoption of
19 the regulation that Steve mentioned that is subject
20 to the rule-making petition before - now before the
21 Environmental Quality Board to make this cap-and-
22 invest program and economy-wide program that goes to
23 zero by 2052.

24 As our group of attorneys and
25 practitioners will set out in our written comments,

1 the regulation and the petition can readily be
2 modified to make it consistent with the RGGI
3 regulation and expand that to all sectors of the
4 economy. This is particularly important since,
5 since we need - one of the needs for decarbonization
6 is to electrify the entire economy such as a
7 transportation sector. And we need to put
8 equivalent costs on those sectors to that we're
9 putting on electricity.

10 Thank you for - thank you and the
11 governor for taking this step and we look forward to
12 working with you to profitably address the climate
13 crisis. Thank you.

14 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Robert.

15 Our next speaker number 16 is Paul
16 Spiegel.

17 Is Paul with us?

18 MR. JAGIELA: He isn't muted.

19 MS. GRIFFIN: Hello. Okay.

20 We will try back for Paul then.

21 Hopefully he can call in.

22 Speaker number 17 is Jeaneen Zappa.

23 MS. ZAPPA: Good afternoon.

24 And thank you for the opportunity to
25 speak. My name is Jeaneen Zappa and I am testifying

1 today as a private citizen.

2 But I come to you with years of
3 professional energy efficiency experience. I served
4 as the first sustainability manager for Allegheny
5 County and more recently and more recently until
6 it's merger with another organization this past
7 summer, I served for seven years as the Executive
8 Director of Conservation Consultant Inc., a
9 nonprofit organization that provided energy
10 efficiency services to nearly 4,000 southwestern
11 Pennsylvania households annually.

12 I testify today in support of the
13 proposed regulations to allow Pennsylvania to enter
14 into the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative program.
15 And I urge you to use RGGI auction proceeds to
16 support energy efficiency investments to help
17 residential customers at all income levels, and most
18 especially those who are lower income.

19 My first point is that existing lower
20 income energy efficiency programs work well and
21 should be leveraged, augmented and/or adjusted in
22 conjunction with RGGI funds to achieve even more
23 reductions. The public utility commission already
24 requires utilities in our Commonwealth to provide
25 low income usage reduction programs. The customers

1 served by these programs must have both high energy
2 usage and a household income typically at or below
3 150 percent of federal poverty guidelines.

4 But some of the worst performing homes
5 cannot be served by the program. Columbia Gas of
6 Pennsylvania engaged Apprise Consulting to evaluate
7 why homes were deferred from its own wire program
8 and found that 68 percent of homes exhibited a
9 moisture issue and 20 percent of deferrals were due
10 to roof leaks and 25 percent of deferrals were due
11 to wet basements.

12 If RGGI helps more homes to qualify
13 for weatherization work by providing tandem or
14 contingent funding to address these issues, more of
15 the very worst performing homes will become less
16 wasteful and less polluting.

17 My second key point is that these
18 homes really need energy efficiency investments.
19 People who are poor often live in poorly maintained
20 energy inefficient homes. Focusing resources to fix
21 these worst performing homes will deliver the
22 fastest carbon savings.

23 The American Counsel for an American
24 Energy Efficiency Economy published in September the
25 2020 energy burden report, it's, third such report.

1 An energy burden is a percentage of
2 total income for household spent on home energy
3 bills. Anything above six percent is considered
4 high. And in each report, Pennsylvania homes fair
5 poorly with Philadelphia and my hometown Pittsburgh
6 consistently ranking amongst the worst in the
7 country.

8 The current report shows that Philly's
9 median energy burden is 3.2 but the medium low
10 income energy burden is 9.5 percent and a quarter of
11 the Philly metro low income households have an
12 energy burden above 19 percent. While ACEEE plans
13 to publish its updated figures for Pittsburgh soon,
14 the past report shows a similar crummy profile for
15 Pittsburgh with an average energy burden exceeding
16 eight percent and 16 percent for minority
17 households.

18 The report's lead author said that the
19 deteriorated condition of these homes directly
20 related to the high energy burden. I quote from bad
21 insulation to outdated heating or air conditioning
22 equipment, there's a lot of energy that many homes
23 use unnecessarily.

24 Finally, my third point is that middle
25 income customers also need help to make energy

1 efficiency improvements. And they clearly respond
2 to incentives to make energy efficiency improvements
3 in their homes.

4 At the nonprofit CCI, we conducted a
5 friendly competition starting in August of 2019.
6 Fifty-four (54) Pittsburgh area homeowners
7 voluntarily committed to make energy savings
8 improvements in their homes starting with an energy
9 eye.

10 The competition winner spent just
11 about the same as the higher end of the statewide
12 mandated lighter program spending, about \$8,000 for
13 their home. And she achieved a whopping 27 percent
14 reduction in her energy use.

15 CCI's project shockingly found that 87
16 percent of the attics of our participants didn't
17 even have half of the amount of insulation specified
18 by golden code and a surprising 11 percent of the
19 attics had absolutely no insulation at all. In
20 addition, 43 percent of the homes had walls that
21 could be insulated that were not.

22 We were able to reduce an average of
23 29 percent of carbon in these homes just with energy
24 efficiency. In conclusion, 70 percent of the
25 electricity used in buildings, and building are

1 responsible for 31 percent of total US carbon
2 emissions. By directly investing in EE, through
3 participation in RGGI, Pennsylvania can help all
4 households to save money, save carbon and save
5 energy. Thank you.

6 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Jeaneen.

7 And I think Paul Spiegel is with us.
8 Can you, can you speak with us Paul?

9 MS. SPIEGEL: Yes. Can you hear me
10 now?

11 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can. Please go
12 ahead. Thank you.

13 MR. SPIEGEL: Sorry about the
14 technical glitch with my line.

15 My name is Paul Spiegel. I'm a
16 lifelong resident of Chester County. I live and
17 work in Chester County and I founded an energy
18 consulting company named Practical Energy Solutions
19 back in 2006.

20 Although we recently merged with a
21 larger company, we now have over 90 people in our
22 offices in Reading, Lancaster, Lehigh Valley and
23 West Chester.

24 Others on this call have focused on
25 the environmental impacts of RGGI so I want to

1 provide a bit of a business perspective. A really
2 important element of the RGGI program is that
3 investments in energy efficiency will be a driver
4 for theme economic growth.

5 Now this is a time period that we
6 desperately need to create jobs and the ability to
7 both create jobs and help address the climate crisis
8 is just such a great opportunity. We - we really
9 need to push this forward as quickly as we can.

10 And I have experience in this job
11 growth first hand. When we were in the depth of the
12 recession in 2009, a significant amount of federal
13 stimulus money was allocated to these energy
14 efficiency community block grants. And these grants
15 were, were received by numerous municipalities in
16 this region and were invested in energy efficiency
17 and renewable energy programs.

18 And during this time period when other
19 companies were laying off, we actually more than
20 doubled in size. And 100 percent of our new hires
21 were people that were unemployed at the time that we
22 interviewed and hired them and we were able to
23 provide family sustaining jobs and we were able to
24 help our clients cost effectively reduce their
25 energy costs which help them during a time of

1 difficult economic circumstances, help those
2 businesses become more profitable saving and
3 creating jobs in their industries.

4 Also this idea of job creation, it's
5 somewhat nebulous when it's just discussed in that
6 context. A lot of people assume that when you are
7 retrofitting a commercial building to be more energy
8 efficient or installing solar panels on that
9 building that you're just creating jobs in the
10 construction trades. And so it's a very limited
11 sector of the labor force and maybe doesn't have as
12 much of an impact as you would like.

13 But the truth is that these projects
14 create all types of jobs, yes. They create jobs for
15 laborers and carpenters and plumbers and steel iron
16 workers. But it also creates jobs for design
17 engineers and consultants that actually develop the
18 project scopes. Financial managers and lenders are
19 needed to provide the financing for the project. We
20 need project managers and construction managers.

21 Manufacturing jobs are created for the
22 equipment being installed. And so you're
23 manufacturing that equipment. You're transporting
24 it to the project site. There is raw material
25 suppliers that are supplying those manufacturers

1 with their materials that they need. We even need
2 legal and contract services. So, you know, maybe an
3 underserved part of the community is the legal
4 community. Surety and bond and assurance providers
5 are also needed in these projects.

6 So the impact of these types of
7 projects is not limited to just maybe one sector of
8 the employment economy. And I think it's really
9 important to understand how wide that impact can be.

10 So what we're facing right now with
11 climate change and with the economic issues that
12 we're going through because of the pandemic, I think
13 it makes adoption of this program and starting this
14 program really urgent. And it's something that I
15 urge you to push this forward and get it up and
16 running as quickly as you can.

17 Thank you so much for the time and I
18 appreciate the opportunity to speak today.

19 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Paul.

20 Our next speaker is John Walliser.

21 MR. WALLISER: Good afternoon. My
22 name is John Walliser and I'm a Vice President with
23 the Pennsylvania Environmental Counsel. Thank you
24 for the opportunity to come in today on the proposed
25 CO2 budget trading program rulemaking.

1 Addressing climate change is an
2 environmental, economic and public health imperative
3 for the Commonwealth and decarbonization of our
4 electric generation sector is the most important
5 first step that we can take.

6 Independent analysis has shown that
7 without policy action, decline in emissions that
8 we've witnessed over the past decade will reverse
9 within the next several years. Pennsylvania's power
10 sector emissions will again start to rise and zero
11 emitting resources are displaced by fossil
12 generation without carbon capture technologies.

13 The department's proposed CO2 budget
14 trading program by linking to the Regional
15 Greenhouse Gas Initiative, a proven market-based
16 platform will provide the most cost effective and
17 flexible option for reducing emissions from our
18 states diverse energy portfolio.

19 RGGI does not dictate which plans
20 operate and which ones don't. Instead, RGGI lets
21 companies determine how best to comply whether it's
22 through emission reduction technologies, skill
23 switching or the acquisition of allowances or
24 offsets. This is not a new concept to Pennsylvania.
25 RGGI's emission allowance design mirrors other

1 successful air pollution reduction programs in which
2 our state has already participated.

3 Compliance costs and administration
4 has been independently maintained successful in
5 terms of price discovery, transparency and
6 transaction costs. As we've already heard, RGGI has
7 helped neighboring states reduce their emissions,
8 lower energy prices and create jobs.

9 And by linking to RGGI we can return
10 proceeds to our state for investment in an array of
11 programs that can include energy efficiency and
12 resiliency, clean energy projects, carbon capture,
13 community and job assistance and more.

14 In short, joining RGGI is the most
15 sensible and constructive approach to reduce carbon
16 dioxide emissions. As more and more states,
17 utilities and companies implement decarbonization
18 commitments, Pennsylvania's economic competitiveness
19 involved in energy help will hinge on clean energy
20 innovation and deployment.

21 The proposed rulemaking is a crucial
22 first step towards that future. Failure to act will
23 only result in Pennsylvania falling behind in new
24 investment growth while worsening the already
25 apparent and detrimental impact of climate change.

1 In closing, PEC supports the work, the
2 department to advance this proposal for finalization
3 by 2022. We will be submitting additional technical
4 comments for consideration as well.

5 Thank you again for the opportunity to
6 comment.

7 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you John.

8 Our next person is Vanessa Lynch.

9 MS. LYNCH: Hi. My name is Vanessa
10 Lynch. I'm speaking today as a private citizen but
11 I work for Mom's Clean Air Force, a community of
12 over 100,000 moms and dads in Pennsylvania united
13 against air pollution to protect our children's
14 health and fight for the importance of equitable
15 solutions in addressing air pollution.

16 I am here in support of the carbon
17 dioxide budget trading program which will allow
18 Pennsylvania to link to RGGI.

19 My family and I including my two
20 children live in the suburbs of Pittsburgh. We live
21 in an area close to the Cheswick Generating Station.
22 While at the store one day near this coal-fired
23 power plant, I came out to a rain storm. I decided
24 to make a run for it to the car as we all do when
25 stranded without an umbrella.

1 But as I sped to the car, I realized
2 though it was quite warm out, there were visible
3 bits of what I later realized was soot falling with
4 the rain. It's hard to ignore chunks of garbage
5 falling on your head but that's what we're being
6 asked to do when we allow coal-fired power plants to
7 continue to operate without carbon dioxide pollution
8 limits despite knowing how much air pollution they
9 create.

10 In addition to this coal-fired power
11 plant in my community, we have a fracking well cab
12 nearby which also releases health and climate
13 impacting air pollution. Because of these polluting
14 operations, southwest Pennsylvanians like mine are
15 incredibly concerned about our children and the air
16 they breathe. Concern for my children's health in
17 the future is a major reason why I am supportive of
18 Pennsylvania linking to the Regional Greenhouse Gas
19 Initiative swiftly and without delay.

20 In a first of it's kind children's
21 home study by Columbia University, researchers found
22 from 2009 to 2014 air pollution reductions generated
23 by RGGI such as harmful particulate matter or soot
24 from power plants had reduced asthma attacks,
25 preterm births, low birth weight and childhood

1 autism which researchers conservatively estimated
2 avoided health costs of up to \$350 million.

3 RGGI is one part of what needs to be a
4 comprehensive approach to air and climate pollution
5 in our state. The current carbon dioxide emissions
6 reductions being advocated for by RGGI in
7 conjunction with the recent work the DEP is doing to
8 address climate warming methane and toxic volatile
9 organic compound emissions from oil and gas
10 operations are the start of a real plan to address
11 climate change and the air pollution affecting our
12 children.

13 Included in this comprehensive
14 approach must be a discussion of equity. Seeking
15 out the voices and input of those disproportionately
16 impacted by power plant pollution ensuring the fair
17 distribution of power plant updates across all of
18 the power sector and investing RGGI proceeds back
19 into those same disproportionately impacted
20 communities must occur.

21 Our black, brown, indigenous and poor
22 communities should not be asked to bear the brunt of
23 the harm created by our power consumption. With
24 RGGI, power companies will have an incentive to
25 invest in cleaner and zero carbon energy like solar

1 and wind while improving efficiency in reducing air
2 pollution.

3 We will not make meaningful progress
4 in cleaning up our air in Pennsylvania until we
5 clean up our power sector. And that means turning
6 to zero pollution, electric generation including
7 renewable solar and wind.

8 Our children deserve a future where
9 equity, public health and clean air are valued.

10 Thank you.

11 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Vanessa.

12 Our speaker number 20 today is Liz
13 Robinson.

14 MS. ROBINSON: Can you hear me?

15 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, I can Liz. Please
16 go ahead.

17 MS. ROBINSON: I'm Liz Robinson,
18 Executive Director of the Philadelphia Solar Energy
19 Association. PSEA strongly supports the carbon
20 trading program and urges that the regulations be
21 promptly finalized and implemented.

22 The ten existing RGGI states as you've
23 heard have benefited significantly from this carbon
24 market and Pennsylvania needs to participate in RGGI
25 for a whole host of reasons, environmental,

1 economic, and health, our principle.

2 Existing RGGI states have reinvested
3 the vast majority of carbon allowance revenues into
4 energy efficiency and renewable energy in their
5 states. This investment in clean energy has
6 accomplished several important goals. Contrary to
7 what the coal and gas industries would have you
8 believe, it has reduced energy bills for all classes
9 of customers and it has actually lowered the price
10 of energy by reducing the demand for energy.

11 As evidenced in a recent Acadia study,
12 a carbon market will be extremely beneficial to all
13 Pennsylvanians by helping to stabilize their energy
14 market, providing security to consumers and
15 producers alike, by lowering greenhouse gas
16 emissions significantly and steadily, by creating
17 tens of thousands of local jobs statewide.

18 Granted, we may lose some of the
19 remaining 1,300 coal jobs in PA but estimates
20 suggest that RGGI will create as many as 100,000
21 clean energy jobs statewide. This is absolutely
22 vital for our economic recovery given that we've
23 lost approximately half a million jobs since March
24 of this year.

25 RGGI will spur the economy statewide

1 including such important sectors as manufacturing,
2 agriculture and IT. RGGI will improve public health
3 by lower asthma rates and other respiratory disease
4 and it will lower energy prices and costs.

5 As the third highest in air carbon
6 pollution in the nation, Pennsylvania releases more
7 carbon into the atmosphere than all the other RGGI
8 states combined. To meet our goal of reducing
9 emissions 80 percent by 2015, Pennsylvania must
10 reduce carbon emissions at least three percent per
11 year while the Intergovernmental Panel On Climate
12 Change finds that global emissions need to be cut in
13 half by 2030 and be reduced to net zero by 2050
14 which for Pennsylvania would mean a five percent
15 reduction per year for the next ten years.

16 To achieve the necessary carbon
17 reductions, Pennsylvania will need to implement a
18 sweep of complimentary policies to quickly reduce
19 energy waste and increase our energy production from
20 carbon-free sources. In order to maximize consumer
21 benefit, it's key to reduce carbon emissions cost
22 effectively through a market-based approach like
23 RGGI.

24 Pennsylvania strongly recommends -
25 sorry PSEA strongly recommends that Pennsylvania

1 invest in the majority of the annual RGGI auction
2 proceeds into energy efficiency and renewable energy
3 projects within our borders. Not only is this the
4 most cost effective way to improve our quality
5 statewide by driving down carbon emissions, it will
6 create tens of thousands of local jobs, spare
7 economic development in every corner of the state
8 and reduce energy costs.

9 Pennsylvania has a track record of
10 supporting high quality solar programs including the
11 largest solarized program in the country, Solarize
12 Philly. The solar share requirement and the
13 alternative energy portfolio standard and solar
14 projects supported by our regional sustainable
15 energy funds and DEP.

16 It's now time to dramatically increase
17 the scale of those efforts. Solar energy needs to
18 be rapidly expanded in Pennsylvania not just to
19 reduce emissions but to help get our economy back on
20 track after this pandemic and to strengthen parts of
21 our state's economy that are having severe
22 difficulty such as dairy farms and other parts of
23 the agricultural industry.

24 Pennsylvania has been a national
25 leader in energy since the 1700s when coal was first

1 put to use. Coal, oil, nuclear and natural gas have
2 each taken a turn in the spotlight. Unfortunately,
3 Pennsylvania's nuclear fleet which now provides 42
4 percent of our electricity will not last forever.
5 When the nuclear plants retire, we must replace them
6 with clean energy. To do that, we must expand our
7 renewal energy industry now.

8 With climate change bearing down, we
9 must transition to clean energy principally energy
10 efficiency solar and wind. Pennsylvania can
11 continue to be an energy leader if we act resolutely
12 and with deliberate speed. The Philadelphia Solar
13 Energy Association urges the Environmental Quality
14 Board to support RGGI and implement it as quickly as
15 possible.

16 Thank you for the opportunity.

17 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Liz.

18 Our next speaker number 21 is Tom
19 Jenik.

20 Are you with us Tom? Okay.

21 MR. JAGIELA: He is unmuted but I
22 guess they're having problems.

23 MS. GRIFFIN: Okay.

24 We're going to go on then to the next
25 person and we'll come back to Tom.

1 Number 22, Barbara Benton.

2 Is Barbara -.

3 MR. JAGIELA: Barbara is - they're
4 having issues. She's not connected right now
5 though.

6 MS. GRIFFIN: Okay.

7 We'll come back to, back to Barbara
8 then.

9 So number 23. Is Lisa Rose with us?

10 MR. JAGIELA: She is not on the line
11 either.

12 MS. GRIFFIN: I'm sorry? Sorry Darek.

13 MR. JAGIELA: She is not on the line
14 either.

15 MS. GRIFFIN: Okay.

16 How about we try and go to number 24,
17 Steven Greenspan?

18 MR. GREENSPAN: Related to viruses
19 such as Covid-19. These damaged are not evenly
20 distributed. They tend to be concentrated in
21 communities that are located near or downwind from
22 the factories that emit greenhouse and other toxic
23 gases.

24 These environmental justice
25 communities are typically black or brown or low

1 income. For decades they have been unjustly
2 burdened with the toxic emissions of nearby power
3 generating plants and, therefore, they, the EJ
4 communities, should be the major beneficiary of the
5 income derived from RGGI.

6 RGGI is not a cure all for climate
7 change or social injustice but it can be a vital
8 part of our state's response. The states that
9 participated in RGGI have reduced emissions for
10 fossil fuels far more than other states that did not
11 cap carbon emissions. The revenue generated from
12 selling allowances have been invested in clean
13 energy and energy efficiency.

14 The DEP projects similar benefits to
15 Pennsylvania including a net increase of 27,000 jobs
16 and hundreds of millions in state revenue. These
17 are strong arguments for linking to RGGI and I urge
18 the EQB and DEP to advance the draft rulemaking with
19 urgency and with the following considerations.

20 A recent study from the University of
21 Massachusetts documented an unintended consequence
22 of RGGI that needs to be avoided in Pennsylvania.
23 Under RGGI carbon pricing and allowances encourage
24 some companies to shift power production to dirtier
25 factories. The consequence was increased sulfur

1 dioxide emissions near EJ communities that are in
2 large population sectors. This should not be
3 allowed to happen in Pennsylvania.

4 I urge the department to adjust the
5 rules and to use it's authority to prohibit
6 increasing emissions from any and all fossil fuel
7 plants once RGGI is implemented and to ensure that
8 EJ communities are not subject to increased
9 pollution as industry adjusts to RGGI.

10 Secondly, the revenue generated
11 through RGGI should not be placed in the state's
12 general fund or used to service the public debt or
13 other investments unrelated to environmental repair
14 and justice.

15 An appropriate use of the revenue
16 would be to reduce demand for power by improving
17 infrastructure and insulation especially in rural
18 and urban EJ communities. Another appropriate use
19 would be to encourage new jobs in sustainable energy
20 and to help workers in the fossil fuel industry
21 transition to stable, safe jobs in a green economy.

22 In conclusion, I simply ask that the
23 DEP and EQB align the actions of our state with
24 amendment one section 27 of our state constitution.
25 The people have a right to clean air, pure water and

1 to the preservation of the natural scenic, historic
2 and aesthetic values of the environment. Your
3 decisions are vital to ensuring that future
4 generations will have clean air and environmental
5 justice. Thank you for your time and consideration.

6 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Steven. Okay.
7 We're going to try with - to get Tom -
8 Tom Jenik to speak.

9 MR. JENIK: Okay.
10 Can you hear me?

11 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can hear you
12 Tom.

13 MR. JENIK: Oh good. Great.

14 MR. JENIK: Good afternoon. My name
15 is Thomas Jenik. I live in Swarthmore,
16 Pennsylvania.

17 Hello? Hello, can you hear me?

18 MS. GRIFFIN: Okay.

19 Is this Tom?

20 MR. JENIK: You can? Yes.

21 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, I - okay Tom. We
22 can hear you. Go ahead please.

23 MR. JENIK: Okay. Thank you.

24 Good afternoon. My name is Thomas
25 Jenik. I live in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania. I've

1 been a resident of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
2 for 30 years.

3 I love to be outside. As a child I
4 remember lying on my back in the grass looking up at
5 clouds changing shape in the sky. I still do that
6 today.

7 I remember recently some passersbys
8 asking my wife and I what we were watching while
9 sitting in our lawn chairs set up on the grassy
10 strip between the curb and the sidewalk. We pointed
11 to the sunset and they looked as well.

12 As a child I was a member of the
13 Junior Audubon and I guess I'm still an amateur bird
14 watcher today. When I see something beautiful like
15 a bird I consider it a gift. It reminds me of my
16 aunt who used to say Tommy stop. Look at that
17 flower. Look at that sunset.

18 I want to preserve the environment so
19 future generations can have the same experience. My
20 mother and I used to feed the ducks along the
21 Passaic River in New Jersey when I was a child. She
22 told me that when she was young, they used to swim
23 in that river but could no longer do so because it
24 was polluted.

25 In the summer my family would take one

1 of my father's two weeks vacations to rent a
2 bungalow at the Jersey Shore. I remember asking
3 about the black gobs of goo on the sand. We removed
4 it from our feet with kerosene. It had come from an
5 oil spill. All of us should be able to enjoy the
6 beach and enjoy the water and it is our obligation
7 to preserve it.

8 I have an Undergraduate Degree in
9 Economics and a Master's Degree in Business. At one
10 point in time water and air were considered quote
11 free. Now finally we have the capacity to calculate
12 the costs of our actions or non-actions. Some would
13 say we are now calculating the third party effect or
14 externalities of our actions. If polluted air
15 contributes to respiratory disease, it follows that
16 those who cause respiratory disease should pay for
17 it.

18 We know the effects of greenhouse gas
19 emissions. It is clear that our actions can
20 contribute or mitigate the effects of global
21 warming. It is undeniable that global warming is
22 happening. Scientists suggest that we have less
23 than ten years to dramatically reduce our CO2
24 emissions to avoid catastrophic climate change.

25 It appears to me that through our

1 participation on RGGI we will put a price on
2 pollution. Global warming is increasing the
3 severity of asthma, respiratory disease, heart
4 disease and many other health problems.

5 I have coronary artery disease and had
6 a heart attack six years ago. I'm doing what I can
7 personally do, eat a good diet, exercise, maintain a
8 healthy weight, not smoke, reduce stress. I can't
9 change hereditary factors. I can only - I can
10 change the air quality. And I particularly
11 appreciate the opportunity that you have provided to
12 voice my opinion.

13 I fly infrequently enough that I still
14 want a window seat. I feel great hope and
15 excitement when I look out and see wind turbines on
16 ridges in Pennsylvania. We are the third dirtiest
17 state in terms of our carbon pollution. Seeing
18 those turbines give me hope that we can do much
19 more.

20 We have a responsibility to meet the
21 target of lowering emissions by at least three
22 percent a year. RGGI will ensure that we can meet
23 that target. It is projected to reduce carbon
24 emissions by 180 tons. The unemployment rate is
25 currently 13 percent. We know future employment is

1 not going to come from fossil fuels and we have a
2 responsibility to those whose jobs may be displaced.

3 But we can contribute to future
4 employment in the fields of alternative sources of
5 energy and energy efficiency. We can use the money
6 that is generated by RGGI to train workers in these
7 emerging fields. It is projected that we can create
8 more than 27,000 new jobs.

9 I think that we have a collective
10 responsibility. That's what Commonwealth suggests.
11 We live in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Let us
12 act like it is our Commonwealth.

13 Thank you very much.

14 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Tom.

15 I'm told that Barbara has called in.

16 Is Barbara Benton with us?

17 MS. BENTON: I am on the same line.

18 Can you hear me?

19 MS. GRIFFIN: I can, Barbara. Please
20 go ahead.

21 MS. BENTON: Okay. Good.

22 My name is Barbara Benton. I've been
23 a resident of Pennsylvania since 1969 and currently
24 living in Swarthmore and I'm testifying as a, as a
25 resident.

1 It is so refreshing and exciting to
2 hear of, hear of a plan that is truly good news for
3 all of us that can be accomplished with the
4 excellent planning that is currently going into it,
5 the results from surrounding states and the
6 government resources we already have in
7 Pennsylvania.

8 The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative
9 called RGGI is the nation's oldest carbon market.
10 RGGI harnesses market forces to reduce carbon
11 emissions as cost effectively as possible. It has
12 been a big success in the ten states where it is in
13 place, cutting climate pollution by a third and
14 raising nearly three billion dollars to invest in
15 clean energy and other purposes. It should be used
16 and it may become that as people in this
17 Commonwealth see what it can do for us.

18 In 2019 a miracle happened. The
19 Pennsylvania Commonwealth passed an amendment to our
20 constitution stating that Pennsylvanians have a
21 right to clean air and water. RGGI is a critical
22 and already tested way to move in that direction
23 bringing in revenue that will be spent on
24 conservation efforts.

25 The timing is so right for

1 Pennsylvania to become part of the RGGI efforts of
2 the group - of the group of Penn State surrounding
3 us from Main to Virginia. We will in fact increase
4 enormously the positive effects that some states
5 have already had, as Pennsylvania is the third
6 dirtiest state in the country in terms of carbon
7 emissions.

8 MS. SHIRLEY: Hey Barbara, I'm sorry
9 to interrupt. This is Jessica Shirley. Can you
10 mute your computer?

11 MS. BENTON: Mute it? Is that better?
12 No. Okay. Let me - or you can hold on just one,
13 just one second. I'm going to try to hit the red
14 circle on the right.

15 MR. JAGIELA: The X. This is new to
16 them.

17 MS. BENTON: Okay.

18 Here are some exciting statistics. It
19 is projected to reduce emissions in Pennsylvania's
20 electrical sector by 25 percent in the next 13
21 years.

22 MS. GRIFFIN: No. It's still hard to
23 - that still didn't work. We're still getting a lot
24 of feedback.

25 MS. BENTON: Okay.

1 Do you want me to submit this in
2 writing?

3 MS. GRIFFIN: Yeah, that would be,
4 that would be great.

5 MS. BENTON: Okay. I will do that.

6 MS. GRIFFIN: I think it's still - I
7 think it's picking up your phone and your computer.
8 I mean I don't know if there's a way you can go to
9 another room?

10 MS. BENTON: Oh. I'm reading off my
11 computer unfortunately. Hold on.

12 Does that help any? No. Okay.

13 I'm sorry. Thank you very much. My
14 apologies for technical difficulties. Okay. Bye

15 I turned the sound off this way.

16 MS. GRIFFIN: Okay.

17 We're still hearing you. We're
18 hearing you now.

19 MS. BENTON: I thought as long as I
20 was far enough away from that -.

21 Darek can you mute her?

22 MS. BENTON: Why would I be getting a
23 double thing?

24 MS. GRIFFIN: Barbara we can -.

25 MS. BENTON: Well WebEx sucks.

1 MS. GRIFFIN: Oh my gosh. Barbara.
2 I think - is there somebody that is also -.

3 MS. BENTON: Nothing what I can see.
4 Rose -.

5 MS. GRIFFIN: He's never had - can we
6 see who's talking?

7 MR. JAGIELA: I can't see anyone else
8 talking right now.

9 MS. BENTON: Well, all right. That -
10 well that didn't work.

11 MR. JAGIELA: Okay.
12 I don't see anyone now.

13 MS. GRIFFIN: I think maybe someone
14 else in - someone else is logged in. Like there
15 might be two people in the same location that are
16 logged in.

17 MR. JAGIELA: It was something else
18 going on. It was a bug. I had to expel Tom from
19 the meeting and it stopped finally. Muting
20 unusually did nothing to stop it.

21 MS. GRIFFIN: Okay. Okay.

22 Sorry about that everyone. We've had
23 a number of these virtual public hearings and we've
24 never had anything like that happen before. So
25 hopefully that was the one time. Thank you Jessica

1 and Darek.

2 So our next speaker is number 25 Diane
3 Nissen.

4 MS. NISSEN: Hi. My name is Diane
5 Nissen and I live in Haverford, Pennsylvania. Thank
6 you for the opportunity to testify about this very
7 important issue.

8 Climate change is real and it's
9 certainly caused by human activity. I know from
10 personal experience that the temperature in
11 Pennsylvania has dramatically changed in the last 65
12 years.

13 In 1955 my parents built a house on
14 Lake Wallenpaupack in the Pocono's. They splurged
15 on a stone fireplace because although we only were
16 going to spend summers there, the temperature at
17 night often dipped into the 40s in July and August.
18 We used that fireplace so often that we burned
19 through three grates.

20 Fast forward to 2005 and my parents
21 had to install air conditioning because the
22 temperature at night was often in the 80s.
23 Absolutely unheard of in the 1950s and 1960s.

24 Besides a temperature shift, there's
25 been other negative changes. The lake now has so

1 much algae that this year we had to stop swimming in
2 late July because we were told there could be health
3 risks.

4 So I have no doubt that climate has
5 changed dramatically in Pennsylvania even over the
6 last 65 years. I have seen firsthand the impacts
7 that climate change is already causing here in
8 Pennsylvania. And that's why I think it's critical
9 that we join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative
10 and start taking immediate steps to reduce our
11 impact on climate change.

12 RGGI has a proven track record of
13 moving state and regional economies away from dirty
14 fossil fuels, erratic energy prices and antiquated
15 power plants and toward clean technologies and
16 innovations.

17 Just as designed, the RGGI has lowered
18 the region's carbon emissions. RGGI has helped the
19 ten member states cut carbon pollution from power
20 plants by more than half. The pollution cap is
21 slated to decline by two and a half percent a year
22 to 2020 and three percent a year between 2021 and
23 2030.

24 Because other pollutants were also
25 reduced, RGGI created health benefits valued at \$5.7

1 billion. Air pollution reductions from RGGI will
2 particularly benefit those most impacted by poor air
3 quality such as children, seniors and low income and
4 environmental justice communities.

5 Pennsylvania is the fourth largest
6 greenhouse gas emitter in the country. This means
7 we are adversely affecting the health and well-being
8 of our citizens and contributing to climate change.
9 Many worried that cutting emissions cuts jobs, in
10 particular coal jobs. But those jobs are
11 disappearing with or without joining RGGI.

12 And fracking, besides contaminating
13 water and polluting the air, may not be viable in
14 the future as many of those companies have filed for
15 bankruptcy.

16 So let's move on and away from carbon
17 pollution. According to analysis by the state's
18 department of environmental protection, joining RGGI
19 would reduce carbon emissions in the state by an
20 estimated 188 million tons between 2022 and 2030 and
21 would decrease the electricity prices, produce a net
22 increase of more than 30,000 and boost
23 Pennsylvania's gross state product by \$19 billion.

24 How can we not do this? I urge our
25 state to join with the ten states already benefiting

1 from their membership in RGGI. Thank you for giving
2 me this opportunity to testify.

3 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Diane.

4 Our next speaker number 26 is Tiffany
5 Taulton.

6 MS. TAULTON: Can you hear me?

7 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can hear you
8 Tiffany. Please continue.

9 MS. TAULTON: Thank you.

10 Good afternoon. Thank you for this
11 opportunity to speak on this important topic. My
12 name is Tiffany Taulton and I will be providing
13 comments on behalf of Hazelwood Initiative
14 Incorporated, a community development corporation
15 focused on affordable housing.

16 I'm the Director of Community
17 Initiatives and a Hazelwood resident. Let me start
18 by saying that Hazelwood Initiative Inc. supports
19 Pennsylvania's integration into the Regional
20 Greenhouse Gas Initiative and hopes the money raised
21 can be used to help communities like ours to
22 transition to become healthier communities and full
23 participants in the new green economy.

24 Greater Hazelwood is an environmental
25 justice community in Pittsburgh located in the

1 southern bend of the Monongahela River.
2 Approximately 40 percent of our population is black
3 and the average income is just \$24,000 with over
4 half of our renters earning less than \$15,000 a
5 year.

6 Once a thriving community of 13,000
7 people, we were the site of the LTD steelworks, the
8 last steel plant to close within the Pittsburgh city
9 limits in 1998. Since then, we've lost 65 percent
10 of our population and almost all of our jobs. We
11 have no grocery store, no clothing store, no
12 community school, no gym and only a few years ago
13 were we able to reopen our library.

14 What we do have is a recycle plant, we
15 do have diesel trains running behind our homes and
16 diesel trucks running down the middle of our
17 community. Our business district along state route
18 885. What we do have are high rates of asthma,
19 autism and diabetes, all of which have been
20 positively correlated with air pollution.

21 What we do have is high unemployment
22 and underemployment. But how can we expect parents
23 to work when they have to take off every time their
24 kid has an asthma attack. Last year Pittsburgh made
25 national headlines when it was named the most

1 dangerous city in the country for a black woman to
2 live.

3 Black women are earning less here and
4 suffering more negative health outcomes. The state
5 should take every possible action to correct this
6 injustice and that includes joining the Regional
7 Greenhouse Gas Initiative RGGI to reduce the harmful
8 air pollutants that affect vulnerable communities
9 like ours leading to life-threatening conditions
10 such as preeclampsia, pre-term births, low birth
11 weights, asthma attacks and lost wages.

12 Recent studies have even linked higher
13 air pollution rates to more severe cases of Covid-19
14 in minority communities. Joining RGGI will not
15 eliminate all air pollution or prevent every
16 predicted danger of climate change from being
17 realized. But it will greatly reduce pollution and
18 improve the lives of everyone, particularly those
19 who have been unfairly burdened by pollution for
20 decades.

21 Additionally, on behalf of our
22 community that has suffered these last 40 years, we
23 at Hazelwood Initiative Inc. request that the funds
24 earned from RGGI be used to help workers transition
25 to green jobs and to help legacy communities like

1 ours be set to rights.

2 The impact of joining the Regional
3 Greenhouse Gas Initiative will be that much greater
4 if the funds are used to help communities like
5 Hazelwood to purchase solar panels, train residents
6 in solar panel marketing and installation and lower
7 our carbon footprint through home energy efficiency
8 upgrades.

9 Lastly, the funds could also be used
10 for more targeted pollution reductions in
11 environmental justice communities like ours that are
12 situated along major transit corridors. No one
13 should ever have to risk their health or that of
14 their child to walk to the library.

15 Please consider dedicating funding to
16 help bus and recycling companies operating in EJ
17 communities to convert their fleets to electric
18 vehicles. With that I conclude my comments. Thank
19 you for your time.

20 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Tiffany.

21 Our next speaker number 27 is Henry
22 McKay.

23 MR. MCKAY: Good afternoon.

24 My name is Henry McKay and I am
25 speaking on behalf of Solar United Neighbors in

1 support of Pennsylvania joining the Regional
2 Greenhouse Gas Initiative or RGGI.

3 Solar United Neighbors is a national
4 nonprofit organization dedicated to helping people
5 go solar, joint together and fight for their energy
6 rights. In Pennsylvania, we are organizing a
7 grassroots movement of solar owners who believe that
8 the energy system of the future must be one that is
9 clean, fair and shares its benefits broadly. We
10 believe that RGGI is an important tool to help us
11 achieve this vision.

12 The solar owners in our network
13 represent a subset of the over 26,000 solar
14 installations across the Commonwealth. All over
15 Pennsylvania people, businesses and communities are
16 investing in solar to dramatically reduce their
17 environmental impact and to save money. But these
18 solar owners are not satisfied with just having
19 solar panels on their own roof house. They want to
20 build a fair and equitable energy system that
21 benefits everyone. This is impossible without
22 policy change.

23 RGGI can help create a cleaner fairer
24 energy system. By capping and reducing climate
25 forcing carbon pollution, RGGI helps level the

1 playing field between fossil fuels and renewables.
2 And by reinvesting it's proceeds into expanding
3 access to renewables and supporting fossil fuel
4 impacted frontline communities, RGGI can accelerate
5 this transition in a way that leads no one behind.

6 Let's be clear. RGGI or not, coal is
7 on its way out in Pennsylvania. But simply leaving
8 energy markets to transition on their own would not
9 only be insufficient from a climate action
10 perspective, but would also be unjust.

11 Many Pennsylvania communities still
12 depend on coal for jobs and tax revenues. These
13 communities through their hard work and ingenuity
14 have powered Pennsylvania and this nation for the
15 past century. Many of the families who Solar United
16 Neighbors has helped to go solar live in these
17 communities and have worked in the coal industry
18 themselves.

19 Some of them are speaking in support
20 of RGGI at these very hearings. We owe these
21 families and the communities a just transition to
22 clean energy economy. RGGI can support this just
23 transition for coal-dependent communities in a
24 number of ways including grants to workforce
25 development organizations, community colleges and

1 high schools for clean energy job training.

2 Grants to fund the remediation and
3 redevelopment of areas used to mine, process and
4 burn coal and grants for solar installations on
5 public buildings which would lower energy costs for
6 local governments while supporting solar jobs.

7 Our current energy system is
8 inequitable and expensive. On average, low income
9 households in Pennsylvania pay two to three times
10 more for energy than wealthier households pay as a
11 share of their income. In Pittsburgh where I live,
12 black and Latinic households are approximately
13 double the citywide average. In a pandemic that has
14 hit the most vulnerable among us the hardest, these
15 inequities are being exacerbated.

16 But if we used RGGI revenue to make
17 solar energy affordable to low income Pennsylvania
18 households, we can build a more just energy system
19 while also reducing carbon pollution.

20 Pennsylvania has been a leader in the
21 energy technologies of 19th and 20th centuries. We
22 can continue this leadership by embracing the energy
23 technologies of the 21st century. RGGI is an
24 opportunity to accomplish this while protecting our
25 health, our environment and the most vulnerable

1 among us. Thank you for your time.

2 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Henry.

3 Our next speaker number 28 is Jonathan
4 Warnock.

5 MR. WARNOCK: Hello and thank you for
6 my - for your attention.

7 My name is Jonathan Warnock and I am
8 an Associate Professor of Geosciences at Indiana
9 University of Pennsylvania.

10 As a scientist I study Antarctica, its
11 oceans and it's ice sheets over the past 15 million
12 years. I am a climate scientist.

13 I am here speaking as a citizen of
14 Pennsylvania and representing the borough council of
15 Indiana Borough, although I have been asked to
16 mention that one of our 12 member council wanted
17 more time to consider RGGI. And so I do not
18 represent council completely unanimously.

19 Joining the RGGI is extremely
20 important. The effects of climate change are here
21 and already affecting Western Pennsylvania. In
22 Indiana we struggle with storm water. Homes
23 routinely flood. Properties are extensively
24 damaged. An increased amount of tax money is spent
25 managing storm water every year.

1 Record breaking and new record
2 breaking rainfall occurs in Indiana County most
3 years now. Fields flood damaging or destroying
4 crops and leaving farmers struggling to pay the
5 bills.

6 The science is clear. This is a
7 result of climate change. We need RGGI to begin to
8 address climate change. We can no longer wait to
9 push these problems onto future generations.

10 The effects of climate changes in
11 Pennsylvania do not stop at flooding and
12 infrastructure. Climate change related winter and
13 spring temperature fluctuations are affecting our
14 trees. This year, our fruiting trees budded out
15 early as we had an unusually warm winter. A very
16 typical May frost then killed the buds without
17 climate change, these trees would not yet have
18 budded and they would have produced fruit. Instead,
19 our trees this year went bare.

20 The impact of this loss range from the
21 level of the individual homeowner up to large
22 orchards and businesses losing revenue. Much of
23 Pennsylvania's industry from agriculture to logging
24 to tourism is tied to our woods. We can no longer
25 wait to address climate change. The more our

1 forests will suffer.

2 This will reduce our quality of life,
3 change our way of life and lead to continued job
4 loses. Forests aren't the only problem. Rising
5 temperatures and flooding are already affecting
6 other portions of the agriculture sector as well as
7 industry and public health. These changes are only
8 expected to be magnified in the future. We need to
9 take action to stop these loses.

10 The economies and quality of life in
11 Indiana Borough and Indiana County have long been
12 tied to coal. However, as automation replaces
13 miners and car plant workers, energy industry jobs
14 have declined. Like much of Western Pennsylvania,
15 Indiana is struggling with unemployment, a decreased
16 tax base and poverty.

17 RGGI can help to solve these problems
18 by creating jobs, job training programs and
19 providing tax revenues they can use to support coal
20 country. Further, RGGI can work. We have seen
21 already how similar initiatives in Western
22 Pennsylvania and coal fired power plants have helped
23 to reduce sulfates in the atmosphere and associated
24 danger of acid rain.

25 The states that have already joined

1 RGGI have seen both decrease in carbon emissions and
2 raised billions to invest in clean energy viable
3 training programs that lead to training jobs and
4 actual jobs. Pennsylvania has benefited from coal
5 and now we have a responsibility to address the
6 damage that coal has done to our climate.

7 Indiana County has been a leader in
8 this area with two successful solar coops having
9 lead to more than two dozen homes including my own
10 going solar over the past two years. Indiana
11 Borough has been leading in Western Pennsylvania in
12 the fight against climate change.

13 Joining RGGI fits with Indiana
14 Borough's climate action plan. It will improve
15 public health, save money, create jobs and protect
16 our natural resources.

17 The Borough of Indiana thanks you for
18 your time and attention. We ask you to support
19 Pennsylvania joining the New England and mid-
20 Atlantic RGGI for the sake of our community, our
21 economy and future generations.

22 Thank you for your time.

23 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Jonathan.

24 Our next speaker number 29 is Hugh
25 Taft-Morales.

1 MR. TAFT-MORALES: Thank you.

2 My name is Hugh Taft-Morales and I
3 serve as a clergy leader of the Philadelphia Ethical
4 Society on Rittenhouse Square in Philadelphia.
5 Thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of
6 Pennsylvania becoming a responsible member in the
7 greenhouse gas initiative known as RGGI.

8 As clergy for a humanist denomination
9 dedicated to living more ethical ideas, I appeal to
10 your moral consciences to seize this opportunity to
11 do what's right. Those who resist RGGI may think
12 the status quo is good enough. And they think that
13 RGGI will weight the energy industry down with
14 impractical carbon caps or unreasonable timelines.

15 That's not true. Please don't
16 compromise your ethical principles or our collective
17 welfare. Don't sacrifice long-term economic growth
18 benefiting many for short-term profit benefiting
19 few. Don't settle for doing what's possible. I'm
20 asking you to change what's possible. That's often
21 what ethics demands of us.

22 RGGI would reset how we do business in
23 Philadelphia. Our state suffers from what ethicists
24 call the tragedy of commons, a term introduced
25 almost two centuries ago that explains that

1 individuals acting out of narrow self-interest can
2 gravely harm the common good by depleting shared
3 resources.

4 And the resource we are focusing on
5 today is a most precious and vital one, clean air.
6 It's a fundamental part of our state's natural
7 wealth. So let's live up to the legal and moral
8 underpinnings of our Commonwealth.

9 I appeal to our regulatory and elected
10 leaders to see how the interests of all as
11 individuals and as the collective are served by
12 protecting the shared resources of air. Let's keep
13 our eyes on the prize by assuring that the funds
14 raised through RGGI go to the clean air fund not to
15 the general fund.

16 Now a key ethical value inherit in
17 RGGI is equity. And as we guide our state through
18 an inevitable process of transitioning to
19 sustainable energy, let's make sure everyone
20 benefits.

21 RGGI will help assure that the true
22 cost of energy production are the responsibility of
23 energy producers. When energy companies throw
24 carbon into the atmosphere while we're awarding
25 stockholders with short-term profits, millions of

1 voters pay the price. Every citizen of Pennsylvania
2 deserves clean air. And energy company stockholders
3 deserve long-term sustainability and clean
4 consciences.

5 RGGI's commitment to adjust transition
6 to sustainable energy would benefit energy workers
7 throughout the state adversely affected both by
8 pollution and by the inevitable shrinking of the
9 fossil fuels industry.

10 The creation of good green jobs would
11 revitalize Pennsylvania's economic health and
12 benefit unemployed and underemployed citizens by
13 adding 27,000 jobs by 2030. RGGI would help those
14 suffering from asthma as I do and suffering from
15 other respiratory challenges.

16 RGGI would serve environmental justice
17 by offering development opportunities to
18 marginalized communities as explained by the center
19 for coal field justice. And RGGI would benefit
20 future generations by slowing climate change.

21 RGGI would benefit energy industry by
22 helping them focus on the long game assuring that
23 energy companies don't miss out on the upcoming
24 renewable energy boom. It seems the environmental
25 rights amendment of 1971, Pennsylvania's

1 constitution has guaranteed that the people have a
2 right to clean air and water.

3 It's promised that the natural scenic,
4 historic and asthetic environment is stewarded
5 responsibly. I mean our constitution is the bridge
6 between our ethical ideals and the practical
7 necessity of managing our Commonwealth.

8 So I'm asking that you seize this
9 historic opportunity. Our political and regulatory
10 leaders must be ethical leaders. Rarely has such a
11 moral path forward been so clear.

12 So please, help us into a sustainable
13 future by embracing RGGI as it has been put forward
14 by the Pennsylvania Department of the Environment.

15 Thank you.

16 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Hugh.

17 Speaker number 30 Russell Hicks, are
18 you with us? Russell have you joined us? Okay.

19 We'll have to come back and see if
20 Russell joins us.

21 Speaker number 31 Dwayne Royster,
22 excuse me.

23 MR. ROYSTER: Hello. I am here. It's
24 Dwayne Royster.

25 MS. GRIFFIN: Great. Please start.

1 MR. ROYSTER: Good afternoon.

2 I'm Bishop Dwayne Royster, Founding
3 Executive Director of Power and Interfaith Movement.
4 We're 120 plus congregations in ten counties across
5 the state of Pennsylvania that are committed to
6 building life, liberty and democracy for people all
7 across our state. We are people of faith and moral
8 courage.

9 I am standing here today in favor of
10 Pennsylvania joining RGGI. With some key equity
11 principles built in from the beginning. What
12 matters to me most is that RGGI be constructed in a
13 way that centers repairing past harm done to
14 communities on the front lines of the extracted
15 fossil fuel economy and that RGGI invest in those
16 same communities.

17 Reducing carbon emissions does not
18 help all people equally. A general reduction of
19 carbon over ten states does not help the people who
20 often look like me, and I'm African-American, living
21 next to the toxic fossil fuel plant that is spewing
22 pollution into our lungs or piling waste near where
23 our children play.

24 In fact we need to center the voices
25 of people who have been excluded in the past.

1 Communities now identified by the Environmental
2 Protection Agency as EJ, or environmental justice
3 communities.

4 Each community needs to be recognized
5 with total sight and be individually tracked and
6 analyzed with all the data made transparent and
7 public. This data should continuously inform the
8 equitable implementation of RGGI.

9 The placed and people who have been
10 targeted the most of the fossil fuel economy need
11 the most investment in a just transition. We do
12 need to have a carbon market to incentivize carbon
13 reductions and we need to do it in a way that wraps
14 everyone into a healthy future.

15 We need to make sure that once again
16 the most marginalized communities are not excluded
17 from solutions. We need our legislatures and rule
18 makers to prioritize the people who have born the
19 greatest burden of the fossil fuel economy.

20 When our state adopts RGGI, let's make
21 sure we are perpetuating environmental racism and in
22 fact we are finding community-drive solutions that
23 work for everyone. Enacting RGGI in a way that
24 works for all Pennsylvanians means that every step
25 of the way there needs to be transparency and public

1 involvement, especially including black, brown, low
2 income rule and other people who have been
3 traditionally left out of governments.

4 Enacting RGGI in a way that works for
5 all Pennsylvanians means that the rule makers need
6 to be accountable to communities of real people, not
7 to corporations and fossil fuel lobbyists.

8 We appreciate it that the DEP listened
9 to our input about how to hold an inclusive public
10 comment session. We asked not to have six hour
11 hearings during the working day that exclude people
12 with jobs, people with childcare giving
13 responsibility.

14 Thank you for listening to this input
15 from our and other equity groups and scheduling
16 these public comments in a way that supports
17 participation of working people having known
18 timeslots for speaking, having morning, afternoon
19 and evening sessions and prioritizing diversity of
20 speakers.

21 We want our children to keep bringing
22 children into this world and to continue to build
23 the human legacy. We want our families to thrive
24 and to live without the fear there may not be a
25 stable world to live in. It is our moral duty to

1 eliminate our carbon footprint to protect our planet
2 and to nourish the generations to come.

3 RGGI is an enormous opportunity to
4 reduce destructive effects of carbon while investing
5 in a regenerative economic future. Let's make sure
6 RGGI is a plan featuring justice from the ground up.

7 Thank you for listening and hearing
8 our comments.

9 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Dwayne.

10 Speaker number 32 is Allen Drew.

11 MR. DREW: Hello, can you hear me?

12 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes Allen. Please go
13 ahead.

14 MR. DREW: Okay. Great.

15 Hello. Thank you for giving me the
16 opportunity to speak at this public hearing. My
17 name is Reverend Allen Drew. I've lived in
18 Northwest Philadelphia for the last 16 years. I'm a
19 commission pastor in the Christian Reformed Church
20 of North America or CRCNA and an east coast regional
21 organizer with the CRCNA's climate witness project
22 for CWP.

23 I'm speaking this morning as a
24 representative of nine Philadelphia churches in
25 faith communities, three Philadelphia Christian

1 schools and the CWP's broad network of 121 partner
2 churches and 1,286 partners.

3 My list of endorsers is continuing to
4 grow and I'll include the final list at the bottom
5 of my written testimony when I submit it.

6 My endorsers and I are speaking this
7 morning as people of Christian faith who
8 emphatically support the affirmation and
9 implementation of the Regional Greenhouse Gas
10 Initiative or RGGI in our state of Pennsylvania
11 along with a few adjustments to protect and
12 prioritize benefits for low income communities.

13 RGGI is a crucial step in our
14 collective fight against climate change. The
15 intergovernmental panel and climate change has made
16 it clear that we need to reduce global greenhouse
17 gas emissions by 50 percent by 2030, get to net zero
18 by 2050 and then get to net negative beyond that in
19 order avoid catastrophic climate unraveling playing
20 out in the form of increases in fires, storms, heat,
21 drought, flooding, disease, sea level rise and crop
22 failures on a devastating planetary scale with poor
23 individuals, communities and nations suffering the
24 most.

25 This means that there is quite simply

1 a moral imperative to act boldly now to reduce
2 greenhouse gas emissions particularly here in PA
3 where the electric power sector produces the third
4 highest emissions of all the states in the United
5 States.

6 RGGI is a really exciting way that we
7 can do this. Expert analysis shows that
8 participating in RGGI will enable PA's carbon
9 pollution to be cut by 21 percent by 2030 or 188
10 million tons. Emissions need to be cut
11 significantly more than this to reach our planetary
12 goals but this is still a really important start and
13 it will set a tone that we hope will spur the kind
14 of broader changes that are needed to do our part in
15 the critical 50 percent global draw down that must
16 take place over the next ten years.

17 RGGI could have a number of other
18 benefits as well. An in-depth analysis for the
19 Department of Environmental Protection projects that
20 RGGI will create 27,000 jobs for Pennsylvanians, add
21 \$1.9 billion to the state's economy, and generate
22 hundreds of millions of dollars annually to help
23 eliminate air pollution, spur job creations, support
24 working Pennsylvanians and help workers in the
25 fossil fuel industries successfully transition into

1 the growing clean energy economy.

2 While electricity rate increases are
3 possible in other RGGI states, strategic allocation
4 of revenue towards energy efficiency work has
5 enabled consumers to save \$1 billion on their energy
6 bills increasing disposable income and increasing
7 overall GDP.

8 Furthermore, through reducing
9 statewide pollution, RGGI is expected to create \$6
10 billion in health benefits through 2030, 45,000
11 fewer asthma attacks and 1,000 fewer cases of
12 childhood bronchitis.

13 Finally, with a few strategic
14 adjustments, RGGI could play an important role in
15 strengthening environmental and economic justice for
16 the poor which for me and my community endorsers is
17 a major priority as Christians.

18 The impacts of pollution and climate
19 change fall heaviest on those with the least. I
20 live in Mount Airy, a middle income community in
21 Northwest Philadelphia and I do much of my faith-
22 based organizing work in Hunting Park, a low income
23 community in North Philly.

24 I experience daily the stark
25 differences in summer heat wave severity, tree

1 canopy, green space and corresponding health issues
2 between these two communities. Realities like these
3 are fundamentally unjust, and yet unfortunately
4 they're very common in our society.

5 RGGI, however, could have a positive
6 impact on communities like Hunting Park if it makes
7 a few strategic adjustments to its plan. We
8 recommend that the final RGGI plan number one,
9 direct a large portion of it's revenue towards
10 energy efficiency improvements, greening and other
11 environmental projects in low income communities,
12 two, include safeguards that protect low income
13 families from any electricity rate increases
14 resulting from the program, and three ensure that
15 dirty emitters are unable to move their plants into
16 low income neighborhoods to save money for
17 themselves at the expense of the health of these
18 communities.

19 With these adjustments and safeguards,
20 RGGI could make communities like Hunting Park
21 greener, healthier, more energy efficient and
22 financially stronger. And so friends, the choice is
23 clear. RGGI is not only a crucial step in our
24 state's fight against the climate - climate crisis,
25 it's also an incredible economic and health

1 opportunity for PA.

2 And by incorporating a few strategic
3 adjustments to the plan, it can become a meaningful
4 engine of environmental and economic justice for our
5 most vulnerable neighbors.

6 Thank you for your consideration.

7 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Allen.

8 Speak number 33 is Jim Wylie.

9 MR. WYLIE: Hi. Jim here.

10 MS. GRIFFIN: Great, Jim. Please go
11 ahead.

12 MR. WYLIE: Okay.

13 My name is Jim Wylie. I live in West
14 Chester, Chester County. I'm 62 years old. I'm a
15 PECO customer. I would like to speak in support of
16 RGGI today.

17 Urgent action is needed to avoid the
18 worst predictions of the climate impacts including
19 threats to human health and housing, especially for
20 those not equipped to move or adapt their living
21 conditions.

22 Many have recognized this for decades.
23 There have been calls for putting a price on carbon
24 for at least that long. Many countries, regions and
25 states have done so and now there is clear data that

1 shows that it works.

2 Thirty-five (35) communities in
3 Pennsylvania have set goals of transition to 100
4 percent removal of electricity by 2035. Fifty (50)
5 percent of PECO customers live in towns that have
6 set 100 percent renewable energy goals. Setting an
7 escalated price on carbon emissions will help us
8 reach that goal by inspiring more renewable
9 solutions for us to choose from.

10 The demand for renewable energy is
11 here. More supply is needed. Green the grid then
12 electrify our transportation and heating has been a
13 formulaic plan. Electric vehicle technology is set
14 to explode. If we do not make strong commitments to
15 reduce and eventually eliminate the carbon emissions
16 from the electricity sector the trend of EBs will
17 not nearly be as effective as it could be.

18 Setting statewide goals for emission
19 reductions is important and establishing market
20 incentives for meeting those goals is essential. It
21 sets expectations for stakeholders that there is a
22 long-term plan and that those that plan accordingly
23 will benefit.

24 Setting expectations and energy market
25 stability is the major point I want to make. Capped

1 prices should be used to motivate the market to
2 achieve even more reductions. The RGGI cap was
3 adjusted in 2014 and the electricity market
4 responded to an even lower emissions. The price
5 never hitting the cap.

6 Our neighboring states that are RGGI
7 members have enjoyed investments in energy
8 efficiency programs, lower overall electricity
9 prices, and a commitment by electricity providers to
10 new renewable energy. Pennsylvania should not be
11 left behind.

12 Thank you very much.

13 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Jim.

14 Our next speaker number 34 is Thomas
15 Au.

16 MR. AU: Hello. My name is Thomas Au.
17 I live in Susquehanna Township Dauphin County.
18 Thank you for taking the time to hear from
19 Pennsylvanians on this important regulation.

20 I support moving forward with this
21 regulation. Last year Governor Tom Wolf issues an
22 executive order 2019-07 which directed the
23 Department of Environmental Protection to develop a
24 cap-and-invest program to control carbon pollution
25 from power plants in Pennsylvania aligning with the

1 Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative which is known as
2 RGGI.

3 The reason behind this rule is simple.
4 Instead of letting power plants emit carbon
5 pollution into our air at no cost to the owner but
6 at a tremendous cost to the public - we'll have to
7 pay a price for the pollution which is determined
8 through an emissions auction.

9 This will encourage more innovation in
10 reducing emissions. And the emissions fees
11 collected can be reinvested to further reduce air
12 pollution. This framework has been successful with
13 other RGGI states in the mid-Atlantic and Northeast.

14 According to one independent analysis,
15 these states are seeing benefits of \$1.4 billion net
16 from - from the years 2015 to 2017. I would like to
17 remind the Environmental Quality Board that a
18 similar cap-and-trade program was adopted to reduce
19 sulfur dioxide emissions which was very successful
20 in reducing the emissions which caused acid rain.

21 Cap-and-trade programs are economic
22 programs which are designed to achieve public goals.
23 RGGI sets a mandatory limit of the amount of carbon
24 pollution power plants are allowed to emit each
25 year. Power plant owners must purchase allowances

1 for the carbon emitted. These allowance purchases
2 generate revenues for the participating states to
3 invest in energy efficiency and clean energy and to
4 support low income rate payers.

5 Pennsylvania has set realistic
6 greenhouse gas reduction goals - a goal of 26
7 percent reduction in net greenhouse gas emissions by
8 2025, a goal of 80 percent reduction in net
9 greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

10 These are very achievable goals.
11 Reducing carbon pollution from these plants will
12 also clean up the air we breathe. Asthma,
13 cardiovascular disease, COPD and other respiratory
14 illnesses impact Pennsylvanians by the thousands
15 leading to premature death. People living in high
16 pollution areas are more likely to die if they
17 contract COVID-19.

18 Cleaner air will reduce these health
19 and social consequences. The RGGI program is not
20 the only program needed to reduce carbon pollution.
21 But it is a significant program and a first step
22 which has economic benefits.

23 RGGI's net positive economic results
24 are in large part due to the state's decisions to
25 sell carbon allowances via centralized auction and

1 then use the auction proceeds in various ways to
2 achieve state policy goals. This approach has been
3 in place in all three RGGI compliance periods.

4 In prior years during the 2015 to 2017
5 period, these states received and spent roughly \$1
6 billion in auction proceeds commonly on energy
7 efficiency programs, community based renewable
8 energy projects, customer bill assistance and other
9 greenhouse gas reduction measures.

10 Since RGGI began in these states,
11 actual carbon emissions declined by 53 percent.
12 These having to pay to pollute is not popular in
13 many industries. With any pollution fees, levy can
14 be reduced by reducing emissions. Getting to zero
15 is the goal of many innovative industries.

16 Thank you for your time.

17 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Thomas.

18 Speaker number 35 is Anisa George.

19 MS. GEORGE: Can you hear me?

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

22 MS. GEORGE: Thank you.

23 My name is Anisa George. I live in
24 South Philadelphia. Thank you for this opportunity
25 to speak. I'm here as a mom.

1 Shortly after turning one my daughter
2 had her first asthma attack. Excuse me. At this
3 point she didn't have many worries at her disposal
4 but in the ER as she was hooked up to the oxygen and
5 the nurse struggled to put the IV in her tiny vein
6 she put two words together for the first time.

7 She looked at me and her dad and she
8 said all done. All done. And then as we struggled
9 to keep her calm to explain the doctors were there
10 to help her breathe and everything would be okay she
11 said her second first sentence and it was I don't
12 know. I don't know.

13 I tell this story because I know my
14 family is only one of thousands in this state that
15 suffer from climate accelerated asthma everyday.
16 But the Asthma Allergy Foundation of America has
17 said that Philadelphia is the fourth worst place in
18 this country to live because of poor air quality and
19 high ozone.

20 So it's very clear to me that the
21 climate crisis is not something in the future. It's
22 not 2035, it's not 2050, it's right here right now
23 causing undo suffering everyday.

24 The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate
25 Change of the UN has said that we have about ten

1 years to deal with the scope of this problem before
2 we get into game over scenarios. And we can do this
3 in two ways. We can do mitigation which is what
4 RGGI wants to do and we can do sequestration, that
5 is taking carbon out of the air and putting it back
6 in the soil where it came from.

7 I think we're past the point where
8 mitigation alone can save us. We need to remove
9 carbon. So RGGI is a great first step. Let's
10 absolutely do it. But what are the investments that
11 can be made with this new revenue stream that can
12 really tackle the scope of this problem?

13 And my proposal to you today which I
14 haven't heard yet in all of this testimony is that a
15 solution perhaps the most promising one is
16 regenerative organic agriculture. We can pay
17 farmers to farm in a way that puts carbon back into
18 the soil through very accessible techniques like
19 cover cropping, managed grazing, perennial outing
20 cropping, et cetera.

21 And the Pennsylvania-based Rodale
22 Institute has said on their studies and I quote the
23 power of exemplary regenerative systems if achieved
24 globally could draw down more than 100 percent of
25 annual CO2 emissions as they currently stand. More

1 than 100 percent.

2 If this was only half true it would be
3 an astounding truth. So why is it not being talked
4 about? And we can do this carbon sequestration
5 while building our rooted soils, strengthening the
6 nutritional density of our yield, boosting the
7 health of our citizens, increasing biodiversity
8 which is under threat, reducing floods which is a
9 problem and purifying our watershed.

10 So for me it's a win win win
11 proposition with maneuverable silver linings. And I
12 think it needs to be pursued and we need to re-write
13 current subsidies and provide grants and loans to
14 agriculture practices that aren't corrosive, that
15 aren't jeopardizing future generations and instead
16 switch to incentivizing farmers who are pursuing
17 these regenerative organic approaches.

18 Since I only have five minutes to
19 speak I guess I'll refer you again to the research
20 at the Rodale Institute to a book by Eric Toensmeier
21 called The Carbon Farming Solution to the Hudson
22 Farming Project that is being rolled out right now
23 to pay farmers to sequester carbon to a documentary
24 called Kiss The Ground which explains it all and is
25 very accessible and to the traditions of course most

1 importantly of the original stewards of this land,
2 the Leni Lenape and the other unseated tribal people
3 of the state who's entire culture was rooted and
4 these principles of regenerative agriculture before
5 that was a named technique.

6 I believe we have all the technology
7 and resources that we need to keep this plant a
8 livable one. Please, bring RGGI to Pennsylvania and
9 please let RGGI propel us into a carbon negative
10 economy so the generations to come after us do not
11 look to ours with confusion and fear in their eyes
12 as my child has looked in mine, that they do not ask
13 us all done, all done. Thank you for your time.

14 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Anisa.

15 Our next speaker is going to be
16 assisted by an interpreter. So speaker number 36
17 Jose Aviles Velez and will be assisted by Pam
18 Rodriguez.

19 MS. RODRIGUES: Hello everyone.

20 My name is Jose Aviles Velez and I am
21 22 years old. I am Puerto-Rican and I arrived in
22 Lancaster, Pennsylvania six years ago.

23 I am also a member of CASA. And for
24 those of you who don't know what CASA is we're an
25 organization that unites the Latino and immigrant

1 community in Pennsylvania to make sure that our
2 voices are heard while we fight so that our families
3 achieve justice.

4 As a Puerto-Rican who has family that
5 lost everything in Hurricane Maria, I am aware of
6 the economical and psychological impact that climate
7 change is having in our daily lives. I am also a
8 young dad of a two year old daughter. And I am
9 extremely worried about climate change and how it is
10 going to shape the way we live in the next five to
11 ten years.

12 As it says in the Commonwealth,
13 citizens of this Commonwealth have an absolute right
14 to clean air, pure water and preservation of the
15 natural scenic, historic and aesthetic values of this
16 environment. But in our communities, the water and
17 wells and contaminated with lead.

18 In our state we are poisoning children
19 like my two year old daughter. In many communities
20 like mine, we need to travel many miles to find
21 green spaces. I believe in RGGI. And I want this
22 program in Pennsylvania.

23 But I believe that this project should
24 prioritize communities that are disproportionately
25 affected by climate change. It is - it is important

1 that we create more green spaces, infrastructure,
2 solar power and home weatherization, and clean
3 energy programs. Again, home weatherization and
4 clean energy programs to educate communities of the
5 importance to use 100 percent green energy.

6 Thank you very much.

7 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Jose and thank
8 you Pam.

9 Our next speaker number 37 is Sharon
10 Pillar. Do we have Sharon with us?

11 MR. JAGIELA: She's on the line and
12 unmuted.

13 MS. GRIFFIN: Okay.

14 In that case we will come back to her.
15 Hopefully we can resolve the technical issue by
16 them.

17 So then speaker number 38 and 39 were
18 not available.

19 MS. PILLAR: I'm sorry. Can you hear
20 me now?

21 MS. GRIFFIN: Oh, there you are.

22 MS. PILLAR: I'm sorry. My footings
23 were on. Sorry about that.

24 MS. GRIFFIN: No problem Sharon.
25 Please go ahead.

1 MS. PILLAR: Thank you. Thanks so
2 much.

3 Thank you for the opportunity to speak
4 today. My name is Sharon Pillar and I'm the
5 Pennsylvania Representative for E2 or Environmental
6 Entrepreneurs and I live just outside of Pittsburgh.

7 E2 is a nation, non-partisan group of
8 business leaders, investors and professionals who
9 advocate for smart policies that are good for the
10 economy and good for the environment.

11 I also co-lead the renewals work for
12 Pennsylvania Coalition comprised of more than 100
13 renewable energy businesses working together to
14 increase Pennsylvania's renewable energy markets.

15 RGGI is a policy that E2 strongly
16 supports because it is good for the environment and
17 for the economy. RGGI has created 45,000 job years
18 of work across the RGGI region since the program's
19 launch and added \$4.3 billion in economic value to
20 the region already.

21 Meanwhile, economic growth in the
22 RGGIO states outpace that of non-RGGI states by 4.3
23 percent. So it is increasing prosperity. And of
24 course DEP estimates that RGGI in Pennsylvania will
25 produce upwards of almost 30,000 jobs, excuse me,

1 and contribute about \$2 billion to the gross state
2 product.

3 RGGI is an important and effective
4 tool in the toolbox for addressing climate change
5 and to reduce health impacts and air pollution from
6 fossil fuels and the investment from the auction
7 proceeds under RGGI can facilitate clean energy
8 projects.

9 However, we caution that RGGI should
10 not be viewed as a panacea to build up the big
11 state's clean energy market. Pennsylvania needs to
12 pass other important policy pieces such as an
13 increase to the alternative energy portfolio
14 standards or the AEPF and the act 129 for energy
15 efficiency which RGGI investments will compliment
16 and - but will not replace.

17 Clean energy investors seek
18 predictable market signals to inform their
19 investment decisions that are provided by the APS
20 and Act 129. For instance the APS is at eight
21 percent renewables goal with a half a percent in
22 state solar which will flatline this coming May. So
23 we have some urgency on that policy as well.

24 The APS is the most effective method
25 to provide that steady market growth and assurance

1 to investors. But all of the RGGI states also have
2 these renewable energy portfolio goals. But most of
3 those states have goals of 50 percent or more.
4 Obviously, we're not here today to discuss the APS
5 nor can DEP change it but it's important to
6 understand the interplay.

7 This analogy might explain the
8 difference of how they work well together to grow
9 clean energy though. The APS is kind of like a
10 roadway to a destination providing a pathway to
11 travel from point A to point B and determine that
12 the road will be a superhighway or a slow back road
13 kind of like what we have now at the APS.

14 The side and route will also determine
15 how many cars can drive on the road and if drivers
16 feel it's a safe and predictable travel route.
17 Private investments purchases most of those vehicles
18 that are driving on the road just like renewable
19 energy investment is mostly from private sources.

20 But RGGI investments on the other hand
21 act like capital for purchases of maybe special
22 PESCO vehicles on that road such as public transit
23 and for workforce training to build and operate
24 those vehicles that might not be financed with
25 private capital. And this is an important role to

1 make traveling more accessible on this road that I'm
2 talking about for all Pennsylvanians.

3 So more concretely the millions of
4 dollars of annual RGGI investment may result in
5 programs that can help specific types of clean
6 energy projects with private investment the
7 investment may not build. E2 suggests RGGI
8 investments be allocated to programs that include
9 energy efficiency to save consumers money and
10 distribute renewable energy projects directed to
11 nonprofit organizations, essential service
12 organizations and multifamily housing for low income
13 individuals.

14 In addition, E2 supports investment in
15 communities that have been negatively affected by
16 the shuttering of coal-fired plants in mining
17 communities caused by the switch to natural gas and
18 for communities that are still suffering from the
19 pollution of carbon intensive industries that will
20 not be covered under RGGI as well as towards
21 beneficial agricultural approaches.

22 E2 also supports RGGI investments
23 directed at workforce training in clean energy
24 industries or carbon mitigation strategies with a
25 focus on economically depressed regions of the state

1 and all projects that have co-benefits such as
2 microgrids, renewable energy on brownfield
3 developments et cetera. We'll provide a more
4 complete list of suggestions in our written
5 comments.

6 But to conclude, E2 strongly supports
7 Pennsylvania's participation in RGGI and this rule
8 making process as an important carbon mitigation
9 strategy which will also help to prolong nuclear
10 energy generation as well as an economic driver than
11 can provide investments in clean energy and for
12 communities in need across the state.

13 Thank you to DEP, the Environmental
14 Quality Board and the governor for this very
15 important work. Thank you.

16 MS. GRIFFIN: And thank you Sharon.

17 Before we continue it is now 3:47 p.m.
18 and we still have a dozen people left who signed up
19 to testify at this hearing.

20 The EQB and DEP want to provide an
21 opportunity for everyone to be heard so we will
22 continue on past 4:00 p.m. We should be finished by
23 5:00.

24 For those commenters who cannot stay
25 on past the regularly scheduled hearing time to

1 provide testimony, Jennifer Swan will contact the
2 remaining commentaries within the next business day
3 with instructions on how to provide your comments or
4 if you do not want to speak you can always submit
5 your written testimony as we discussed earlier
6 today.

7 So with that said, our next commenter
8 number 40 is Representative Dianne Herrin.

9 Are you with us Dianne?

10 MS. HERRIN: I am. Can you hear me?

11 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can. Please go
12 ahead.

13 MS. HERRIN: Great. Thank you.

14 So my name is Dianne Herrin. I am the
15 Mayor of West Chester and Representative-Elect with
16 Pennsylvania's 156 Legislative District.

17 And I'm here today as a citizen and
18 former partner and vice president of Practical
19 Energy Solutions, an energy efficiency and renewable
20 energy consulting firm in West Chester,
21 Pennsylvania.

22 I'm here for the primary reason that
23 we all know we must act on climate change and we
24 have no time left to wait. When it comes to climate
25 action, we can and should learn from the pandemic.

1 That is we need to understand that the experiences
2 we're going through due to the pandemic are nothing
3 compared with the impact of climate change on human
4 suffering and the economy.

5 These pandemic experiences don't even
6 rise to the level of a dress rehearsal. We've also
7 learned from recent experience with the Coronavirus
8 that we humans do not handle slow-moving threats
9 very well. And we need to learn to do so. And it's
10 my hope that we have learned that the best way to do
11 so is through thoughtful and smart government
12 action.

13 Government action makes a very big
14 difference. And I can attest to the benefits of
15 good government action from my experience with my
16 former firm Practical Energy Solutions.

17 For several years my firm worked under
18 a contract with the Delaware state's sustainable
19 energy utility to conduct school-based energy audits
20 and strategic energy planning for school districts
21 across the state of Delaware. This was all thanks
22 to the RGGI program. We helped schools create plans
23 to replace aging HVAC systems with highly efficient
24 alternatives, we helped schools move away from
25 fossil fuels and towards geothermal systems powered

1 by onsite solar PV rays.

2 And we did this with the help of
3 sustainable energy utility's grant and loan and
4 support programs which were all created in
5 conjunction with the multi-state RGGI program.

6 We also did this in concert with the
7 students, teachers and administrators. We turned
8 this into a hands on multidisciplinary educational
9 project that supported the Pennsylvania educational
10 standards - I'm sorry the Delaware educational
11 standards.

12 The opportunity for students to
13 combine disciplines in these hands on learning
14 projects has been extremely valuable. And this work
15 never would have been done without RGGI.

16 So as I said we worked with the state
17 of Delaware even though our firm is based in
18 Pennsylvania because Pennsylvania hadn't passed RGGI
19 yet. But by passing RGGI, we will create real
20 opportunities just like this right here in the
21 Commonwealth.

22 As my professional experience shows,
23 RGGI opens the door of opportunity to good jobs
24 which we need now more than ever while bringing
25 climate solutions at the same time. All told, RGGI

1 will create 27,000 jobs and boost the state's
2 economy by nearly \$2 billion while cutting pollution
3 produced by power plants by 188 million tons.

4 I'd like to point out that some of
5 these jobs will certainly be solar jobs which is one
6 of the fastest growing occupations in the nation.
7 One of the great things about the job of solar PV
8 installer is that it doesn't require a college
9 degree.

10 With the foundation of basic training,
11 these workers can undergo on the job training and
12 land a good paying solid occupation.

13 So in sum, in the ten states where
14 RGGI already exists, the program has cut climate
15 pollution by a third and raised nearly \$3 billion
16 for clean energy and energy efficiency investments.
17 I strongly support policies like RGGI that couple
18 economic recovery with climate change mitigation.

19 Because despite what we've been told,
20 these two things, that is economic recovery through
21 job creation plus climate change mitigation efforts
22 go together like chocolate and peanut butter. RGGI
23 is a first and fundamental step in exploiting these
24 opportunities.

25 So I'd like to thank the Environmental

1 Quality Board and Governor Wolf for bringing these
2 economic opportunities and climate solutions to our
3 Commonwealth.

4 Thanks for the opportunity to speak
5 today.

6 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you
7 Representative-Elect Herrin.

8 Speaker number 41 today is Judy
9 Morgan.

10 MS. MORGAN: Hello, can you hear me?

11 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can Judy.
12 Please go ahead.

13 MS. MORGAN: My name is Judy Morgan
14 and I'm from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. I thank
15 you for this opportunity to speak.

16 I've had a lifelong interest in both
17 environment and social justice issues and I feel
18 very committed to moving rapidly to 100 percent
19 renewable energy, divert climate change and to end
20 unfair burden of the fossil fuel industry of people
21 of color and the poor as well as on future
22 generations.

23 I'm here today as a private citizen
24 but also a member of several environmental
25 organizations and co-founder of Northwest Philly

1 Climate Action Network now a project within
2 Philadelphia Neighborhood Networks.

3 There is extensive evidence on ways
4 that the fossil fuel industry has inequitably
5 imposed harm on the poor and people of color.
6 According to recent research, African-Americans
7 nationally are exposed to 1.54 times more air
8 pollution in general than white people. In the
9 Northeast, communities of color breathe in 1.6 times
10 more polluted air from vehicles than white
11 residents.

12 African-Americans are 75 percent more
13 likely to live close to power plants. A national
14 study of counties most likely to be impacted by
15 natural disasters including floods and fires
16 resulting from climate change, have an average
17 population that was 81 percent minority and they are
18 statistically more vulnerable to damage left in the
19 wake of these events.

20 A study by Rice University and
21 University of Pittsburgh showed that after natural
22 disasters, white people actually accumulate wealth
23 on average while people of color lose wealth. On a
24 personal note, in the last couple of years, cousin
25 and aunt were forced to leave from their homes in

1 Sonoma, California several times because of out-of-
2 control fires exacerbated by climate change.

3 My cousin Laurie, a poet, wrote a poem
4 about the touching connections made by those in the
5 shelters white and brown, teenagers, elderly forced
6 into hiding together from the flames. The
7 frightened refugees from those fires are a symbol of
8 how more and more of us will be affected if CO2
9 emissions are not brought down rapidly.

10 RGGI provides an important strategy in
11 reducing reliance on fossil fuels and supporting
12 energy efficiency and renewable energy purchase that
13 will create jobs for our local people. For moral
14 and ethical as well as practical and economic
15 reasons, RGGI is the right choice now for reducing
16 the threats of both climate change and increasing
17 social inequality.

18 Thank you for your time and I thank
19 the environmental quality board for organizing this
20 public comment process.

21 MS. GRIEFFIN: Thank you Judy.

22 Speaker number 42 today is David
23 Foster.

24 MR. FOSTER: Hello. Thank you very
25 much. Can you all hear me?

1 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can David.
2 Please go ahead.

3 MR. FOSTER: All right.

4 My name is David Foster and I live in
5 Dillsburg, York County. I'm here as a private
6 citizen and I'm also a member of the Evangelical and
7 Environmental Network. Thank you for this
8 opportunity to testify in the public hearing on the
9 proposed rule making for RGGI.

10 It's with great enthusiasm I support
11 Pennsylvania's full participation in RGGI to the
12 proposed rule making. I've worked all my
13 professional life in the environmental area
14 including educating others in environmental ethics
15 and helping others to come to know the creation
16 around us.

17 Personally, I've been enthusiastic
18 about renewable energy with the pursuit of
19 efficiency and the science of reduction of use, et
20 cetera. However, it's only been recently that we
21 have personally embraced CO2 reduction this summer
22 when my boys and I installed a full intake system on
23 our roof ourselves. So I echo the comments others
24 have made about the learning process.

25 And in this context we felt the

1 challenges of transition in every step as we
2 reinforced the roof, installed the panels, hooked up
3 the wiring into our electric panel. And we felt the
4 final victory as our last electric bill was \$10.01.

5 Why we were able to do it? It finally
6 made financial sense. And in that context we still
7 also realize it's not enough to truly offset the
8 magnitude of climate change already seen and
9 projected in the future.

10 Pennsylvania's full participation in
11 RGGI now makes sense. It strategically targets an
12 area of CO2 emissions where we can make a difference
13 now in CO2 emissions and electric power production.
14 It does so in a way that will not be a drag on our
15 economy, but rather provide a benefit. This is
16 proven by increases in productivity in ten historic
17 RGGI states as compared to states not participating.

18 It is proven by increases in net
19 revenue to deal with environmental created in the
20 past. It's proven by net decreases in electric
21 prices in those RGGI states compared to net
22 increases in electric prices in non-RGGI states.
23 There are proven values not modeled values.

24 Projected benefits by others and
25 modeled by the DEP are also very promising including

1 net reduction of CO2 by more than 188 thousand tons
2 by 2030 with a tentative reduction in nitrogen
3 oxide, sulfur dioxide, mercury, and ozone. This
4 will make major progress towards meeting goals in
5 the Pennsylvania Climate Action Plan, goals which
6 polling shows the majority of Pennsylvanians support
7 even those in conservative districts.

8 The promising human health benefits
9 from RGGI especially in respiratory health and
10 especially to communities of color and economically
11 disadvantaged communities include reduced rates of
12 asthma and other respiratory disease. We also
13 improve less missed work days, less hospital visits
14 due to respiratory illness and an increase in the
15 overall state economy.

16 I strongly encourage Pennsylvania to
17 consider using revenues from RGGI towards correcting
18 environmental issues and historically impacted
19 communities for it's workers being displaced in
20 electric plants now using fossil fuel and forward
21 expansion of solar and wind generation in
22 Pennsylvania.

23 Pennsylvania is a historic leader in
24 the transition of energy production from one source
25 to another. In 1835 the Pennsylvania legislature

1 banned the use of wood charcoal in any new iron
2 furnaces because we had decimated our forest. We
3 lead the way in using coal to produce fill
4 researched oil wells in the United States were here,
5 we lead the way in hydroelectric and had the first
6 nuclear power plant in the world.

7 We have opened the doors for solar and
8 wind electricity. It's now time to join the lead in
9 an overall low carbon electric future.

10 In conclusion, I strongly support this
11 and echo the benefits many have included here in
12 their testimonies as well as especially support
13 direction in how bringing renewable energy at two
14 communities that have been starkly most impacted by
15 using fossil fuels to generate electricity.

16 Thank you again.

17 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you David.

18 Speaker number 43 is Nick Favorito.

19 MR. FAVORITO: Hello. My name is Nick
20 Favorito and I live in Glenmaura, Pennsylvania. I'm
21 testifying as a private citizen today. I've also
22 spent my entire working career in the nuclear
23 industry within Pennsylvania.

24 I'm here today proudly to voice my
25 support for Pennsylvania's entry into the Regional

1 Greenhouse Gas Initiative RGGI. The main reasons I
2 support RGGI are for clean, reliable power
3 production, for Pennsylvania jobs, for health of our
4 citizens including my own son who has asthma similar
5 to many people that I've talked to today.

6 While supporting RGGI I'm also
7 standing up for nuclear power in Pennsylvania. RGGI
8 means Pennsylvania's four nuclear power plants have
9 an opportunity to compete on a more level playing
10 field by requiring polluting fossil fuel plants to
11 pay some of the social and health costs of carbon
12 emissions that are released into the air.

13 Nuclear power is clean, safe, reliable
14 and affordable electricity that generates economic
15 and environmental benefits for everyone. The
16 nuclear industry alone supports 15,000 jobs in
17 Pennsylvania and more than 500 companies. Joining
18 RGGI could add hundreds of millions of dollars back
19 into our economy which will add additional jobs and
20 support post-Covid recovery.

21 Pennsylvania's eight nuclear power
22 reactors produce 34 percent of the state's
23 electricity and 91 percent of its clean energy. Our
24 nuclear energy facilities prevent 34 million metric
25 tons of CO2 per year which is equivalent to being

1 released by 7 million passenger cars.

2 We already saw the premature closure
3 of Three Mile Island in 2019 and cannot allow any
4 additional Pennsylvania nuclear plants to close. I
5 proudly worked at Three Mile Island for 13 years
6 until its closure and moved my family to work at the
7 Limerick Generating Station in Pottsville,
8 Pennsylvania because I believe in nuclear power as
9 the best way to produce large scale clean energy.

10 Pennsylvania is a world leader in
11 clean and safe commercial nuclear power production.
12 We can leverage our expertise to significantly
13 impact greenhouse gas emissions regionally where our
14 country as a whole slowly responds to the crisis.

15 For these reasons and more, I ask the
16 Department of Environmental Protection to move
17 Pennsylvania forward on clean energy by entering our
18 Commonwealth into RGGI.

19 Thank you for your time and
20 consideration.

21 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Nick.

22 Our next speaker number 44 is Andrew
23 Shumacher.

24 MR. SHUMACHER: Thank you for
25 permitting me to share my comments today.

1 My name is Andrew Shumacher. I'm a
2 first year osteopathic medical student at the
3 Philadelphia College for Osteopathic Medicine. I'm
4 also an Evangelical Christian.

5 This pandemic season has made me
6 acutely aware of how dizzying our world can be. The
7 storm of information relentlessly reminds us that
8 suffering is around every corner.

9 With no one to turn to, feelings of
10 helplessness, confusion and apathy begin to creep
11 in. These are dark times.

12 It is in these dark times that I am
13 reminded of the true meaning of Christmas as stated
14 in John 1 verse 5, the light shines in the darkness
15 and the darkness has not overcome it. Jesus
16 provides me with hope in this season and I will
17 strive to live out what he said was most important,
18 loving God fully and loving our neighbors as
19 ourselves.

20 Unfortunately, climate change is
21 already impacting our neighbors in God's creation
22 here in the United States and around the world. One
23 week ago, the Lancet published their findings of the
24 impact climate change has had on human health over
25 the last 20 years. Among the findings were

1 increased heat-related deaths, increased prevalence
2 of natural disasters, increased human exposure to
3 wildfires and increased inability for transmission
4 of infectious diseases.

5 The people suffering these impacts are
6 my future patients. It is, therefore, my
7 responsibility to counsel them about the risks that
8 climate change poses to their health and to future
9 generations. These health impacts only coincide
10 with the warming effect caused by the emission of
11 greenhouse gases.

12 In 2018, Pennsylvania burned 1.3
13 million barrels of oil, 23.5 million tons of coal
14 and 539 billion cubic feet of methane for
15 electricity. This produced 77 million metric tons
16 of carbon dioxide qualifying our state as the third
17 largest greenhouse gas emitter in the nation.

18 Additionally, over 2,700
19 Pennsylvanians died prematurely in 2018 from
20 Pennsylvania's air pollution problem including
21 pollution produced by the electric generation
22 industry granting our state the inauspicious claim
23 of having the third most air pollution-related
24 deaths in the nation.

25 To deal with these life-threatening

1 health impacts, I support the Department of
2 Environmental Protection's proposed standard to join
3 the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, RGGI, and
4 cut carbon pollution with the co-benefit of other
5 pollutants from electric power generation.

6 According to the Pennsylvania RGGI
7 modeling report published on September 25, some of
8 the expected economic benefits of this program
9 include decreasing energy prices long term, \$2
10 billion of revenue for Pennsylvania by 2030, rising
11 electricity exports to 37 percent of Pennsylvania's
12 total generation by 2030, job creation in rural
13 communities and an expedited diversification of the
14 coal industry which is facing an 80 percent decline
15 by 2030 by market forces alone.

16 Lastly, 72 percent of Pennsylvanians
17 say it's important to them that their electricity
18 comes from energy that does not create carbon
19 emissions. We are part of the problem but we are
20 willing to be part of the solution.

21 Thank you.

22 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Andrew.

23 Our next four scheduled speakers were
24 not able to attend today. So our next speaker is
25 number 49 Maria O'Matz.

1 MS. O'MATZ: Hi, my name is Maria
2 O'Matz and I live in Mount Lebanon, just a short
3 drive outside of Pittsburgh.

4 I'm 18 years old and just finished up
5 my first term at Dartmouth College. I'm so grateful
6 for the opportunity to advocate for the Regional
7 Greenhouse Gas Initiative this evening. The
8 implementation of the cap-and-invest program would
9 improve the health of Pennsylvania residents and
10 achieve meaningful climate action.

11 On the morning of September 20th, 2019
12 I protested on the steps of Pittsburgh City County
13 Building alongside youth climate leaders from across
14 Western PA. It was a local manifestation of a
15 global youth movement, one that has been
16 successfully implementing environmental reforms
17 around the glob.

18 Today, Pennsylvania has an incredible
19 opportunity. We can do our part to build a
20 stronger, more sustainable economy and reap the
21 environmental benefits. While we may pursue
22 environmental causes for our children and
23 grandchildren, it's important to consider that we
24 are fighting the carbon crisis in the present
25 moment.

1 Greenhouse gas emissions don't just
2 affect the distant future. We're experiencing the
3 climate crisis right now in our own communities. My
4 two brothers as well as many of my friends in the
5 Pittsburgh area all suffer from asthma. But it took
6 until high school for me to learn that this
7 occurrence is not normal. While eight percent of
8 children nationwide have asthma, in Allegheny County
9 it stands at 22 percent, almost three times as high.

10 But we have the capacity to change.
11 Implementing RGGI would allow my generation to
12 inherit a sustainable economy by expanding clean
13 energy jobs in Pennsylvania and it would allow
14 Pennsylvanians to live without premature death,
15 heart attacks and respiratory illnesses associated
16 with air pollution.

17 My family has lived in the Pittsburgh
18 Area for four generations. We know the harmful
19 health and environmental impacts of industrial
20 pollution all too well. But RGGI gives me hope. It
21 demonstrates that there may be a future generation
22 of Pittsburghers who do not suffer the consequences
23 of prior generations' negligence. It shows that a
24 more sustainable economy is possible.

25 It incumbent upon Pennsylvania's

1 current leaders to take action on the climate
2 crisis. By joining RGGI, those leaders could invest
3 in mine and future generations' health and
4 prosperity.

5 Thank you for your time and
6 consideration.

7 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Maria.

8 I was told that speaker number 50,
9 Robin Mann had to leave.

10 Is that the case Darek, that Robin is
11 no longer on the call?

12 MR. JAGIELA: That is correct.

13 MS. GRIFFIN: Okay.

14 So speaker number 51 is Nicholas
15 Pallotto on the call? Are you with us Nicholas?

16 MR. JAGIELA: Not on the line from
17 what I can see.

18 MS. GRIFFIN: Okay.

19 Speaker number 52 withdrew so speaker
20 number 53 Kindra Mohr.

21 MS. MOHR: Yes, hello. Good
22 afternoon.

23 My name is Kindra Mohr and I am in
24 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. I am speaking today on
25 behalf of the Sustainable Business Network of

1 Greater Philadelphia or SBN.

2 Over the past 20 years SBN has
3 supported thousands of local independent businesses
4 across the region that practice and measure success
5 by the triple bottom line of people, planet and
6 profitability.

7 Our members represent businesses with
8 less than 50 employees across a wide range of
9 sectors including those in green infrastructure,
10 clean energy and food systems industries, all of
11 which are deeply impacted by the state's approach to
12 energy efficiency and its investments in clean
13 energy industries.

14 Today I offer strong support for RGGI
15 on behalf of Pennsylvania's local independent
16 business community and urge the DEP to swiftly
17 implement a RGGI rule that prioritizes energy
18 efficiency investments.

19 RGGI is a story about economic growth
20 and job creation. COVID-19 has drastically
21 disrupted Pennsylvania's economy resulting in job
22 losses and business closures. Yet before the
23 pandemic, clean energy such as the renewable energy
24 and energy efficiency sectors outpaced overall job
25 growth in the Commonwealth by five times and

1 employed more than double the number of workers than
2 the state's entire fossil fuel industry.

3 Energy efficiency is the most sizeable
4 and predictable job creator among all the energy
5 sectors. And once Pennsylvania officially links to
6 RGGI, energy efficiency workers will be in demand to
7 build, install, maintain and improve equipment and
8 infrastructure.

9 Furthermore, data suggests a
10 disproportionate impact of the pandemic on local
11 businesses and their employees and clean energy
12 sectors have been no exception. Faced with the
13 irrefutable evidence that local businesses are the
14 backbone of our economy and the ongoing uncertainty
15 that the pandemic brings, the state has a
16 responsibility to prioritize local business recovery
17 and invest in climate infrastructure as fundamental
18 elements of our economic recovery. One way to do so
19 is through RGGI, a proven initiative that achieves
20 both.

21 Relatably, RGGI can also support
22 equitable growth. Jobs in the energy efficiency
23 sector offer a higher than average salary and cannot
24 be outsourced. These jobs range from those in the
25 trade, to engineers and designers to legal

1 accounting and administrative supports. They all
2 provide a foundation for elevating the standard of
3 living for households across the state.

4 In addition, auction proceeds to fund
5 training centers and vocational programs for new
6 workers to succeed in energy efficiency careers,
7 particular those transitioning from other energy
8 sectors and individuals from historically
9 marginalized backgrounds to ensure equitable
10 inclusive growth.

11 Over time this will help meet work
12 force development needs, provide new opportunities
13 in an expanding sector and help Pennsylvania recover
14 from the pandemic with equitable employment
15 resilient growth.

16 Moreover, in our current recession we
17 need to support low and middle income energy
18 consumers. Economic and structural barriers still
19 prevent residents and local independent businesses
20 from participating in the state-offered energy
21 efficiency programs. RGGI proceeds can help fill in
22 gaps in existing low income and small business
23 energy efficiency programs which would facilitate a
24 more equitable economic recovery, one in which every
25 dollar counts.

1 We are at a critical moment in the
2 evolution of the energy industry and its major
3 disruptions for local businesses and workers. RGGI
4 will not only help rebuild our economy and our
5 communities but will enable us to do so in a more
6 equitable and climate-resilient manner.

7 I encourage the DEP to develop a RGGI
8 rule that prioritizes investment in energy
9 efficiency which is best positioned to create jobs,
10 lower consumer bills, reduce emissions and stimulate
11 Pennsylvania's economic recovery.

12 Thank you very much.

13 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Kindra.

14 Speaker number 54 is Brenda Smith.

15 MS. SMITH: Hi. Can you hear me?

16 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can Brenda.

17 Please go ahead.

18 MS. SMITH: Okay. Super.

19 So good afternoon. I'm the executive
20 Director of the Nine Mile Run Watershed Association
21 and a resident of the city of Pittsburgh.

22 Thank you for this opportunity to
23 testify about the Regional Greenhouse Gas
24 Initiative. I support Pennsylvania's participation
25 in this initiative for three main reasons. First,

1 the urgent need to address global climate change and
2 Pennsylvania's responsibility to act.

3 Second, the personal health impacts
4 I've experienced due to Allegheny County's serious
5 air quality problem. And third, the importance of
6 helping our most vulnerable Pennsylvania residents
7 by creating jobs and making their homes more energy
8 efficient.

9 Regarding climate change as I'm sure
10 the department is well aware, the Intergovernmental
11 Panel on Climate Change has told us that we have
12 only a very short window left to eliminate fossil
13 fuel use before it becomes impossible to avoid the
14 most dire consequences of climate change.

15 We must begin as soon as possible
16 moving much faster toward renewable energy if we are
17 to reduce emissions to the necessary levels within
18 approximately 10 to 12 years.

19 The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative
20 is an excellent first step to move us in that
21 direction. I confess I was somewhat shocked to
22 learn that the state of Pennsylvania alone is
23 responsible for one percent of the entire world's
24 carbon pollution. Our state emits more CO2 than 172
25 of the countries that have signed the Paris Climate

1 Agreement.

2 While there are nine states that are
3 already participating in RGGI, the power plants in
4 Pennsylvania emit very nearly as much greenhouse gas
5 as the power plants in all of those nine states
6 combined. So clearly we have a responsibility to
7 act. And RGGI will make a real difference. The
8 emissions in those states currently participating
9 have been reduced by 45 percent since the program
10 started in 2009.

11 My son and his wife are both 34 years
12 old and are hoping to have children soon. I worry
13 constantly about what kind of world their children
14 will inherit. The changes induced by greenhouse
15 gases are already very evident throughout the world
16 including more destructive storms, more frequent and
17 destructive wildfires and many days each year when
18 it is too hot for people to safely work outside in
19 large portions of the world including parts of the
20 United States.

21 Right here in Pennsylvania we can
22 already see effects on plants and trees. Planting
23 zones have shifted. It makes me immensely sad to
24 know that we will very likely lose the maple syrup
25 industry in Pennsylvania because sugar maples can't

1 tolerate the warmer temperatures year round that are
2 now already almost certainly locked in. But if we
3 act now, we may be able to save other Pennsylvania
4 crops from the same fate.

5 As the department is also aware,
6 Allegheny County has some of the worst air quality
7 in the country and climate change will only
8 aggravate this problem. I frequently suffer
9 migraine headaches on the days with the worst air
10 quality. I now check the purple air monitor website
11 every morning to see whether I can take my dog on a
12 longer walk or need to keep it short to avoid the
13 bad air.

14 If we join RGGI, in just a few years
15 the situation will begin to improve as it has in all
16 of the states already participating. Their carbon
17 pollution has been cut by more than half. Why
18 shouldn't Pennsylvanians also enjoy fewer premature
19 deaths, fewer visits to the emergency room for
20 asthma and fewer lost work days due to health
21 impacts of air pollution?

22 Finally, when this pandemic ends, job
23 creation will be a top priority and the most
24 economically disadvantaged Pennsylvanians will be
25 struggling even more to afford the basics. Joining

1 RGGI will generate a pool of money which can be used
2 to make homes more energy efficient. This will
3 create good paying jobs.

4 While I don't think there's any reason
5 to make major changes to the RGGI rules because it's
6 working so well in other states, I do think we
7 should prioritize investing RGGI funds in our
8 environmental justice communities and in home energy
9 retrofit.

10 It's fair to have an opportunity to
11 participate in an initiative that has so many
12 benefits for so many people. I urge the department
13 to move forward and seize this opportunity.

14 Thank you so much.

15 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Brenda.

16 Speaker 56, speaker 55 withdrew so
17 speaker 56 is Vanessa Nelson.

18 MS. NELSON: Hi, can you hear me?

19 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, we can Vanessa.

20 Please go ahead.

21 MS. NELSON: Okay.

22 Good afternoon. My name is Vanessa
23 Nelson. I'm originally from the Harrisburg Area and
24 I now live in Philadelphia as a student at Temple
25 University.

1 I am here to speak on behalf of Defend
2 Our Future which is a nonpartisan climate activism
3 organization sponsored by the Environmental Defense
4 Fund. And we engage young people to act on the
5 climate crisis.

6 As a young person and a student I
7 realize that my generation will encounter
8 significant challenges as a result of the climate
9 crisis including rising global temperatures - of the
10 air and environmental racism.

11 I along with many of my peers struggle
12 with anxiety thinking about the dim future we will
13 have to live in if the climate crisis is not acted
14 upon swiftly.

15 That being said, I would like to voice
16 my support today for Pennsylvania joining the
17 Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative which will
18 support healthier air and water for Pennsylvanians
19 and incentivize a move towards clean energy.

20 Pennsylvania is currently the second
21 largest greenhouse gas producer in the nation, the
22 third largest coal producer in the nation, and the
23 fourth largest carbon dioxide emitter in the nation.
24 It's clear from these statistics that something must
25 be done deliberately and quickly in Pennsylvania to

1 curb greenhouse gas emissions in the interest of
2 real and meaningful climate action.

3 Even so, the energy sector currently
4 employs about 4.5 percent of Pennsylvanians. And a
5 plan to move towards cutting emissions must also
6 invest in clean energy jobs for those currently
7 working for fossil fuel companies.

8 The nature of RGGI in that it is a
9 cap-and-trade program allows for significant
10 investments being put back into energy sector,
11 excuse me, in the form of creating opportunities for
12 clean energy jobs and doing justice and
13 transitioning workers into the clean energy sector.

14 So far, it has been observed that
15 states participating in RGGI have returned over \$2
16 billion in proceeds. Maryland has used it's more
17 than \$500 million in proceeds to invest in energy
18 efficiency upgrades for low to moderate income
19 households improving energy efficiency for small
20 businesses and more as a way to drive energy costs
21 even lower.

22 Maryland serves as a perfect example
23 of how RGGI can be implemented while still
24 protecting low income communities from having to pay
25 higher prices for energy. Reducing emissions would

1 also lead to numerous health benefits for
2 Pennsylvanians. Certain areas of Pennsylvania have
3 some of the worst air quality in the entire nation
4 which exacerbates dangerous health conditions such
5 as asthma and other respiratory illnesses as well as
6 heart attacks and can lead to premature deaths.

7 Notably, these unwanted health effects
8 most often fall on low income communities and
9 particularly communities of color. It is unjust
10 that a lot of the communities that provide labor for
11 fossil fuel companies also have to bear the brunt of
12 the pollution given off by said companies in the
13 form of negative health effects.

14 As a biology student, I've had the
15 opportunity to study the health of streams in the
16 area surrounding Philadelphia firsthand. Only the
17 most resistant insects were capable of surviving in
18 them due to how polluted they were. And I'm sure
19 that this is the case in many other Pennsylvania
20 Metropolitan areas.

21 RGGI is crucial in limiting greenhouse
22 gas emissions and, therefore, driving Pennsylvania
23 to invest in clean energy solutions to reduce
24 overall and in PA.

25 I'm proud to be a Pennsylvanian. I'm

1 proud of the natural beauty of our state and our
2 history of hard-working innovation. I am most proud
3 to see such overwhelming bipartisan support of
4 emissions reduction legislation like RGGI.

5 Pennsylvanians realize how important
6 it is to maintain the beauty of our state and defend
7 communities that are particularly disenfranchised by
8 harmful emissions. We acknowledge that action must
9 be taken immediately to reduce greenhouse gas
10 emissions. RGGI is a proven market-based solution
11 being implemented in blue, red and swing states.

12 Absent a better proposed approach for
13 Pennsylvania, legislators would be well-served to
14 act on the wishes of the vast majority of
15 Pennsylvanians who want their leaders to act on
16 climate.

17 Thank you for your time.

18 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Vanessa.

19 Our last speaker for the day number 57
20 is Jerod Brougher.

21 Are you with us Jerod?

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

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

25 MR. BROUGHER: Okay. Great.

1 Thanks for the time.

2 My name is Jerod Brougher. Unlike 90
3 percent of you I'm not from Philadelphia. I'm
4 actually from the small town beside the coal-fired
5 power plant some of you speak about.

6 Guess what, my kids don't have asthma.
7 They don't have any diseases. I don't have asthma.
8 I don't have any diseases.

9 I was born and raised in Pennsylvania.
10 I graduated from high school, Penn State University
11 then with electrical engineering and technology
12 degree. After college my entire career has been
13 centered around coal. I've worked 1,000 feet
14 underground in the coalmines, the green Washington
15 Counties, the now shuttered power plant in Masontown
16 which is the Hatfield's Generating Station. And now
17 I work at the Conemaugh Generating Station in New
18 Florence, the border of Westmoreland and Indiana
19 Counties.

20 My tenure in the West, Southwestern PA
21 energy industry I've seen many environmental
22 challenges dished out by the EPA and the PADEP.
23 Along with those challenges I've seen literally
24 hundreds of millions of dollars spent by companies
25 to upgrade their facilities in order to comply.

1 These companies have done more than
2 their fair share of complying and have set new
3 standards even for clean air and clean water.

4 At one point in history, sure, we
5 needed to reduce emissions. That's been done. We
6 aren't in the 60s, 70s, 80s or even 90s anymore.
7 We've met our goals. We've cleaned the waterways.
8 We've cleaned the air. We've also found new ways to
9 use our byproducts such as gypsum which goes into
10 the drywall that's likely surrounding all you people
11 right now.

12 So we go through all the motions. We
13 follow all the rules. We bend over backwards to
14 comply with the never-ending regulations. And we do
15 it and we understand why. Because it's good for the
16 environment. Then boom, out of nowhere comes RGGI,
17 the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

18 I put the word regional in quotes
19 because its use in this initiative is actually
20 laughable. I'll circle back around with that but in
21 a nutshell, here's what RGGI does for Pennsylvania.

22 Pennsylvania enters into RGGI in
23 January 2022. Coal-fired power plants in PA cease
24 operation due to the additional tax approximately \$5
25 per megawatt hour. We're not making that as profit

1 now. 8,170 jobs directly affected. There's a \$2.87
2 billion dollar direct and indirect economic impact
3 on the Commonwealth of PA annually. Yes, you heard
4 me right, annually, 2.87 billion dollars of direct
5 and indirect economic impact.

6 That's just the initial economic
7 impact. We're about great resiliency. Nobody's
8 talked about that yet today. So many people forget
9 the coal-fired plants are the only plants left
10 running that have a fuel supply sitting on the
11 ground. Nuclear has that capability as well but we
12 all know what a mess they're in right now with all
13 the bailouts.

14 Why is having fuel on the ground
15 important? Take for example the polar vortex in
16 2014 and residential demand for natural gas actually
17 shut down the gas-fired power plants. Who was left
18 propping up the grid? Us. The coal plants.

19 What happens when we aren't there?
20 Polar vortex like that comes in 2022 when RGGI is in
21 effect, many people could lose their lives due to
22 blackouts and losing heat to their homes. We must
23 and I say it's not an option. We must keep these
24 remaining coal plants in service to stabilize and
25 support the grid, at least temporarily.

1 Come back to my term in quotes
2 regional. So we push forward with RGGI. We lose
3 all these good paying jobs and create major negative
4 economic impact. About 50 miles south of us in West
5 Virginia plants are just pumping out the megawatts.
6 Where will the generation go about their missions?
7 Yep, you got it. Right back into Pennsylvania.

8 Our power will come in as an export
9 from West Virginia and so will their missions. It
10 just doesn't make sense.

11 The point I'm trying to make here is
12 this. Haven't you picked on us enough? Haven't you
13 savaged enough tax dollars from our businesses for
14 electricity generation throughout the state? You
15 people that make these laws are never affected. You
16 sign the document and you go home to your families
17 never having to worry about how you'll put food on
18 the table or where you're next paycheck is going to
19 come from.

20 By the way, I know where it comes
21 from. It comes from me and the 8,170 other people
22 who will be struggling to make ends meet when RGGI
23 goes into effect. We're law-abiding, blue collar
24 proud to be working citizens. We pay our taxes
25 because we're blessed to have the ability to do so.

1 If things like this continue to come
2 out of the governor's office as executive orders,
3 you're going to start seeing a mass exodus out of
4 Pennsylvania and the states to welcome cheap,
5 reliable, safe, and efficient energy jobs.

6 I'm 33 years old. I have a wife and
7 three kids who fully depend on me, not the
8 government, to clothe and feed them. I love my God,
9 my family and my friends. Two of those I can easily
10 take with me to another state that supports my way
11 of living and gives me the cheap, reliable energy
12 source.

13 Besides our family and friends, what
14 incentive do I have to stay in this Commonwealth?
15 The weather? You're screwing up Pennsylvania, big
16 time. Thank you.

17 MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you Jerod. And
18 thank you for holding in - hanging in with us
19 despite a three and a half hour long hearing.

20 So thank you all for your patience and
21 taking the time to provide testimony today. With no
22 other commenters present on behalf of the EQB I
23 hereby adjourn this hearing at 4:28 p.m.

24 * * * * *

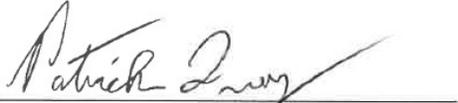
25 HEARING CONCLUDED AT 4:28 P.M.

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CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing proceeding was reported by me on 12/09/2020 and that I, Patrick Troy, read this transcript and that I attest that this transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceeding. This notarial act involved the use of communication technology.

Dated the 18th day of January, 2021


Patrick Troy,

Court Reporter