

**DEP Listening Session EPA Clean Power Plan
Testimony of Joanne Kilgour
Harrisburg, PA, 9/25/14**

Good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to speak today and for hosting this listening session. My name is Joanne Kilgour and I am the Director of the Pennsylvania Chapter of the Sierra Club with more than 24,500 members across the Commonwealth. Our members are committed to outdoor recreation, as well as protecting human health and the environment, and have long been leading climate advocates in their communities.

I currently live in Lancaster County, PA, which - despite the pastoral image of Amish farms and river hills the name invokes - has some of the worst air quality in the nation. My community is at risk, as are 31 of the 67 counties in the Commonwealth, and will continue to be at risk for generations to come unless we act now, taking swift and bold - but reasonable - steps to address harmful air pollution. Across Pennsylvania alone, we have nearly 285,000 children living with pediatric asthma - each of whom faces greater threat of medical complication because of exposure to ozone and particle pollution.

The proposed Clean Power Plan provides an opportunity for us to improve public health, such as threats from childhood asthma, by cleaning up the region's air and helping to address climate disruption. Through strong implementation of the Clean Power Plan we can achieve significant reductions in harmful air pollution, create new jobs, and realize the benefits of economic growth in the renewable energy industry. We all want a bright, healthy future for our families and making meaningful improvements to air quality by reducing harmful pollution is essential to making that hope a reality.

First, I want to stress that we CAN achieve the proposed emissions reduction target here in Pennsylvania. We can do this because we are already doing many of the things we need to do to achieve carbon dioxide emissions reductions. If we maintain our current energy efficiency and clean energy requirements at current rates we will be more than 1/3 of the way to our proposed target. And, when we add in reductions from coal plant retirements that have occurred or been announced since 2012, that number jumps to more than 1/2 of our proposed reduction target. This means that we get more than half way to what EPA is proposing just by continuing our existing efforts - and we will get "credit" for those existing efforts.

But, we also have the opportunity to maximize the potential benefit to human, environmental and economic health from reducing existing power plant emissions if we achieve the remaining reductions through clean energy and efficiency. Our current

annual efficiency targets are half of what many leading states are achieving. Our current Tier I clean energy target is only 8%, compared to 20% for Maryland, 22% for New Jersey, and 25% for Delaware. If we simply match the commitments of other leading states by doubling our commitment to efficiency and achieving 20% renewable energy by 2030, we will meet over 96% of our target. With these reasonable, achievable steps, we CAN do this, and we owe it to ourselves, our children, and future generations to take these actions now.

In addition to helping Pennsylvania meet our carbon pollution reduction targets, renewable energy and energy efficiency can help to support jobs and our local economies. Wind energy manufacturing, construction, and operation now employ at least 75,000 Americans, and the great majority of components are sourced domestically. In 2013, the solar industry created 24,000 new jobs in America. States neighboring Pennsylvania, such as Ohio and Michigan are seeing a resurgence of manufacturing jobs in the clean energy sector, revitalizing the Rust Belt. We want the same for Pennsylvania and we can use the Clean Power Plan as an opportunity to implement policies that will bring these jobs to the Commonwealth.

I also want to recognize that while this is reasonable and achievable for Pennsylvania, there will be a necessary transition in some areas of the state, and it is essential that these transitions happen with the insight and inclusion of those who have been, and will be, most impacted. To this end, I would like to share some words from our Allegheny Group's Mining Issues Chair, and the Community Organizer for the Center for Coalfield Justice in Washington, PA – Veronica Coptis. Veronica is a life-long resident of Greene County, PA and she shares the following reflections:

“For too many years, my friends and family have suffered serious health impacts from the life cycle of coal. All too often, coal extraction and combustion in power plants occur in designated Environmental Justice areas, communities with large minority populations and/or low income levels. In fact, Environmental Justice areas are expanding in southwestern Pennsylvania, following the industry's reckless pursuit of coal at all costs. Corporations take advantage of these areas and have for generations. The EPA needs to make sure these carbon rules are as stringent as possible to offer much needed relief to people living within the dirty coal cycle, like my community.

In southwestern Pennsylvania, many of the coalfield areas are also exploding with Shale gas extraction. Without a plan that focuses on renewables, these same communities will see Shale gas drilling increase even more as power plants convert to gas. This will not alleviate the negative health impacts we see from the coal cycle

because the extraction of gas has serious health impacts as well and massive methane emissions that will just increase the damages of climate change.

It is clear that these new regulations are going to create significant changes to frontline communities and the EPA has a responsibility to make sure those are just and equitable. This transition will have many great improvements to our communities but if those most impacted are not part of the conversation there will also be negative impacts to those living on the frontlines. This absolutely includes the coal miners who are here today and those who could not make the trip. I doubt very much that anyone here today will argue against the benefit of clean air and clean water. What is a real concern is that whatever comes next, when we move beyond coal, will leave coalfield residents behind. Those who stand to be impacted the most MUST play an active role in this transition."

Thank you for your time today.

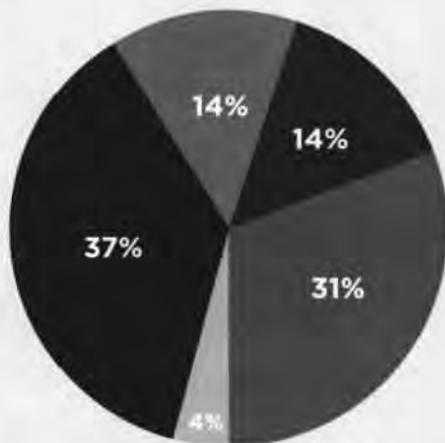
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THE CLEAN POWER PLAN FOR PENNSYLVANIA

The Environmental Protection Agency's new Clean Power Plan is designed to give states flexibility in meeting their goals. Each state will be allowed to create its own plan to cut carbon pollution, grow the economy and clean up the air we breathe.

In Pennsylvania, we're already well on our way to meeting our goal of reducing carbon pollution from power plants 32% from 2012 levels by 2030. That's equivalent to taking 5.6 million cars off the road. The proposed deadlines for submitting draft State Implementation Plans are June 2016 for individual plans and June 2017 for multi-state plans.

PA'S PATH TO REDUCING CARBON POLLUTION



CURRENT POLICIES & RETIREMENTS

- Existing clean energy and energy efficiency policies
- Recent and upcoming coal plant retirements (retired or announced since 2012)

NEW PROGRAMS & POLICIES

- Increasing energy efficiency
- Increasing renewable energy
- Additional measures

PENNSYLVANIA IS ALREADY REDUCING CARBON POLLUTION

Pennsylvania has existing programs that would get us more than halfway to our goal, if they are fully implemented:

- The Energy Savings Act (Act 129) requires utilities to help customers save electricity and money through energy efficiency. If the existing programs are extended through 2030, this would meet **14%** of our goal.
- The Alternative Energy Portfolio Standard requires that 8% of our electricity come from renewable sources by 2021, which would meet **23%** of our goal.
- Coal-fired power plants that have already retired since 2012 or announced that they will soon retire will meet **14%** of our goal.

CLOSING THE GAP

We can meet and exceed our goal with modest increases in energy efficiency and renewable energy:

- Doubling our energy efficiency savings goal from just 0.75% per year to 1.5% per year would make us consistent with leading states, lower peoples' monthly bills, and get us an additional **14%** toward our goal.
- Increasing the percentage of renewable energy in our mix from 8% to 20% by 2030 would make us more competitive with neighboring states and get us an additional **31%** toward our goal.
- The remaining **4%** can be easily met by a range of options, including updating building codes and increasing power plant efficiency.

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