



Thoughtful people disagree on the moral or spiritual gravity of unintended harm. But to knowingly allow harm to come to others – to stand by and choose convenience or profit first? On that, all of our faith traditions are clear: it is not OK. And people of faith are not alone – ask the children on any playground.

PA IPL is an organization composed of people of faith working to respond to climate change. We're working to use less energy, to be better stewards of resources in our congregations and our homes, to choose electricity generated without dangerous emissions, and to help members of our communities who cannot alone afford to invest in order to use less.

That work is good. In fact, many of us find that it is precisely in the *doing* that hope takes root and faith blossoms. We are also painfully aware that our direct efforts cannot slow our emissions fast enough. Larger, faster change is required, and there is no reason to wait for the federal government.

PA IPL is thankful that the DEP is preparing for the important rules to curb greenhouse gas emissions from power plants that the EPA plans to issue. Power generation accounts for 40% of our greenhouse gas emissions, so these rules are important. We testify at EPA hearings on climate change matters whenever those hearings occur in Pennsylvania. Many faith leaders testified just last month at the listening sessions held in Philadelphia on the very rule you are now considering.

While we are pleased to have the opportunities to participate in these discussions, we are clear that it is now time for action. Pennsylvania alone is responsible for 1% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions, and those emissions are harmful. Because of the scale of our emissions, we also have an extraordinary opportunity to make a difference.

We recently helped organize events for Dr. Wendy Ring, a physician and master of public health who bicycled across the US to take the “Climate 911 Prescription for Climate Action” to Washington. Her talk about the public health effects of climate change featured specific examples from Pennsylvania. As with most public health threats, the greatest threat is to the most vulnerable people: the young, the old, the sick, and the poor. In addition, the plants that generate those GHG emissions also emit more directly-harmful, locally-acting pollutants. How can we knowingly let that continue? What are we waiting for?

We *have* a state climate plan in Pennsylvania. It's got a lot going for it, but we need to follow it, update it on schedule, and help Pennsylvanians hold our state leaders accountable to the plan. We are glad that you are planning for the state portion of the EPA proposals, but please, don't wait to act.

Pennsylvania is an official “observer” of RGGI. The member states of that coalition didn’t wait for the federal government to act on climate change. They moved ahead to act ethically and in the interests of their residents. Pennsylvania observes from the

sidelines. What are we waiting for?

As people of faith, we want to lift existing electricity production into a new era – one in which we can refrigerate food and listen to iPods without doing so much harm. We pray for a fast and fair transition to a clean-energy economy. The sooner we act to set emissions expectations, the sooner we will signal inventors, researchers, and the market that Pennsylvanians will support those who step forward to move us in the right direction. What are we waiting for?

Here in Pennsylvania, we know that there are clean-energy options. Pennsylvanians – whether or not they express concern about climate change<sup>1</sup> – want more sustainably-generated electricity. We do have a vested interest —Pennsylvania is home to factories that build parts for wind turbines, and we have ridges famous for their steady updrafts — but we are also home to combustible fuel. We know the boom-and-bust cycle of that economy, and we know what happens to people downwind. With carbon pollution, we are all downwind.

Those who are suffering now are those who live closest to the margins: the poor, the infirm, children, the elderly, but none of us will remain exempt, and congregational aide can only go so far. What we do now matters.

As people of faith, we are deeply and urgently concerned about climate change as a threat to Creation *and* as a harm to the most vulnerable people. We wish that rules were unnecessary, but they are not. We need to update our carbon-belching infrastructure. We need to reduce carbon emissions more, and faster than faith communities can alone, so we support the EPA's rules, and the DEP's work to uphold them. We are ready to move into the future in hope.

Pennsylvania Interfaith Power & Light supports EPA's intention to limit carbon pollution from existing power plants. We urge the DEP to prepare for the new rules, to lead beyond the new rules, and to do so more nimbly than the federal government, stepping into action well before June of 2016.

We understand that there will be a highly-credentialed panel here for a hearing on the state climate plan in room 418 of the Main Capitol building next Monday, December 16. We hope you will attend.

Thank you for your time, and for your work to uphold Article 1, Section 27 of the Pennsylvania State Constitution.

<sup>1</sup> "But even among respondents who indicated a lack of concern over global warming, 59 percent wanted more of Pennsylvania's electricity supply to come from renewable sources." ( July 2012, Hinrichs, Ready, Eshleman, and Yoo, *Pennsylvanian's Attitudes Toward Renewable Energy*, a study undertaken at the behest of the non-partisan Center for Rural Pennsylvania, a Legislative Agency of the Pennsylvania Assembly. p.14)