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Extreme weather events like Superstorm Sandy and the record heat waves we've seen in recent summers are exactly the sorts of events scientists have been saying will become more frequent and severe because of climate change. Global warming-induced sea level rise has already doubled the risk of coastal flooding like we saw during Sandy,¹ and Pennsylvania is projected to see the number of days each year where the temperature exceeds 90 degrees Fahrenheit quadruple by the end of the century.² And climate change is leading to ecosystem shifts that threaten to drive many species to extinction.³

Carbon pollution in our atmosphere is making extreme weather more frequent and severe, and scientists predict it only get worse unless we act to cut the global warming pollution that's fueling the problem.

Here in Pennsylvania, the primary source of carbon pollution is abundantly clear: PennEnvironment Research & Policy Center's recent report, *'America's Dirtiest Power Plants,'* shows that power plants produce more than 40 percent of our nation's total carbon pollution, and an even higher percentage – 47 percent – here in Pennsylvania. A handful of the dirtiest plants make up a huge portion of our

¹ <http://www.ametsoc.org/2012extremeeventsclimate.pdf>

² "Climate Change Impacts and Solutions for Pennsylvania," (2008). Union of Concerned Scientists.

³ http://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/02/science/earth/in-new-jersey-pines-trouble-arrives-on-six-legs.html?hpw&rref=us&_r=0

emissions: For example, the 50 dirtiest US plants alone emit more carbon pollution than all but 6 other entire countries.

Pennsylvania is ranked third worst in the country in terms of its carbon pollution from power plants.

The urgency is clear, but so is the opportunity. We in Pennsylvania must cut our emissions if we want to avert the worst impacts of climate change – and that’s why section 111(d) performance standards are so important, and why Pennsylvania’s State Implementation Plan needs to be strong and timely.

Pennsylvanians have already submitted more than 200,000 comments in support of limiting carbon pollution from power plants, while hundreds of elected officials, business leaders, and doctors have voiced their support for reigning in the biggest polluters.

The mission of the Department of Environmental Protection is to “protect Pennsylvania's air, land and water [...] and to provide for the health and safety of its citizens through a cleaner environment.” And there is no greater threat to our environment than the threat of climate change.

I urge the department of environmental protection to develop a state implementation plan that includes strong performance standards for existing power plants, and paves the way for clean energy sources like wind solar, and energy efficiency.

Already, Pennsylvania is seeing substantial environmental benefits from clean energy: in 2012, thanks to our use of wind energy, Pennsylvania avoided climate-

altering carbon pollution equivalent to taking more than 278 thousand cars off the road. We are saving enough water to meet the needs of over 28,600 people. And we are avoiding 1,255 tons of smog-causing nitrogen oxides and over 1,500 tons of sulfur dioxide, which cause acid rain and the soot that leads to respiratory disease. Wind power in Pennsylvania is projected to increase by 97 percent over the next five years, and a State Implementation Plan that includes substantial support for clean energy could increase that percentage dramatically.

This is our biggest opportunity yet to meet the challenge of global warming. Climate change's worst impacts will be felt by future generations, but destructive hurricanes and crippling droughts are already a problem for *our* time. Let's not ignore the message that these devastating events are sending us. Failure to act wouldn't just be a betrayal of future generations – it would be sticking our heads in the sand.

On behalf of PennEnvironment and our thousands of citizen members, I urge the Department of Environmental Protection to design a strong State Implementation Plan that will cut carbon from existing power plants and encourage clean energy, in order to protect our children and future generations from the worst impacts of climate change. Pennsylvania is the 3rd biggest emitter of carbon pollution from the biggest sources, so we can't afford to wait.