A RESOLUTION

Urging the Department of Environmental Protection to cease all action on its "cap and invest" regulation.

WHEREAS, During the COVID-19 pandemic, Pennsylvania has united to adjust course and prioritize mitigating the spread of this deadly virus; and

WHEREAS, In Pennsylvania, business as usual has literally ceased, with small businesses across Pennsylvania closing their doors and most construction activities halted; and

WHEREAS, Many Pennsylvania families are without a definable path forward as they struggle to pay mortgages and rents and put food on the table; and

WHEREAS, Most Pennsylvanians are willing to provide latitude to their government to take temporary measures to address these extraordinary challenges; and

WHEREAS, Pennsylvanians visualize a government that prioritizes their health and safety while also developing a plan to begin reopening the economy in a sensible manner that provides a definitive path to the end of the COVID-19 crisis;
WHEREAS, Recently, the General Assembly passed legislation, aligning with the standards of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, to provide for the development of a plan to allow certain businesses to reopen and resume operations during the mitigation of the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, Governor Wolf vetoed the General Assembly's plan, joining a multi-state council aligning himself with governors of six other states whose interests do not prioritize Pennsylvania residents and the strength of our economy; and

WHEREAS, During this time of crisis, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) continues to advance the development of regulations to join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), despite concerns echoing across this Commonwealth that this program will do irreparable harm to Pennsylvania's economy; and

WHEREAS, The DEP's "cap and invest" regulation tracks the RGGI's model, but crucial guidelines on the baseline carbon budget and investment of allowance auction proceeds are currently being considered; and

WHEREAS, Advisory committee meetings of the General Assembly are essential in providing meaningful input to the DEP's "cap and invest" regulation; and

WHEREAS, Critical oversight hearings by legislative committees to ask questions and explore policy ramifications are indispensable in the promulgation of the DEP's "cap and invest" regulation, which not only caps carbon pollution but also requires carbon-emitting power plants to buy pollution allowances; and
WHEREAS, The DEP's "cap and invest" regulation continues to proceed through the regulatory process at a time when policymakers should be focused on reopening and rebuilding Pennsylvania's economy; and

WHEREAS, At a time when policymakers should be focused on reopening and rebuilding Pennsylvania's economy, the Wolf Administration has authorized expenditures of several hundred thousand dollars to advance policies unrelated to the current pandemic emergency; and

WHEREAS, Though Governor Wolf has been asked to suspend the development of the DEP's "cap and invest" regulation, as well as the pursuit of other major policy initiatives during this time of crisis, the Wolf Administration is spending massive quantities of taxpayer dollars to position Pennsylvania's economy at the mercy of some of the identical states to which Governor Wolf is currently relinquishing Pennsylvania's economic sovereignty; and

WHEREAS, Pennsylvanians deserve an Executive Branch that is focused on their well-being in its totality, their health, safety and prosperity; and

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania-elected lawmakers are hearing daily from their constituents and constituent business owners that mitigation measures for COVID-19 are critical; and

WHEREAS, During this time of a declared emergency, Pennsylvanians should not have to wonder what schemes their government is advancing while they struggle to make ends meet; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate urge the Department of Environmental Protection to cease all action on its "cap and invest" regulation.