

Good morning. My name is David Masur and I'm the Executive Director for PennEnvironment. PennEnvironment is a statewide, citizen-based, non-profit environmental advocacy group.

I'd like to thank the Chairman and his staff for inviting me to testify today and everyone for joining us today to discuss this important topic of climate change.

As you have heard from other testifiers today, climate change is real, it is predominantly caused by human activity, and the effects will be disastrous.

The negative effects that we will see from climate change are a regular topic of conversation in the media and with the public. I don't think I need to beat people over the head with the threats posed by climate change at today's hearing. But to quickly summarize, here in Pennsylvania, the negative impacts include extreme weather, more severe downpours, hotter days that can trigger more asthma attacks and heat-related deaths, and increased prevalence of invasive species, pests, viruses, and diseases.

Besides the predicted effects of climate change on our health, there are also dire predictions for our economy.

The National Bureau of Economic Research recently released a study showing that if we do not dramatically reduce our global warming pollution, the nation could see more than a 10% cut in GDP by 2100.<sup>1</sup> This is in line with a study recently released by the Trump administration that also predicted that climate change could cost the nation 10 percent of its GDP.<sup>2</sup>

Our business community is predicting similar economic effects due to climate change.

Tyson Foods, which recently acquired Keystone Foods (a global food provider with 25 manufacturing facilities worldwide and headquarters in West Chester, PA that employs 11,000 people and generates \$2.7 billion in annual sales) has warned its investors that "climate change could affect our ability to procure needed commodities at costs and in quantities we currently experience and may require us to make additional unplanned capital expenditures."<sup>3</sup> Kraft Heinz has given similar warnings to its investors. And Coca-Cola (which has 14 facilities in Pennsylvania) reports that, "climate change may have long-term direct and indirect implications for our business and supply chain." Its official statement explains, "the consensus on climate

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<https://www.washingtonpost.com/weather/2019/08/19/climate-change-could-cost-us-up-percent-its-gdp-by-study-finds/>

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.businessfwd.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/20191015-State-Climate-Report-PA-.pdf>

science is increasingly unequivocal – global climate change is happening and man-made greenhouse gas emissions are a crucial factor.<sup>4</sup>

Erie Insurance Group warned, “Changing climate conditions have added to the unpredictability, frequency and severity of natural disasters and have created additional uncertainty as to future trends and exposures.” PNC Financial Services (based in Pittsburgh) reports a similar concern: “Climate change may be increasing the frequency or severity of adverse weather conditions, making the impact from these types of natural disasters on us or our customers worse.”<sup>5</sup>

Pennsylvanians share the same concerns raised by our business leaders: a recent poll showed that Pennsylvanians overwhelmingly believe in climate change—and overwhelming support commonsense clean energy solutions.<sup>6</sup> Most registered voters believe that climate change is currently causing problems (67%) and most (68%) think the state should do more to address those problems. **Only 4% of Pennsylvanians polled don’t believe in climate change.**

I’d like to address the elephant in the room head on: certainly at PennEnvironment we are disappointed that time and again, committees in the General Assembly have held hearings on the topic of climate change that include testifiers who don’t agree with the overwhelming consensus on climate change. This has been a tried and true strategy of opponents to strong environmental policies for decades: sow seeds of doubt and trot out dueling scientists in an effort to show that “the debate’s still out” on the topic.

This implies that there is serious debate within the scientific community on the fact that our climate is changing rapidly and that it’s predominantly caused by human activity.

And if the criteria for proving that “the science is still out” on a topic is one or a handful of dissenters who have the letters PhD behind their name or “Doctor of” in front it, we would still be questioning if smoking is good for us, if African Americans are inferior to Caucasians, if the Holocaust happened, if homosexuality is a choice, and if the world is flat.

Just two weeks ago, a professor from the University of Minnesota-Duluth published his book entitled, “Nobody Died at Sandy Hook,” which as the title notes, argued that the school massacre at Sandy Hook was a farce. But we are not having a serious debate about whether discussion about whether Sandy Hook occurred because someone can trot out one academic with a PhD.

This is not how science works in the United States. The time for these types of debates has long passed.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.businessfwd.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/20191015-State-Climate-Report-PA-.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.businessfwd.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/20191015-State-Climate-Report-PA-.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.fandm.edu/uploads/files/503040077590675717-f-m-poll-release-march-2019.pdf>

**The scientific consensus regarding climate change is overwhelming. 97% of scientists are in agreement that climate change is happening, it's caused by humans, and the risks of not taking action are accelerating.**

So let's talk about the solutions.

This should be an appropriate conversation for the Majority caucus, give the leadership on clean energy policies (past and present) have been driven by Republican Senators and House members alike. This includes being the lead sponsors to Pennsylvania's Alternative Energy Portfolio Standard (AEPS), which was introduced by Senator Ted Erickson and state Representative Chris Ross; closing solar borders legislation introduced by Republican state Senator Mario Scavello; improvements and expansions to the Commonwealth's energy conservation law (Act 129) currently being proposed by state Senator Tom Killion; wind energy policies introduced by state Rep. Curt Sonney; solar legislation introduced by Rep. Kauffer; energy efficiency standards legislation being introduced by Rep. Wendi Thomas; and electric vehicles legislation introduced by state Senators Mensch and Tomlinson.

I hope that the leadership in the House and Senate will bring up these proposals and move them through the chambers, and pass these bipartisan clean energy policies that will help us reduce climate pollution (among other pollutants).

Given what other organizations have said about TCI, RGGI and other policies, and in order to be cognizant of time I won't go into deep detail about these particular policy handles other than to say that PennEnvironment is strongly supportive of both of them. And certainly, at the close of our panel would be willing to answer questions on these topics or our position on them.

With that I will wrap up. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, and staff: let me again offer my thanks and appreciation in inviting me to participate in today's hearing.