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Title: WHEREAS, our nation’s climate crisis is becoming more apparent every year, with higher summer temperatures and severe storms here in Pennsylvania, wildfires out west, and hurricanes down south; and,

Sponsors: Erika Strassburger, All Members

Indexes: PROCLAMATION - MRS. STRASSBURGER

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WHEREAS, our nation’s climate crisis is becoming more apparent every year, with higher summer temperatures and severe storms here in Pennsylvania, wildfires out west, and hurricanes down south; and,

WHEREAS, as the fourth largest climate polluter in the country, Pennsylvania has a responsibility to be a leader in implementing climate solutions; and,

WHEREAS, the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) is a bipartisan, multi-state program started in 2008 that works by setting a cap on pollution from power plants and reducing those caps each year; and,

WHEREAS, Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont all participate in RGGI, with Virginia in process of joining; and,

WHEREAS, through 2008 to 2018, carbon pollution has decreased by 47% in participating RGGI states, outpacing the rest of the country by 90%; and,

WHEREAS, in 2019 Governor Tom Wolf issued an executive order for Pennsylvania to join RGGI. Pennsylvania joining RGGI would have a massive impact on reducing emissions by 188 million tons by 2030; and,

WHEREAS, air pollution reductions from joining RGGI will benefit those most impacted by poor air quality, such as children, seniors, and low-income and environmental justice communities, especially impactful during a global pandemic that attacks our respiratory systems; and,

WHEREAS, air pollution reductions from joining RGGI will reduce pollution from sulfur dioxide, nitrogen

oxide, and particulate matter. These pollutants are linked to health problems including respiratory illnesses, heart attack, stroke, cancer, and mental health problems. Pollution from nitrogen oxide is expected to drop by 112,000 tons, with pollution from sulfur dioxide is expected to drop by 67,000 tons; and,

WHEREAS, in Pennsylvania, RGGI has the potential to create 27,000 new jobs and reduce electricity prices, with electricity prices in participating states reduced by 5.7%. During a time of great economic uncertainty and a public health crisis, RGGI is a tool to increase outcomes in both areas; and,

WHEREAS, to date, RGGI has raised over \$2.5 billion in the participating states for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects, greenhouse gas abatement, and direct bill assistance. Additionally, economic growth in RGGI states outpaced the rest of the country by 31%. RGGI has the potential to put nearly \$2 billion into Pennsylvania's economy over the next decade; and,

WHEREAS, in Pennsylvania, our constitution guarantees in Article 1 Section 27 a "right to clean air, pure water, and to the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic, and esthetic values of the environment"; and,

WHEREAS, the Environmental Quality Board of the Department of Environmental Protections for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania currently has an open comment period for the Proposed Rulemaking: CO2 Budget Trading Program (#7-559), establishing the Commonwealth's participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative; and,

WHEREAS, to promote a livable climate for all Pennsylvanians and future generations and uphold the constitution of our state, Pennsylvania must join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh does hereby urge the Pennsylvania General Assembly and State Senate to join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) and further support reduction in greenhouse gas emissions across our Commonwealth and country.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this Will of Council shall be sent to the Allegheny County delegation of the Pennsylvania State House and Senate, the chairs and minority chairs of the State House and Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committees, Governor Tom Wolf, and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.