



Power PA Jobs Alliance

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Bi-partisan elected leaders, business representatives and union trades stand up to Governor Wolf's proposed carbon tax plan

Pittsburgh, PA (May 19, 2021) – Representatives from a cross-section of industries hosted a jobs rally on Wednesday, May 19 to fight against Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf's plans to have Pennsylvania join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI).

The event focused on the devastating direct and indirect impact of RGGI on employment in many Western PA communities as well as, low-and fixed-income residential electric customers, which could be as high as 18 percent based upon an analysis from PJM, Inc and customer data from the Energy Information Agency.”. Bi-partisan elected leaders, business representatives and labor representatives took a bold position to stand up to the Governor in an effort to save thousands of good-paying jobs.

Pennsylvania's inclusion in RGGI would result in a carbon tax on air emissions from fossil fueled power plants, which are some of the most reliable and efficient providers of energy in the Commonwealth. This tax could lead to the closure of several of these power plants, resulting in the direct elimination of thousands of family-sustaining jobs and increases in the cost of electricity for all the Commonwealth's energy consumers.

“When Governor Wolf took office, he pledged a government that works, jobs that pay and schools that teach, said Pennsylvania Senator Joe Pittman (R-41). “His government is working – working to eliminate thousands of jobs that pay. Meanwhile, schools in the



region I represent will be deprived of their ability to teach as his carbon tax destroys their local tax base.”

The event also included staggering results of recent polling of voters and business owners regarding the matter.

Based on the Spring 2021 Keystone Business Climate Survey from the Lincoln Institute of Public Opinion and Research, 73% of Pennsylvania businesses oppose Governor Wolf taking unilateral action on energy policies that directly impact electric rates and jobs from existing power plants without the approval of the General Assembly.

That same question was posed to likely voters throughout Pennsylvania in another recent poll conducted by Susquehanna Polling & Research. The results showed that 60% of those likely voters also opposed the Governor’s proposed unilateral actions.

“Entering the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative will have devastating, long-term economic impacts on Pennsylvania for many years to come, said Pennsylvania Representative Jim Struzzi (R-62). “These factors are not being considered and the voice of the people is essentially being ignored by this administration. We are asking to this to be vetted properly through the General Assembly so that all the ramifications of RGGI are considered.”

When business owners and likely voters were asked about an added fee (or tax) on carbon dioxide emissions from Pennsylvania power plants, 67% of business owners were opposed and 57% of likely voters were opposed.

“These polling results show that Pennsylvanians are learning more about the devastating economic impacts of RGGI and an overwhelming number of voters and job creating businesses oppose a stifling tax on carbon emissions, said Tom Melcher, business manager of the Pittsburgh Building Trades Council.

Pennsylvania’s Department of Environmental Protection’s (DEP) own modeling shows no decrease in carbon dioxide emissions in our transmission organization as a result of Pennsylvania joining RGGI, but rather a shift in generation, and therefore jobs, to our neighboring states that do not tax.

“RGGI will create an uneven playing field moving the goal post out of Pennsylvania and into West Virginia and Ohio,” said Shawn Steffee, Business Agent for Boilermakers Local 154.

Joining RGGI may be worse for the environment, as to date there has been no effort to address power generation leakage. DEP’s updated modeling shows a 0.89% reduction in CO2 between now and 2030 in PJM, and a 0.168% reduction in CO2 emissions in the Eastern Interconnection during the same time. Because of the generation leaking from



Pennsylvania to Ohio and West Virginia, increases in actual pollutants like NO_x and SO₂ will occur given those states do not have the same stringent controls on their power plants, and the fact that Pennsylvania is immediately downwind.

“Energy and the environment can and must co-exist,” said Jimmy Brock, President and Chief Executive Officer of CONSOL Energy. “We need to be investing and innovating, while finding ways to maintain our coal mines and power plants operations through technology to reduce or eliminate CO₂ emissions and also finding alternative uses of coal.”

About Power PA Jobs Alliance

The Power PA Jobs Alliance is a coalition of labor, management, and consumer stakeholders that oppose state proposals to impose carbon dioxide emission taxes on fossil fuel generation, manufacturing operations, and motor fuels. These carbon tax proposals will eliminate thousands of jobs, undermine Pennsylvania’s economy, and threaten consumers with significant price hikes on consumer electricity rates, consumer goods, and motor fuels.