



29 January 2020

Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee  
Senate Transportation Committee  
Joint Public Hearing  
"Impacts of Pennsylvania's Participation in the Transportation and Climate Initiative"  
Clean Air Council Testimony

My name is Nick Zuwiala-Rogers, and I am the Transportation Program Director at Clean Air Council. The Council is an environmental organization with a mission to protect everyone's right to a healthy environment. The Council is submitting this testimony on behalf of its 35,000 members across Pennsylvania who seek to reduce pollution from transportation and embark on an improved transportation system in the 21st Century.

The transportation sector makes up roughly 30% of the United States' greenhouse gas pollution, making it the fastest-growing and highest-emitting sector in the country. In Pennsylvania, this breakdown is similar, as transportation emissions contribute about 25% of the commonwealth's overall greenhouse gas pollution, based mostly on burning gasoline and diesel brought in from outside of the state. Beyond contributing to climate change, pollution from the transportation sector includes particulate matter and other pollutants that lead to asthma and other respiratory illnesses, which disproportionately affect seniors, children, low-income communities, and communities of color. For these reasons, the District of Columbia and states across the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic, including Pennsylvania, have worked together over the past year to develop the framework for a program to reduce transportation sector pollution known as the Transportation and Climate Initiative (TCI). The Council supports Pennsylvania's involvement in the TCI talks and encourages the state to remain engaged and move towards the adoption of a robust program that will lead to less pollution and an improved transportation system in Pennsylvania.

The transportation system in Pennsylvania and across the northeast is not working for many of its residents, who are bogged down by congested roads, polluting vehicles, and unreliable infrastructure. TCI has the potential to help propel Pennsylvania towards safe, clean, reliable transportation that works for rural, suburban, and urban communities across the commonwealth. Based on listening sessions held throughout 2019 and from recent polling, Pennsylvanians across demographic categories want better public transportation, safer streets, better access to electric vehicles, and a transition to cleaner school buses, trucks, and other large vehicles.

Rural communities in Pennsylvania are perhaps the least well-served by the current transportation system. Rural residents live furthest away from their jobs and other places of travel. They spend more of their budget on transportation costs and have the most to benefit from increased fuel economy and more transportation options, which TCI can help provide.



Suburban communities suffer from congested, stressful commutes. TCI can help invest in better public transportation, increased biking and walking infrastructure to close last mile gaps, and support the switch to electric vehicles that will keep these Pennsylvanians' energy dollars at home.

Urban residents in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia suffer from disproportionate air pollution resulting from transportation sector emissions. These are some of the same communities burdened heavily by other forms of pollution and would benefit greatly from cleaner transportation. Additionally, many of these communities are cut off from access to growing job markets outside of urban areas and need better transportation options to realize new employment opportunities.

It is important to understand that TCI is still being developed through cooperation and dialogue among participating states, and Pennsylvania's continued engagement is needed to help craft a regional program that most aligns with the needs of Pennsylvania residents. Currently, the program is designed to impose costs on importers and suppliers of gas and diesel, not the consumer; nevertheless, this and many other details can still be changed between now and the planned release of a final memorandum of understanding this spring. At that time, each state will begin its internal process to determine whether to adopt its own state-specific program that can collaborate with neighboring states. If Pennsylvania were to stop its participation, not only would we lose the opportunity to influence the core program details, but we risk staying stuck in a failing, outdated 20th century transportation system. Meanwhile, our neighboring states would be benefiting from the proceeds generated by this program and investing in a cleaner, faster, safer, more reliable 21st century transportation system.

Clean Air Council commends the Department of Transportation and Department of Environmental Protection for participating in the cooperative multi-state TCI talks, as well as the Senate for holding today's hearing to engage on this important program. The Council urges Pennsylvania to continue its involvement in developing TCI, which holds the promise to create a transportation system that works better for all Pennsylvanians.

Thank you for your consideration of Clean Air Council's written testimony, and please direct any questions to Nick Zuwiala-Rogers at [nzr@cleanair.org](mailto:nzr@cleanair.org) or (215) 567-4004 x 110.