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Good morning everyone and thank you for your time. The coal industry, and these coal-fired power plants in particular create economic value in communities across Pennsylvania, and that is especially true where I am from in Indiana County and many of our neighboring counties. But if we've learned anything out of the past 4-5 months, it is that we are all one large interconnected economy that depend on one another. So, the potential impact of the closure of these power plants is not limited to simply the number of people that these facilities employ. The Allegheny Conference conducted a study in April of last year on the economic impact of the coal industry in Pennsylvania. This study also measured the indirect impact of coal and power plant jobs on the entire local and regional economy. The report refers to indirect spending, which is when money spent by the Coal Industry in its supply chain is spent again by local businesses. This also includes the indirect jobs of making and delivering goods to the facilities from limestone in State College to coal from Greene and Washington counties, to the truckers, train drivers, haulers, contractors, or engineers, among others. But as I said, we're all interconnected, and the impact on a potential closure of these power plants extends far beyond just indirect spending and these indirect jobs. Employees throughout not only the plants themselves but also this entire supply chain use their salaries and wages to purchase goods and services from other businesses throughout the area. The industries that would be affected by a significant drop in this revenue include housing, retail, food and drink, utilities, travel, and entertainment, just to name a few.

So when we are talking about the potential closure of even one of these plants, we're not simply looking at the jobs lost at that plant. The Allegheny Conference study found that for each of these jobs, an additional 1.97 jobs are generated through our region. That's a multiplier of 2.97. On a national level, a similar brief was also published last year by the Economic Policy Institute and found this number to actually be closer to 6.64. So when we look at a county like Indiana in a region like we are in, the loss of hundreds or even a couple of thousand total jobs at these plants would have a significant impact on our economy, but the indirect impact of those closures and the thousands of jobs and families that it would negatively affect would be devastating. The backward and forward linkages from these jobs would be large enough to cause mammoth ripple effects throughout our local, regional, and even state economies.

To get a view of what this could look like we can simply look west to Ohio who has recently seen the closure of a number of coal-fired power plants over the last 10 years. A study was conducted in 2019 to examine the impacts of just two coal-fired plants in Adams County, Ohio. A region very similar to Indiana in geography, industry, and work ethic. This study found that the county and local governments and school districts were set to lose \$8.5 million in tax revenues, 370 direct jobs, and over 760 indirect jobs. A figure very close to the multiplier reported by the Allegheny Conference. And to make matters worse, the study found that the majority of these displaced workers had limited local options to find employment that would match their qualifications. And those that were able to find work are facing a wage challenge due to transitioning to a brand-new career. So when hundreds of families are unable to find work within a particular community, what do they do? They leave. And when all of these individuals leave a community what does it do to the local businesses, what is the indirect impact? Well in these communities in Ohio it meant more and more vacant buildings, more stores shutting down, a real estate market that is struggling, and schools either consolidating or closing meaning an additional loss of jobs. No community needs to face that. And we certainly don't need to do that in our region.

We have found out what can happen over just a 2-3 month period when business transactions slow down or stop altogether. Imagine what will happen if we follow Adams County and see thousands of jobs and the spending capacity that those jobs create, just go away forever. We need to be looking for ways to support all of these industries, get our businesses back on track, and create new opportunities and new jobs. We do not need to develop policies like RGGI that are pure anti-business. Policies that will take away jobs, force families to leave our region or our state, and further cripple businesses causing many to close their doors for good. This does not only create a competitive disadvantage for Indiana County or our region, but for Pennsylvania as a whole. Our local economy and small business community have already taken a hit due to COVID-19. But our community and our small businesses are strong and we will bounce back. What we do not need is to have the further loss of jobs, exodus of families, and the subsequent loss of revenue hanging over the heads of these businesses like a dark cloud for the next few years as business owners wonder whether this time they may have to close for good. Governor Wolf has preached about jobs that pay, schools that teach, and government that works. Yet he continues to push forward an initiative that takes away thousands of jobs that pay, closes schools that teach, and shows many of us that that kind of government does not work.