

Upper Delaware River Basin Citizens

STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 6, 2021

“Citizens Group Calls Out Wolf Plan Carbon Tax”

The Upper Delaware River Basin Citizens, a bi-state citizen group representing over 1,000 landowners and residents on both sides of the Upper Delaware River, has called on Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf to cease and desist in efforts to impose an unconstitutional and extremely ill-advised carbon tax on all Pennsylvanians by executive action.

Upper Delaware River Basin Citizens (UDRBC) strongly opposes Governor Wolf’s attempt to bypass the Pennsylvania legislature and inflict a new tax on Pennsylvanians by unilaterally deciding to join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI).

RGGI represents New York, New Jersey and several New England states, which, unlike Pennsylvania, do not produce enough energy to meet their needs. Joining RGGI will require the Commonwealth to surrender its competitive advantage of lower electricity rates by attaching higher costs to the fuels used to make that energy, taking money out of the hands of all residents of the Commonwealth in the process.

Governor Wolf is pursuing RGGI against the will of the legislature and contrary to the recommendations of independent agencies such as Pennsylvania’s Independent Regulatory Review Commission. He ordered the state’s Department of Environmental Protection, on October 3, 2019 to join RGGI, which sets a cap on total carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from electric power generators in RGGI states, forcing power plants to purchase allowances for the CO₂ they emit. These are equivalent to a carbon tax.

Pennsylvanians enjoy much lower electric rates and because the Commonwealth would be the only state with the natural gas resources to produce large amounts of energy, it would bear the brunt of this tax. The UDRBC, therefore, demands the Governor halt his efforts to impose it by mandate. This is terrible policy and an unconstitutional usurpation of the legislature’s authority.