



EPA Listening Session on Carbon Pollution Standards for Existing Fossil Fuel Power Plants

Statement of Peter Heisler

Washington, D.C.

November 7, 2013

Hello, my name is Peter Heisler, and I'm here today on behalf of Environmental Defense Fund and its over 750,000 members nationwide. EDF is a non-profit, non-partisan organization that combines law, policy, science, and economics to find solutions to today's most pressing environmental problems. Thank you for the opportunity to be here.

It is unacceptable that there are no national limits on the climate-destabilizing pollution emitted by power plants. The U.S. experienced twelve separate billion-dollar climate disasters in 2012, including a yearlong drought and widespread crop failure in 22 states, Western wildfires that burned over 9.2 million acres, and Hurricane Sandy, which devastated major population centers in the Northeast.¹ It is imperative that we make major reductions in carbon pollution from existing power plants—the largest source of carbon pollution in our nation.²

The solutions we need are at hand—including changes at existing plants to reduce emissions, shifting utilization towards lower-emitting existing generation, and deploying renewable energy and energy efficiency.

¹ *Billion-Dollar Weather/Climate Disasters*, Nat'l Climatic Data Ctr., <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/billions/events> (last visited Nov. 5, 2013).

² *National Greenhouse Gas Emissions Data*, EPA, <http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/ghgemissions/usinventoryreport.html> (last visited Nov. 5, 2013).

States and power companies across the nation have demonstrated the environmental and economic benefits that result from the transition to a more efficient, cleaner energy system. I'd like to share a few success stories.

- In the Twin Cities, Xcel Energy has achieved a 20% reduction in CO₂ emissions by shifting to lower-emitting fuels, cutting other harmful pollutants as well.³ Minnesota utilities are on track to meet the state's Renewable Energy Standard of 25% of retail electricity by 2025.⁴ In recent years, the state's Conservation Improvement Program has avoided close to a million tons of CO₂ emissions annually.⁵

- Right here in Maryland, the Renewable Portfolio Standard of 20% of in-state generation by 2020 is expected to avoid more than 10 million tons of CO₂ equivalent.⁶ The EmPOWER Maryland Initiative's energy efficiency programs are expected to avoid another 10 million metric tons of CO₂ equivalent annually,⁷ and are already saving customers millions of dollars on energy bills each year.⁸ Maryland also participates in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, which has created jobs in every participating state⁹ and by 2012 had added \$1.6 billion to the states' economies.¹⁰

³ *Minnesota Metro Emissions Reduction Project*, Xcel Energy, http://www.xcelenergy.com/Environment/Doing_Our_Part/Clean_Air_Projects/MN_MERP (last visited Nov. 5, 2013).

⁴ Minn. Dep't of Commerce, *Progress on Compliance by Electric Utilities with the Minnesota Renewable Energy Objective and the Renewable Energy Standard 3, 9* (2013), *available at* <http://mn.gov/commerce/energy/images/2013RESLegReport.pdf>.

⁵ Minn. Dep't of Commerce, *Minnesota Conservation Improvement Program Energy and Carbon Dioxide Savings Report for 2009-2010*, at 3 (2012), *available at* <http://mn.gov/commerce/energy/images/CIPCO2Rpt2012.pdf>.

⁶ Md. Dep't of the Env't, *Maryland's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act Plan 85* (2013), *available at* http://climatechange.maryland.gov/site/assets/files/1392/mde_grp_report.pdf.

⁷ *Id.* at 75.

⁸ Maryland Energy Administration, *EmPOWER Maryland Planning*, <http://energy.maryland.gov/empower3/> (last visited Nov. 5, 2013).

⁹ Analysis Grp., *The Economic Impacts of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative on Ten Northeast and Mid-Atlantic States 3-4* (2011), *available at* http://www.analysisgroup.com/uploadedFiles/Publishing/Articles/Economic_Impact_RGGI_Report.pdf.

¹⁰ *Id.* at 2.

- Wind power was the top source of new electricity additions in 2012, and much of this wind was deployed in the heartland of our nation, in red states and blue states alike, such as Oklahoma, Texas, Kansas, Illinois, Colorado, Minnesota, and Iowa.¹¹
- Over 30 states have programs requiring cleaner energy and more efficient use of existing energy.¹² These success stories provide a strong foundation for nationwide policies that limit carbon pollution from the power sector and build a stronger clean energy economy.

We urge EPA to design a 111(d) framework that builds on success stories like these and supports the expansion of clean energy and energy efficiency programs. These investments will not only cut emissions of carbon pollution, but also provide homegrown energy, create jobs, and decrease utility bills for homes and businesses.

Thank you.

¹¹ *Installed Wind Capacity*, U.S. Dep't of Energy, http://www.windpoweringamerica.gov/wind_installed_capacity.asp (last visited Nov. 5, 2013).

¹² *Rules, Regulations, and Policies for Renewable Energy*, Database of State Incentives for Renewable Energy, <http://www.dsireusa.org/summarytables/rrpre.cfm> (last visited Nov. 5, 2013); *Rules, Regulations, and Policies for Energy Efficiency*, Database of State Incentives for Renewable Energy, <http://www.dsireusa.org/summarytables/rrpee.cfm> (last visited Nov. 5, 2013).