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Pittsburgh Works Together Lauds Rejection of RGGI for Pennsylvania

PITTSBURGH, PA – The Labor Co-Chair of Pittsburgh Works Together, a labor-management coalition of union leaders and top management officials representing the manufacturing, construction, and energy sectors – today praised the Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee (AQTAC) for taking into account the plight the workers, their families and communities, and abiding by the request of a broad, bipartisan group of legislators, who aggressively opposed the adoption of Pennsylvania joining The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) as “risk without reward” reality.

“The adoption of RGGI was not a sound idea or policy decision when proposed many months ago,” said Tom Melcher, Co-Chair Labor of Pittsburgh Works Together and Business Manager of the Pittsburgh Regional Building Trades Council. “The board of PWT agrees that we need to respect and protect our environment and we believe this can be done while also growing and protecting our energy, manufacturing and related industries and the good-paying jobs they create. The path to better protecting the environment is not through job crushing regulation that in the end accomplishes little if any environmental benefit.”

On Thursday, following the public comment period, AQTAC declined to approve the Department of Environmental Protection’s (DEP) RGGI regulation.

“This is an important decision for industry and jobs,” Melcher said. “It’s testament to the cooperation of labor, management, political leaders and others who worked together with the **PowerPa Jobs Alliance** to show the massive shortcomings of RGGI.”

Melcher noted that we find ourselves at a point where the most critical issues we face are rebuilding and growing our economy and solving an unemployment rate that is the highest since the Great Depression nearly a century ago.

“We are slowly coming out of a two-month shut-down of our economy – and we face many more weeks if not months to return to a level even approaching pre-virus normalcy,” he said. “RGGI is not the right approach for our state to take in the best of times let alone in the face of the massive economic issues we presently face.”

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Pittsburgh Works is committed to creating an inclusive vision of economic progress that embraces and respects both traditional legacy industries and emerging ones, while honoring the diversity of cultures and traditions inherent to each, while ensuring a sustainable environment. We seek a Pittsburgh and a region in which the lines between “old” and “new” economy are erased and respect is shown for our work ethic and dedication to community, while building a future for all.