Testimony to Governor Shapiro and
members of the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee
6/24/2024

This summer, so far, Mexico, India, Greece, Mali, Saudi Arabia, Algeria, China and the United States have suffered extreme heatwaves that collectively killed thousands of people. There hasn't been a year with below-average temperatures since 1976 - 48 years ago.

Humans pumped 37.4 billion tons of CO2 into the atmosphere in 2023 driving the carbon concentration in the atmosphere up to 419.3 parts per million above the preindustrial level of 280 PPM. The global temperature is now bouncing around at 1.5 degrees Celsius; a level scientists say will be dangerous to exceed.

Former U.S. Climate Change Envoy for the Biden Administration John Kerry said that despite all the carbon reduction promises made at the COP-21 Paris Agreement in 2015, carbon reductions only amount to 7.5 percent when, by now, they should have been cut by 30 percent. He and many scientists agree that we are not doing enough, fast enough to get to zero emissions by 2050.

According to the International Energy Agency, the fossil industry intends to increase fossil consumption by 2 percent per year into the future. If they succeed, scientists say it could increase the global temperature to around 4 degrees Celsius or 7.6 degrees Fahrenheit. The planet will survive in a deeply altered state, but it's possible that humans may not.

This is why Pennsylvania must amend the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standard to require – at minimum – 35 percent solar or with a mix of other clean energy sources by 2035. Humanity should be in a race against time to cut carbon emissions to zero by 2050. If we don't make it, the economy will be rendered a moot point and we will face a parched planet, starvation will be our biggest threat. If you have children or grandchildren, you owe it to them to do the right thing - now.

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The information above is derived from IPCC reports, NOAA, NASA, IEA, Dr. Jim Hansen, and Former Climate Envoy for the United States, John Kerry.