

## Testimony of Barbara Brandom

I enjoy being in my garden, making small 'improvements', to help my favorite plants prosper. I am so pleased to see the edibles growing. I love to feel the cool breeze from the adjacent forest and hear the sounds of the birds as I dig. I imagine my grandchildren and great nieces & nephews playing there with me. Further, I imagine that they will appreciate these plants living after me, when they visit to scatter my ashes. Every day I feel more strongly that these products of my imagination will never become reality. How many of these native plants will survive the steadily increasing temperatures? If we continue to consume fossil fuels as we did in the past, by 2050 the air temperature will have increased another five degrees. As a physician who cared for children of all ages, I weep when I understand that the children who are alive now will be lucky if they live half as long as I already have! Why can't we alter our behavior faster?

I now also recognize more immediate risks. Recent epidemiological studies of seven counties in south western Pennsylvania showed that living closer than ten miles to a producing fracked well is associated with increased risk of serious exacerbations of asthma. I should not hope that my young asthmatic relatives will join me in the Laurel Highlands, because their asthma could become much worse, where we live less than five miles from producing wells. I see that expansion of fracking is threatening both the environment near me and the entire world. Why can't fracking be prohibited in Pennsylvania as it has been in New York State?

It has been said that the time of climate warming is over, that now we are experiencing boiling temperatures. The recently published, Pennsylvania's Looming Climate Cost Crisis<sup>1</sup>, is making predictions based on a moderate climate scenario and includes only 8 of the many climate impacts that communities will experience. The costs are calculated in 2023 dollars and assume that governments will make the less expensive proactive repairs. Have you seen such actions in your community? Improved stormwater runoff management and road maintenance together are expected to account for more than half of the costs, which are likely to be \$5,000 or more per person in Pennsylvania. Air conditioning for schools, so that children can continue to attend school with their peers, is the next most expensive item on this list of the remediations which are necessary to adjust to increasing temperatures.

Pennsylvania is competing for billions of federal dollars to build hydrogen hubs.<sup>2</sup> Can hydrogen made in Pennsylvania from methane reduce the impact of this crisis? Hydrogen made from methane with attempts to capture and sequester carbon dioxide requires a lot of energy. This process will release more greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) and other air pollutants, not less.<sup>3</sup> When GHGs increase, heat in the atmosphere increases and storms get worse.

Heat already kills more people in the US than any other weather event. When GHGs decrease to zero, our atmosphere will not be forced to heat even faster than it is now. Give life a chance. Electrify directly with wind, solar, hydroelectric and geothermal energy, which cost us less than gas does! Conserve energy. Leave fossil fuels in the ground. Now I understand that

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<sup>1</sup> <https://climateintegrity.org/uploads/media/Pennsylvania-ClimateCostStudy-2023.pdf>,

<sup>2</sup>

<https://triblive.com/news/pennsylvania/pa-is-competing-for-billions-to-build-hydrogen-hubs-will-they-really-be-green/>

<sup>3</sup> [How green is blue hydrogen? - Howarth - 2021 - Energy Science & Engineering - Wiley Online Library](#)

the fossil fuel industry has destroyed my hopes for my family and given us a life threatening climate crisis.