



**Testimony for DOER Hearing on
225 CMR 14--Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard – Class I (“RPS Class I”)
225 CMR 15--Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard – Class II (“RPS Class II”)
June 5, 2019**

As a pediatrician, I urge you to **reject proposed changes** that would allow large-scale biomass power plants to be eligible for renewable energy credits or receive clean energy subsidies.

I have been a practicing pediatrician in the City of Springfield since 1998 and have seen the disparity in the incidence of asthma grow. This disparity adversely affects the residents of this city and has a pernicious effect on the children and families in this region.

Our city has been rated for the past two years as the worse city for people living with asthma in the country.

This is no coincidence.

- Our city has repeatedly received a D in air quality by the American Lung Association. Some of the reasons the air is poor is due to our geography and the combination of forces that carry the exhaust from large coal power plants in the Midwest and the air from the New York metropolitan area. These converging winds collect in the bowl formation of our valley creating a toxic soup for people with respiratory illness.
- The age of the dwellings in this “City of Homes” also contributes to poor indoor air quality for many residents.
- The adverse economic circumstance in our community is also a barrier to home improvements that would mitigate these conditions.
- We should be planting and protecting trees to capture CO₂ and reduce pollution instead of burning them.
- We should be working closely with the “knowledge corridor” to bring and subsidize new energy saving and storage technology to all of our residents.
- We should bring the manufacturing of these technologies to improve our local economy and our air quality, while providing many of our residents with good paying clean jobs for our community.

To build a power plant that intentionally adds air pollution to a region like ours feels similar to the government decisions that caused the continuing drinking water catastrophe in Flint, Michigan. This community has fought this plant and has mobilized

for the health of its residents. Changing the standard feels like an attack on our health and on our efforts to build a healthier Springfield.

Our efforts should be focused on mitigating and reducing the health impacts that already exist for children and adults with respiratory illness in our community. As a doctor I have been taught to do no harm. This proposed standard, and any resulting plant that would result from it, contradicts this principle and must be prevented.

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