

Pennsylvania Climate Convergence - People's Hearing
Spoken Testimony - Stacey Magda, Mountain Watershed Association
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Hello, my name is Stacey Magda. I am a mother, an organizer, an advocate calling on the rest of the Commonwealth and Country to come together in the name of our future.

I have lived my entire life in Pennsylvania, growing up, romping, and exploring the muddy banks of the Susquehanna River. This is where I learned to connect to nature. This is where I began to understand symbiosis - how we are all connected and reliant on each other in one, large system. How if the natural systems crash, so do humans. I grew up with innocence and building snowmen and appreciating four distinct seasons. I grew up taking clean water, clean air entirely for granted.

Fast track to present day. I moved to the Youghiogheny River watershed and developed a deep love for running rivers. I connected with my partner in such a unique way. We saw magical moments, we learned to value clean water in a whole new way. Then, we decided to start a family. Our life responsibilities multiplied. I can vividly remember being pregnant with my child and the deluge of feelings and emotions all overburdened with the thought of what will her life be like? How will this world be to her? What can she do for the world? What will be left?

In the past four years we have made incredible family memories. On rivers, on snowy mountains, in beautiful parks and outside with friends. Also, in the past four years we have also seen massive changes just where we live, but also throughout the world. Flooding, intense windstorms that leave us without power for days, carefully monitoring our well water use, shorter winters, but more extreme cold spells. Missing holidays with family because it was too cold to leave our home unoccupied. Extremes that we have never experienced before.

Extremes that are just getting more and more intense. And that's just in SWPA. Hearing the news from across the US and the world is far more sobering.

While we have bucked up and learned to do our best to be prepared for anything. I want to make sure my family is not becoming numb to these new norms. I want to ensure we are aware and active in addressing what the issues are and working hard to mitigate them.

The ones that come next are ours. They are our children, niblings, cousins, grandchildren, neighborhood kids. They are the future. We look at them with love, we celebrate their achievements, we usher them gifts and glory during times of celebration! But the truth is, the decisions we make today are our legacy. And the greatest gift and love we can give them is action to protect their lives, their planet and to directly address climate change.

So, what will we give them? We call on our governments to stop the subsidies, improve the regulations, and stop the payoffs to feed industry their gluton while turning backs on the rest of us. If we make important choices today we can make waves of change! We can see a brighter tomorrow. We can see a future without constant air quality notices, communities living in terror of extreme weather, and parents who can have hope for their children's future!

Today we gather, in peace and necessity to call on all Pennsylvanians, all Americans, all humans, and all levels of government to DO BETTER! Tomorrow and everyday thereafter we can make change to protect our planet and our lives from being devastated by corporate greed and poorly influenced officials. Let us be the rising tide, let us be the change, let the idea of improvement be the only wildfires that burn to ensure we have a healthy planet and a healthy future. For us and for them.