

STATEMENT BY ELILSABETH RADOW

EPA LISTENITNG SESSION 10/23/2013, NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK

THANK YOU TO EPA FOR HOLDING THIS LISTENING SESSION.

GOOD MORNING, MY NAME IS ELISABETH RADOW. I AM A LIFELONG NEW YORKER, AN ATTORNEY AND A MOM. I CHAIR THE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT FOR THE NEW YORK STATE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS. TODAY I WILL ADDRESS THE URGENT NEED FOR EPA TO TAKE ACTION.

ON MONDAY, OCTOBER 21<sup>ST</sup> IN THE NORTHEAST CHINESE CITY OF HARBIN, WITH A POPLUATION OF 10 MILLION, THE ALREADY FOGGY SKY THICKENED SO SERIOUSLY WHEN THE GOVERNMENT TURNED ON THE COAL-POWERED MUNICIPAL HEATING SYSTEM FOR WINTER, THAT SCHOOL WAS CANCELED, TRAFFIC WAS NEARLY PARALYZED AND THE AIRPORT WAS SHUT DOWN. THE POLLUTION THERE HAS CAUSED A 30% SURGE IN HOSPITAL ADMISSSIONS OF PATIENTS WITH RESPIRATORY PROBLEMS. <sup>1</sup>

HERE IN AMERICA POWER PLANTS ACCOUNT FOR 40% OF THE CARBON POLLUTION THAT CAUSES CLIMATE CHANGE. WHILE WE CURRENTLY PROTECT PUBLIC HEALTH WITH LIMITS ON ARSENIC, LEAD MERCURY, SOOT AND OTHER POLLUTION FROM POWER PLANTS, THERE ARE NO EXISTING NATIONAL LIMITS

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<sup>1</sup> *Air pollution hits Harbin in northeast china closing schools and roads.* New York Times; 10/21/2013. <http://sinosphere.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/10/21/air-pollution-hits-harbin-in-northeast-china-closing-schools-and-roads/?ref=environment&r=0>

ON CARBON POLLUTION. CURRENT UNDER-REGULATION IS RESULTING IN MYRIAD COSTS TO THE PUBLIC. THESE COSTS MUST BE FACTORED IN TO EVERY EQUATION WHICH FOCUSES ON THE PERCEIVED SAVINGS THAT WE GET FROM CHEAP FOSSIL FUEL.

THESE COSTS COME IN THE FORM OF ADVERSE IMPACTS TO OUR WATER AND AIR QUALITY, OUR FOOD SUPPLY AND OUR HEALTH. IT BEGINS WITH EXTREME WEATHER, SUCH AS FLOODING, DROUGHTS AND HEAT WAVES. MOST YEARS THE LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH FROM EXTREME WEATHER IS HEAT WAVES AND IT IS WORST IN CITIES, SUCH AS NEW YORK, WHEN THE TEMPERATURE DOES NOT GO DOWN AT NIGHT. <sup>2</sup>

LAST YEAR SUPERSTORM SANDY DEVASTATED THE NEW YORK METROPOLITAN AREA. 60% OF THE RESIDENTS IN MY TOWN IN WESTCHESTER WERE WITHOUT HEAT AND ELECTRICITY. OTHERS IN OUR REGION WERE LEFT HOMELESS. COMMUNITIES WERE LOST.

MORE THAN 120 HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDING THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS AND AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION ARE ON RECORD STATING "CLIMATE CHANGE IS A SERIOUS PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUE. AS TEMPERATURES RISE, MORE AMERICANS WILL BE EXPOSED TO CONDITIONS THAT CAN RESULT IN ILLNESS AND DEATH DUE TO RESPIRATORY ILLNESS, HEAT AND WEATHER RELATED STRESS AND DISEASES CARRIED BY INSECTS." IMPACTS WILL BE FELT MOST BY OUR CHILDREN, OUR

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<sup>2</sup> *Extreme Weather Impacts on Public Health*, By Catherine Thomasson, MD, May 30, 2013, Physicians For Social Responsibility.

OLDER ADULT POPULATION AND THOSE WITH EXISTING COMPROMISED HEALTH.<sup>3</sup>

WE HAVE A MORAL OBLIGATION TO PROTECT OUR CHILDREN AND FUTURE GENERATIONS FROM THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE BY ADDRESSING ITS CAUSES, INCLUDING CARBON POLLUTION FROM POWER PLANTS.

EPA IS CALLED UPON TO PROPOSE STRONG CARBON POLLUTION STANDARDS FOR ALL POWER PLANTS, TO ADDRESS THE MAIN CAUSES OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC HEALTH FROM ITS ALREADY OBVIOUS DEVASTATING EFFECTS. ANY OTHER COURSE IS UNSUSTAINABLE AND WILL RISK NOT ONLY OUR NATIONAL SECURITY, BUT OUR FUTURE EXISTENCE.

THANK YOU.

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<sup>3</sup> Star Ledger (NJ), [5/15/2012](#)