

My name is Nicole Karsch, I'm 25 years old. I live in West Philly but my roots are in Olney on my dad's side and South Philly on my mom's. I'm here today to testify with the Sunrise Movement in Philadelphia on behalf of young people facing the climate crisis.

We're here to talk about the sustainability of PGW. I first want to name in the room what is unsustainable about PGW and our current environmental and economic system.

We know that it is unsustainable to continue to burn coal, oil, and gas. We know that if left unchecked this will lead to social and environmental catastrophe. We know that it will cause flooding, it will cause increased asthma rates, it will increase and exacerbate the housing crisis that we already face in Philadelphia. We know that it is unsustainable to live in a society where a handful of fossil fuel executives continue to make more and more wealth while more and more Philadelphians cannot pay their energy bills. We know that it is unsustainable that we have high rates of asthma in the city, homes and schools full of lead and asbestos, and no concrete plan to address it.

I'm only 25 years old, but in the few years that I have been fighting for justice on these issues, I am often told that I am simply too young. I am told that I don't understand how politics works. I am told that I am naive, and that one day I will accept that these are the just the realities of living through these times. Well I'm here today to tell you that the way that politics works is unsustainable. Young people are no longer going to tolerate a system that is unjust and unsustainable, and we are going to demand action to address it. We are facing a crisis and to think that these crises can be solved within the same system that caused them, that is naive.

According to the latest International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, we have just 11 years to rapidly decarbonize our economy to avert the worst effects of climate catastrophe. 11 years. The city of Philadelphia has made a commitment to an 80 percent reduction of carbon emissions by 2050. That is 31 years. Let me be clear: 80 percent reduction by 2050 is not good enough. Science says we have 11 years, and what is naive is to think that any plan made to transition PGW on a timeline of 80 percent by 2050 will avert the worst effects of the climate crisis. Our goal must transition PGW off of fossil fuels within 11 years.

Right now we know that our economy is corrupt by fossil fuel money. We know that we need a Green New Deal and a massive market mobilization that centers jobs and justice of the many rather than the profits of a few. We must complete an unapologetically people centered study, centering the science, jobs, and justice of communities members. The political reality of this country is changing. A Green New Deal will mobilize federal resources to fund these transitions. So we need to have a plan for a just transition ready.

This is an opportunity to commission the study for a transition plan that will deliver on jobs, justice, and science. Our demand as young people is that we commission a study such that PGW provides carbon-free heat by 2030, while guaranteeing a union job with a livable wage to all workers involved in the transition, working to repair the damage that the fossil fuel industry

has done to the health of our communities, and expanding direct democratic control of our energy system. Thank you.