Good evening and thank you for the opportunity to speak with you. I appreciate the great work the EPA has done to limit greenhouse gas emissions and protect our environment for future generations.

I’m a native Georgian and have seen with my own eyes the changes in our climate over my lifetime. I am concerned about the future of our climate and the damage we continue to inflict on the environment that supports all of life on earth. I’m also concerned about the economic impacts of failing to take steps to drastically reduce greenhouse emissions quickly enough. We can no longer afford to ignore the impacts of decades of carbon dioxide accumulation in the atmosphere, and fixing the problem will continue to get more expensive the longer we wait to change course.

Reducing carbon emissions is a smart, sensible path forward for our nation, and it comes with a host of side benefits, such as cleaner air & water, along with decreases in respiratory illnesses and premature deaths. Those who object to regulating emissions often point to the belief that acting to regulate these emissions will be detrimental to US jobs and economic growth. Well, it turns out that there is a policy option that reduces these emissions AND benefits the US economy. It’s called carbon fee & dividend, and it’s a policy that I hope the EPA will include as a mechanism for state compliance in its final rules in 2015.
A recent non-partisan study conducted by REMI concluded that putting a fee on carbon and returning all of the money to the public would slash carbon emissions while creating jobs and increasing GDP in the process. The report shows that fixing the market distortion that has allowed fossil-based energy to be artificially cheap due to externalized and socialized costs will drive innovation and create 2.8 million jobs while reducing emissions over 50% in a 20-year time span.

I’m confident that if the EPA reads the full REMI report, it will see why the carbon fee & dividend approach is a sensible policy solution that states can employ to be in compliance with final EPA rules to come. In that case, I would ask that the EPA specifically include carbon fee & dividend as a compliance mechanism and that details on carbon pricing levels, escalation schedules, and administrative guidance on the implementation of the policy be included in the final rules that would ensure states have a roadmap for using this policy for compliance.

Thank you again for the work you are doing here. I appreciate the chance to share information on this policy mechanism that will allow states to comply with the proposed emissions reductions.