Good evening members of the EPA panel. My name is Alex Solomon, I’m from Atlanta by way of New Jersey. I work as an engineer, I’m a member of the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy, and I’m here today as a private citizen. I’m speaking in support of the carbon reduction targets proposed in the Clean Power Plan.

When I was a little kid, I dreamt one day I’d buy a Cadillac El Dorado. For those who are not familiar, this is an absolutely massive 2 door car, with a sleek low profile, that boat-like gurgling of an American muscle V8, and 4 gleaming chrome tail pipes, which—to 8 year old me—signified the ultimate cool.

One might call this a classic “boyhood” dream for a reason: we grow up, and we grow out of these dreams. We get a little older, we learn a little bit more. As it turns out, the 90s era Cadillac El Dorado was not a great car. It was clunky, had the gas mileage of a midsized SUV, was unreliable, and as far as reputations go, you could often spot a comb over hair-do in the drivers’ seat.

You see, just like my caddy aspirations, we need to re-evaluate and redefine our dreams and ambitions for Power Generation. The fact is, we know better now than we used to. We know that what’s coming out of our fossil fuel stacks is having an adverse impact on our world. We already feel the effects of our heating earth, our record setting droughts, our energized oceans. This was most recently re-confirmed by the fifth report of the UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in 2013. But even with all the data and hard science on our side, I believe that it doesn’t take an advanced degree to feel the effects of climate change first hand.

Everyone in this room has a personal tie. Everyone. 2 years ago in the wake of Superstorm Sandy, I watched the endless news cycle of my favorite beach from childhood, Seaside Heights in New Jersey, literally falling into the churning ocean, decimated by a storm that no one could have imagined.

With these proposed actions, the Clean Air Act has a meaningful way to regulate carbon dioxide for the very first time. Take Georgia as an example. Though our state has reduced its coal use in the last few years, 33% of our power supply still came from coal in 2013, according to the EIA. Now, enter the Clean Power Plan. Based on Georgia’s renewables and efficiency possibilities, this plan has taken a real look at Georgia’s immense potential for energy opportunities beyond coal. The Clean Power Plan has given us a goal for a 44% reduction in 2012 carbon emissions by the year 2030. This would make Georgia a standout leader in the southeast for clean air.

To me, cutting our emissions and fighting climate change is about making an informed choice as we get older, wiser, and as we rethink our dreams. Instead of an El Dorado, nowadays, I prefer to ride my bike. Instead of hanging on to antiquated coal plants of the past, the new, rethought dream for power generation uses more renewables and improves efficiency.

In short, we know what we need to do. We have the tools to do it. I support the Clean Power plan. I support its goal for reducing carbon emissions. I support this new, adult dream. It’s time for us to grow up.

I want to thank the EPA for their work, and thank you for your time today.