SIERRA CLUB SUMMARY:

EPA LISTENING SESSIONS

Carbon Pollution Protections for Existing Power Plants

OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 2013
Across the country, concerned citizens from the environmental, faith, clean energy, and environmental justice communities joined with parents, children, local community leaders, and others to support strong carbon protections for existing power plants. From Seattle to Philadelphia, the Sierra Club and our allies sent a strong, clear message to the EPA: It’s time to protect our communities by taking climate action now. Nearly 1,200 Sierra Club supporters and more than 2,000 total coalition supporters turned out to the 11 EPA listening sessions. Online organizing email arcs in target states brought in over 1,100 RSVPs and generated more than 16,000 associated online actions. Those activists also generated an additional 2,112 comments on the new source rule.
Sierra Club staff and volunteers from Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Indiana rocked the final EPA listening session in Chicago. Over the course of the day, more than 700 people participated in the EPA listening session and climate rally. More than half attended the listening session, and over 200 — including Illinois Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky — testified in support of strong carbon standards. The opposition had 58 testimonies. We outnumbered them 4:1.
More than 450 people attended our noon climate rally, which featured speeches from:

- Mary Anne Hitt, director of the Sierra Club’s Beyond Coal campaign
- Mike Frerichs, Illinois State Senator
- Tracy Fox, Peoria Sierra Club volunteer leader
- Dr. Susan Buchanan, board member of Physicians for Social Responsibility, director of the University of Illinois Chicago’s residency program in Occupational and Environmental Medicine, and director of the Great Lakes Center for Children’s Environmental Health
- Keith Bolin, Illinois farmer and wind developer
- Cheryl Johnson, director of Southside Chicago’s People for Community Recovery
- Katie Mimnaugh, University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana student leader
- Brandon Leavitt, president of Solar Service, Inc.

The opposition turned out around 200 people throughout the day (only 58 testified) and 60 people showed up to their press conference. The coal industry bussed people to the hearing to testify on the pro-coal side, including members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and the Sheet Metal Workers International Association. They also hired truck drivers with pro-coal advertisements on their big rigs to circle the venue where the listening session was held.

Following the listening session, we held a Climate Social at the Sierra Club’s Chicago office, attended by more than 150 people including Illinois Senator Dick Durbin, Illinois Lieutenant Governor Sheila Simon, Organizing for Action Executive Director Jon Carson, State Senator Mike Frerichs, and Chicago Water Reclamation District Commissioner Debra Shore.

Michigan sent a large delegation to the listening session, with 78 people traveling via a 55-passenger bus and two full-sized vans from the Detroit and Lansing areas. The delegation represented a wide diversity of adults, youth, seniors, faith, and ethnic backgrounds.

In addition to community groups like the NAACP, Green Door Initiative, Feed Da Streetz, Pilgrims Baptist Church, Resource Information Center for the Helpless, Wayne County Council of Friends, Giving It from the Source, and the Unitarian Universalist Church, a number of local residents made the all-day-and-all-night trip to Chicago and gave testimony at the hearing.

After hearing previous expert testimony that correlated people’s place of residence with life expectancy, two-time cancer survivor Barbara Loving of River Rouge, an industrial suburb of Detroit, spoke about the need for local residents to get support from the EPA in the community’s fight for a healthy environment. Reginald Myers, a worker at local Chrysler plant who traveled to the hearing with his wife, Amina, and their four-month-old daughter, testified about his concerns over buying a new home in the downriver community where he grew up while trying to raise a family.

Reginald’s younger brother Douglas — whose father was a retired U.S. Navy veteran and postal worker who died prematurely, and whose widowed mother had to relocate from River Rouge for better climate conditions in Arizona — helped lead more than
50 residents from River Rouge and surrounding communities to voice their collective concerns over the environmental conditions residents are forced to endure. Environmental justice pioneer Donele Wilkens also testified on the disproportionate harmful effects of climate change on economically disadvantaged communities like Detroit.

In all, more than 20 Michiganders gave testimony at the listening session, urging the EPA to impose strong carbon rules on existing coal-fired power plants and support “just transition” plans for local communities in the event of eventual plant closures. (Just transition is a framework for a fair and sustainable shift to a low-carbon economy.)

One volunteer who traveled to the listening session from Michigan said, “I felt so nurtured and cared for in Chicago”.

**MEDIA CLIPS:**
- Chicago Green Living Examiner (IL): The Chicago EPA hearings on proposed pollution standards for power plants
- WTL-C-AM (IN) - Sierra Club's Mary Anne Hitt Says Indiana Must Go “Beyond Coal” & Increase Use of Solar, Wind Power
- WIBC (IN) - EPA to Hold Session on Coal Plant Regulations
- WFIU (IN) - Coal Companies And Environmental Groups Try To Influence EPA
- WBBM-AM (IL) - Interview and Clip with Kady McFadden
- Public News Service (IL): Chicago EPA Session Asks for Public Input on Carbon Pollution
- Progress Illinois (IL): Environmental, Labor Groups Hold Dueling Chicago Rallies Over EPA Pollution Limits For Power Plants (VIDEO)
- Wisconsin Public Radio (WI) - EPA Holds Listening Session On Carbon Reduction At Coal Plants
- Associated Press: US EPA holds ‘listening session’ in Chicago to gather input on reducing power plant pollution
Proponents of a strong carbon rule outnumbered opponents by a ratio of about 5:1. The Sierra Club organized a very well-attended press conference with 80-90 people squeezing into a room at the National Press Club designed to seat 40. At least one attendee was under the age of two, and diverse ages, genders, and heritages were represented.
Speakers included Gene Karpinski (President, League of Conservation Voters); Dr. Alan Lockwood (Board Member, Physicians for Social Responsibility); Laura MacLeery (Local Mother and Lawyer); Molly Rauch (Public Health and Policy Outreach Manager, Moms Clean Air Force); and Leslie Fields (Environmental Justice and Community Partnerships Director, Sierra Club).

Highlights from the day included “Polluter Smoke Screen” signs held up during Sen. Mitch McConnell’s testimony; the youngest testifiers proudly wearing their stickers proudly and participating in the press conference; additional young testifiers from Thomas Jefferson High School; Colin Cech, a Sierra Club activist from Alexandria, age 15, who spoke passionately and eloquently; Sierra Club volunteer Joey Firman, who led the march and rally chants and sang his testimony to the EPA; and Sierra Club volunteer Sarah Lescher, who brought photographs of a friend who is dying of lung cancer even though he has never smoked. We had larger-than-expected participation from coalition partners like Moms Clean Air Force and faith leaders, among others. People came as far as Baltimore and Virginia Beach, and one Sierra Club member came all the way from Philadelphia. The panel also heard testimony from Sierra Club Board of Directors President David Scott.

THE NUMBERS:

Total Testimony:
- Coalition: 193+ (likely 200+)
- Sierra Club: 85
- Opposition: 37 + 4 neutral

Total Turnout:
- Coalition: 200+
- SC: 95

Press Hits: 7

Sierra Club Online Sign-ups: 109

MEDIA CLIPS:
New Republic: newrepublic.com/article/115517/epa-holds-listening-sessions-carbon-standards-existing-plants
Politico: politico.com/morningenergy/1113/morningenergy12152.html
Voice of America: http://www.voanews.com/content/proposed-pollution-rules-rattle-us-power-industry/1793200.html
EENews: http://www.eenews.net/greenwire/2013/11/07/stories/1059990158
Photos: flickr.com/photos/67128413@N05/sets/72157637419075926/
Storify: storify.com/CleanAirMoms/epa-dc-listening-session-on-carbon-pollution
The Boston listening session was rescheduled for November 4 after being postponed due to the government shutdown. Proponents of strong action on carbon pollution outnumbered the opposition by more than 20:1, sending a clear message to the EPA. Climate Change and Health; Kim Richards, founder of Citizens for Clean Air in Eliot, Maine; Susan Labandibar, President of TechNetworks Boston; and Vincent Maraventano, Executive Director of Massachusetts Interfaith Power and Light.

**THE NUMBERS:**

**Total Testimony:**
- Coalition: 64
- Sierra Club: 47
- Opposition: 2-3

**Total Turnout:**
- Coalition: 64
- SC: 47

**Press Hits:** 1

**Sierra Club Online Sign-ups:** 80

**MEDIA CLIPS:**
Living on Earth (PRI/NPR) - Living on Earth - Anti-Carbon Pollution Rally
LENEXA, KS

November 4, 2013, 4:00-8:00 pm CST
Organization Lead: Sierra Club
Coalition Lead (SC): Glen Hooks

The Sierra Club and our allies outnumbered opponents at the EPA listening session in Lenexa, Kansas, by more than 2:1. Over 100 people testified and a total of about 150 people turned out to the listening session in support of strong carbon-pollution standards. Only 41 people testified against the standards.
About 75 people turned out to a 3:00 pm press conference, with speakers from the Sierra Club and the faith, environmental justice, and public health communities. Speakers included Glen Hooks of the Sierra Club; Rabbi Moti Rieber, Director of Kansas Interfaith Power and Light; Richard Mabion, a community organizer from Kansas City; Cynthia Tedeman, a retired nurse from Omaha; and Brandon Ellington of the Missouri House of Representatives.

Highlights from the day included Richard Mabion giving heartfelt testimony about his work with low-income communities and how strong carbon pollution protections will help them (see video here); a 17-year-old from St. Louis County who lives near the Meramec coal plant giving his pages of testimony in 3 minutes; five students from Kansas University who testified and spoke about the lives they want for their grandchildren; faith leaders and concerned citizens from Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa, and Missouri who spoke about the moral importance of action on climate change and being good stewards of the planet.

A pro-coal Kansas state representative summed it up thusly: “Wow, you guys had a lot more people here than we did!”

**THE NUMBERS:**

**Total Testimony:**
- Coalition: 100
- Sierra Club: 80
- Opposition: 41

**Total Turnout:**
- Coalition: 150
- SC: -125

**Press Conference Turnout:** 75

**Press Hits:** 6

**Sierra Club Online Sign-ups:** 109

**MEDIA CLIPS:**

Morning shows: KMBC, 11/4, Fox4KC 11/4

KCUR (KS) - EPA To Hold Public Forum On Carbon Emission In Kansas

Osage County News (KS) - EPA to take public input on reducing carbon pollution from power plants

Topeka Capital-Journal (KS) - EPA invites opinions on coal-plant emissions policy

Kansas Public Radio (KS) - EPA to Hold Public Forum on Carbon Emission in Kansas

UMKC Student paper (KS) - http://info.umkc.edu/unews/sierra-club-calls-for-pollution-rally-umkc-support/

Al Jazeera America: Emissions, climate-change debate hits heartland as EPA visits Kansas

Kansas City Star (KS) - Hundreds turn out for EPA hearing on power plant carbon-emission

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (MO) - EPA ‘listening tour’ precedes coal-plant carbon rule

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (MO) - Clashing views on climate, coal plant regulation on display at EPA

**Photos:**

picasaweb.google.com/106617714045316701522EPACarbonListeningSession?authkey=Gv1sRgCKbJ6aXskPqGwA&noredirect=1

facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.632648116798377.1073741838.160541527342.374&type=1
Proponents of a strong carbon standard dominated the testimony in San Francisco. A mother with her two-year-old son spoke beautifully about how concerned she is for his generation’s future. A ten-year-old boy spoke about how climate change is affecting his home and the activities he and others love to do. The Sierra Club was well-represented by speakers like Larry Fahn of the Club’s Board of Directors, Bruce Nilles, Senior Director of the Beyond Coal Campaign, and Michael Bosse, Deputy National Program Director. Impassioned speakers made the trek to the EPA office from all over Northern California and the Central Valley.
Our press event kicked off with a stroller brigade and a march to the front doors of the EPA, with almost 100 people in attendance, including 7 speakers, 10 babies, and 7 parents. Sierra Club volunteers and staff represented much of the turnout. Speakers included David Chiu, President of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors President; Eric Mar, also of the S.F. Board of Supervisors; Dan Kalb, Oakland City Council member; Nancy Rader, Executive Director of CalWEA; Melanie Fitzpatrick, a climate scientist with the Union of Concerned Scientists; Rev. Sally Bingham, President and Founder Interfaith Power and Light; and Lisa Hoyos, founder and Director of Climate Parents.

**THE NUMBERS:**

**Total Testimony:**
- Coalition: 95
- Sierra Club: 40
- Opposition: 12

**Total Turnout:**
- Coalition: 100
- SC: Over 50-60

**Total Press Hits:**
- Coalition: 6
- SC: 1

**Sierra Club Online Sign-ups:** 98

**MEDIA CLIPS:**

Greenwire E&E news, Stroller brigade greets EPA regulators in San Francisco
SF Examiner, SF officials call for action plan targeting carbon pollution
SF Gate, EPA takes on power plant pollution
KPFA Radio, Power Plant Pollution Hearing Draws Environmentalists and Moms
KGO Radio, Stroller Brigade of Mothers and Kids Demand Reduced Coal Emissions (Click 2:00 PM and go to 31:30 - story played throughout afternoon)
KCBS Radio, Stroller Brigade of Parents and Children Marches to EPA

**Video:** vimeo.com/78681245
**Photos:** dropbox.com/sh/bq8oeyz4x17oblg/L96B7Bxmi8/Key%20Presser%20Shots
DALLAS, TX

November 7, 2013, 10:00 am-3:00 pm CST
Organization Lead: Sierra Club
Coalition Lead (SC): Nia Martin-Robinson
Sierra Club Lead: Dave Cortez

Our coalition and supporters represented a diverse set of backgrounds and that diversity was a large part of the power we demonstrated to EPA officials and to the opposition. Our midday rally speakers really helped hammer home our main messages and included Dr. Bruce Prescott, a Baptist minister from Norman, Oklahoma; Rachel Stone of Environment Texas; Chris Masey of Texas Physicians for Social Responsibility; Dr. Robert Haley of the Dallas County Medical Association; Jacqui Patterson, Director of the NAACP Climate Justice Initiative; Tom “Smitty” Smith, Texas Director of Public Citizen; and Sarah Hodgdon, National Program Director for the Sierra Club.
We turned out more official testifiers in support of the carbon rule (118 versus 107) as well as more supporters overall who signed in to the venue and attended (270 versus 180). The opposition was out in force and clearly wanted to make Dallas a point of emphasis. Dr. Neil Carman of the Sierra Club’s Lone Star Chapter provided testimony explaining why the EPA rules need to be strong and are both legal and necessary. The two largest metropolitan areas in Texas sent government representatives who testified in support of strong carbon regulation. Dallas County Judge Clay Jenkins welcomed everyone to Dallas, highlighted the public health and climate challenges facing the state, and urged the EPA to put forward a strong rule. Houston Mayor Annise Parker, who had just won re-election 48 hours prior, sent the head of her environmental protection bureau to give similar remarks in support of the EPA’s efforts.

Pre-event media coverage was quite good, aided by an op-ed authored by the Lone Star Chapter and the campaign that ran in the Dallas Morning News the day before the hearing; a column by an agri-business entrepreneur and business leader in the San Antonio Express News that also ran the day before the hearing, and an AP story that ran statewide the morning of the hearing. Media coverage of the hearing itself was quite good, with reporters on-site from the Dallas Morning News, Dallas Business Journal, and NPR (KERA). The Dallas Morning News story characterized the hearing as “the T-shirts” against “the Suits”, and was overall pretty good in conveying our side’s message, including a photo of an ozone bad air day warning sign that was included in the online version of the story.

We took on Luminant, OG&E, AEP, and NMA and showed them that we will fight them anywhere to protect our planet!

**THE NUMBERS:**

**Total Testimony:**
- Coalition: **118**
- Sierra Club: **95**
- Opposition: **107**

**Total Turnout:**
- Coalition: **270**
- SC: **230**
- Opposition: **180**

**Press Hits:** **6**

**Sierra Club Online Sign-ups:** **128**

**MEDIA CLIPS:**

Dallas Morning News piece w/ quote from Hodgdon:
[link]

Your Houston News picked up AP:
[yourhoustonnews.com]

Bloomberg Business News w/ AP:
[link]

Christi Craddock’s Opposition Op-ED in Abilene paper:
[link]

Nia and David Griggs’ Op-ed:
[link]

E&E News: [link]
SEATTLE, WA

November 7, 2013, 3:00-6:00 pm PST
Sierra Club Lead: Seth Ballhorn

The 180-person hearing room was at standing room only at the beginning of the hearing, and we estimate that throughout the hearing there were around 210 people in attendance supporting a strong carbon standard. A total of 79 people that testified: 72 in favor, 4 neutral, and 3 against.
We had some powerful grassroots testimony, including an air quality expert from the state Department of Ecology, a council member on the Northwest Power and Conservation Council, a state legislator, representatives from clean energy businesses, faith groups, and MomsRising, health professionals, a forest ecologist, and several top-notch environmental and energy wonks. We even had the head of the local chamber of commerce speaking in favor of a strong carbon rule. There was also powerful testimony from everyday people.

We held a press event in the federal building and had about a dozen people in the lineup and 15-20 in the audience. Doug Howell of the Sierra Club’s Beyond Coal campaign MC’d the event. See a video of the presser here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qcp2tP_4nzc.

**THE NUMBERS:**

**Total Testimony:**
- Coalition: 72
- Sierra Club: 117
- Opposition: 3 + 4 neutral

**Total Turnout:**
- Coalition: 210
- SC: 117+

**Press Hits:** Unknown

**Sierra Club Online Sign-ups:** 94

**MEDIA CLIPS:**

Unknown
Proponents of a strong carbon rule organized a press conference in a grassy area near the Liberty Bell and Independence Mall. Speakers included Mitch Hescox of the Evangelical Environmental Network; Brian Kauffman, Executive Director of the Keystone Energy Efficiency Alliance; Ed Perry of the National Wildlife Federation (speaking as a sport fisherman); Gretchen Alfonso of Moms Clean Air Force; and Joy Bergey of PennFuture. It was covered by a writer and a photographer from WHYY public radio. Brief clips of the coverage were aired on 11/9. A crowd of about 30 people were present to hear the speakers wearing t-shirts reading “Our Communities Need CLIMATE ACTION NOW”. Robin Mann of the Sierra Club’s Board of Director attended and testified on behalf of the Sierra Club.

**THE NUMBERS:**

**Total Testimony:**
- Coalition: 76
- Sierra Club: 35
- Opposition: 16 + 2 neutral

**Total Turnout:**
- Coalition: 60
- SC: 50

**Press Hits:** 2

**Sierra Club Online Sign-ups:** 74

**MEDIA CLIPS:**
StateImpact Pennsylvania (PA) - EPA moves ahead on climate plans despite Supreme Court challenge
In New York, voices supporting strong standards dominated the official testimony by a margin of 80 to 2. There was good turnout from a broad cross-section of 100 New Yorkers who turned out to demand strong climate protections. The panel heard testimony from victims of Hurricane Sandy, public health experts, mental health professionals, parents, and students.
One of the most moving testimonies came from a Sierra Club supporter named Lisa. She is 27 years old, born and raised in Astoria, Queens, owns her own business in the area, and has not actively been engaged with the Club before. Her short but compelling testimony put a real face to the issue:

“I live on a busy intersection with four bus stops, across the street from a gas station, between two airports, two bridges, and two major power plants. I’m a non-smoker with no family history of asthma and I have been diagnosed with COPD since 2008. I take Advair, Singularair, Ventolin and Prednisone every day to breathe normally. There are side effects to being on daily steroidal use. My body’s level of oxygen is barely enough for me and I wake up very tired every day. Sometimes I don’t make it to work. I am afraid to grow old on these medications and I fear my body will grow weak. Technology has invented several ways to generate clean energy, including solar, wind, and geothermal energy, which is powerful enough to supply the entire nation. When will we move on? When will we be able to reap the benefits of this new technology that will save our lives and the health of our future children?”

The two non-supportive testimony givers were representatives from the American Petroleum Institute and the American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity. A representative from Con Edison, the NYC utility, spoke but had neutral remarks, asking the EPA to be mindful of rates. The Utility Workers also gave a measured response, accepting that the rules were coming and that the EPA should be mindful of the impact on workers and that they should urge states to come up with transition plans.

Proponents of a strong standard held a press event at 1:00 pm on the front steps of New York City Hall in Steve Flanders Square. Speakers included Heather Leibowitz, Campaign Director of the Environment New York Research and Policy Center; Melanie McDermott, Associate Director of the Rutgers Initiative on Climate and Society; David Alicea, an organizer with Sierra Club’s Beyond Coal Campaign; David Hawkins, Director of Climate Programs with the NRDC; and Aileen Sheil, a student activist with NYPIRG from Queen’s College.

THE NUMBERS:

Total Testimony:
- Coalition: 85
- Sierra Club: 8
- Opposition: 2 + 7 neutral

Total Turnout:
- Coalition: 90-100
- SC: 11

Press Hits: 0
Sierra Club Online Sign-ups: 94

MEDIA CLIPS:
Politico, Shaheen-Portman backers look for path to Senate floor - EPA data indicate carbon emissions from power plants down
WNYC, EPA Seeks Ideas for Carbon Emissions Regulations
DENVER, CO

October 30, 2013, 9:00 am-5:00 pm MST (last 2 hours for call-ins)
Sierra Club Lead: Bryce Carter

On Wednesday, October 30, the Sierra Club and its allies participated in the EPA listening session in Denver, and a media event that drew 60-70 people and a half dozen media outlets. Speakers included Colorado Lieutenant Governor Joseph Garcia; Boulder County Commissioner Elise Jones; Colorado American Lung Association’s executive director Curt Huber; and Sierra Club member Wade Sikorski, who left at 4:00 am from rural Baker, Montana, drove 230 miles to Billings, and then flew to Denver. (Click here for video of the press event.) Inside the official session, we exceeded our internal goal of getting 30+ people from the Sierra Club to testify. The majority of volunteers we saw throughout the day were affiliated with the Club.
This effort, however, was overshadowed by a concerted mobilization from the coal industry. Peabody Coal and other pro-coal interests bussed more than a hundred people from the coal fields of Wyoming and Western Colorado. They were able to dominate the morning session by 3:1. We recovered in the afternoon, but in the end, the ratio was 2:1 against us. We used this opportunity to build deeper relationships with several Denver City Council members who are working on a letter of support for the rules, or even perhaps a proclamation with council. Moreover, the experience led us to redouble our efforts to generate turnout at the subsequent sessions where the Sierra Club was serving as the lead group. We also altered our media strategy by focusing on generating advance, curtain-raiser stories where we could better frame the debate.

THE NUMBERS:

Total Testimony:
- Coalition: **57**
- Sierra Club: **20-30**
- Opposition: **79**

Total Turnout:
- Coalition: ~**70**
- SC: **35+**

Press Hits: **10+** (several stories picked up by AP)

Sierra Club Online Sign-ups: **53**

MEDIA CLIPS:
- coloradostatesman.com/content/994453-epa-covers-earth-wind-fire-denver-hearing
- kansascity.com/2013/10/31/4588418/epa-holds-hearing-in-denver-on.html
- durangoherald.com/article/20131030/NEWS01/131039972/-/EPA-gets-an-earful-on-plans-for-coal-power-plants-
- kcretv.com/news/around-the-region/Emission-Regulations-on-The-Western-Slope-22997?i=1
- denver.cbslocal.com/2013/10/30/epa-holds-hearing-in-denver-on-plant-emissions-2/
- www.eenews.net/stories/105999696

Photos: flickr.com/photos/sierraclub/sets/72157637312279715/

Video: drive.google.com/a/sierraclub.org/file/d/0B-lhVEPjBD86U1BjREx4YWtFSzA/edit?usp=sharing

We had some good quotes from the speakers caught on our Sierra Club live account:
- twitter.com/sierraclublive
More than 70 proponents of a strong carbon standard attended the listening session, including a physician, a farmer, a Georgia Tech professor, Rev. Alexis Chase of Georgia Interfaith Power and Light, grandparents, mothers, college students, a state representative, and a military veteran. Representatives and members from environmental groups spoke as well. Unfortunately, we were outnumbered by a well-organized industry presence. The Sierra Club was not the lead organization for our community effort in this location.

**THE NUMBERS:**

**Total Testimony:**
- Coalition: 71
- Morning Session: 1/3 Speakers Supportive
- Afternoon: 2/3 Speakers Opposed
- Opposition: 16 + 2 neutral

**Sierra Club Online Sign-ups:** 9

**MEDIA CLIPS:**
Interview with 106.7, an Atlanta based radio station, and reporters from NPR and the Atlanta Journal Constitution spoke to our groups and speakers.