

## HEARING ON THE ENERGY MASTER PLAN – AUGUST 8, 2019

After retiring from William Paterson University after 27 years, I joined Franciscan Response to Fracking, a faith-based environmental group based on the teachings and life of St. Francis. As a mother and grandmother, the importance of clean air, water and protection of life is of paramount importance. I lead a fulfilled active life and most people would characterize myself as a glass half full type of person.

But it has become increasingly difficult in these times to maintain this optimistic outlook that has characterized my personality.

Just this past week, part of the Greenland ice sheet melted at an unprecedented rate losing 12.5 billion tons of water on one day, the largest single loss in recorded history. Losses from Greenland this past week were approaching levels not expected until 2070; 1,000 miles from the North Pole temperatures above 60 degrees were reported with meltwater pouring new channels into the ocean.

As the Arctic warms at twice the average rate of the planet, resulting in rapid ice loss and record temps, the Russian military is still dealing with wildfires that have spread to 7.4 million acres, larger than the country of Belgium. Russian forests, often called the lungs of Europe comprise more than 1/5 of the world's forests. Wildfires are now running rampant in Siberia, Greenland, Alaska and Canada as dry ground and hotter temperatures have caused fires to spread aggressively.

Particulate matter from these fires will come to settle on ice surfaces further north darkening them and accelerating melting. To bring it closer to home, according to NASA the past 5 years have been the warmest on record, with 20 of the warmest occurring during the last 22 years; July 2019 was the warmest July ever recorded. And if anyone traveled to Paris on July 25, they would have experienced a record shattering temperature of 108.7 degrees, a city where few have air

conditioning. What will happen when the Arctic, our natural air conditioner disappears? Will we have closed the window of opportunity for greed or convenience or just preferring to keep our heads in the sand?

Unless you are a science denier, the link between fossil fuels and climate change is clear. Science is telling us that the planet is warming and fossil fuels are the root cause. As a result, the last thing we should be considering is the perpetuation of the fossil fuel infrastructure. We have 13 proposed fossil fuel projects in New Jersey at this time. I voted for Governor Murphy because of his clean renewable energy promises not for his ability to call balls and strikes. Renewable energy is not coal, oil or natural gas. Renewable energy sources include wind, solar, hydroelectric, geothermal and ocean thermal—not fossil fuels.

Governor Murphy, don't be afraid to use your authority and do your part in making New Jersey a leader in clean renewable energy and enact a moratorium on all new fossil fuel projects in our state. Tell me that former Governor Christie is wrong when he called you a "hypocrite" on your energy policies. I would really like to keep my glass half full outlook on life.

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