



### **SAMPLE PUBLIC NARRATIVE/PUBLIC STORY/PUBLIC TESTIMONY**

*For any mother/grandmother/ally who plans to testify at the upcoming Public Service Commission (PSC) Hearings on the NYS Clean Energy Standards as a member of Mothers Out Front.*

When preparing your testimony/preparing to speak

- this sample narrative takes about 6 minutes to speak (approximately 750 words)
- the PSC allows each person to speak for only 2 minutes (approx. 300 words)
- please respect the 2 minute time limit - we want the PSC folks to have a favorable impression of us
- our “ask” is different from the ask in this narrative - we want the clean energy standards to be approved.
- To make a bigger impact, introduce yourself as part of Mothers Out Front, have your testimony written or typed on a page with the Mothers Out Front Logo, and hand it in when you are finished.
- we have mothers grandmothers and allies ready to testify at 10 out of the 11 PSC hearings around the state -
- if you have a Mothers Out Front t-shirt, wear it!
- bring a friend!

Modified Testimony from Neely’s testimony before the Rochester City School District School Board meeting Thursday April 28th 2016:

Good evening, my name is Neely Kelley. Thank you for the opportunity to speak this evening.

I was born into a white, old-money wealthy, conservative, Episcopalian, and politically powerful Greenville, SC family. My childhood was extremely sheltered and incredibly privileged: summers spent at family beach, lake, and mountain homes, playing tennis, riding horses, and getting my a burgundy BMW with leather seats and a sunroof when I was 16. We loved Reagan and feared the USSR.

So it may not surprise you that I was also a rather fervent climate change denier. I vividly remember smug and mocking conversations with friends/family about the scientists who are making the data up just to get more grant money.

Fast forward 7 years to 2013. I found myself curled up in bed, with the covers pulled up over my head - paralyzed with panic and powerlessness at the bleak future of Jessie (6) and Martha (5) because of climate change. I felt utterly alone. By that time, Our family was doing everything in our power to curb our carbon footprint: we had one car, kept the thermostat at 60 in the winter (52 at night), bought carbon offsets, paid a premium for wind power, ate less meat, hung our clothes to dry, recycled, and all furniture shopping was done on freecycle, craigslist, or the neighborhood curb.

Obama had been reelected, but he was going to approve the Keystone Pipeline, fossil fuel consumption continued to increase, and we as a family had just lived through our 2nd catastrophic Atlantic coast hurricane in less than a year - Hurricane Irene and Superstorm Sandy.

I didn't want to get up that morning but J & M needed to wake up, get dressed, eat breakfast, brush their teeth, and catch the Purple Dragon (their school bus).

A few days later, I was invited to a house party of mothers concerned about climate change. I leapt at the opportunity. I heard mothers - strangers to me, share my fears and who felt as alone as I did. We didn't know what we were going to do, but it didn't matter to me, I was in. That was early 2013. and I have been organizing with Mothers Out Front ever since - dozens of teams of mothers are now organizing in Mass, NY, Virginia, California - to Stop pipelines, natural gas leaks, and Extreme Energy extraction.

In June 2013 we moved to Rochester and we love this city—yes, even the winters and these bakken oil trains threaten everything we hold dear. They pose an immediate threat should they derail and explode, and they also transport climate changing fossil fuels that must stay in the ground if our children are to inherit a livable planet. Our daughters, Jessie and Martha, attend School 23, which is within the impact zone of the Bakken Oil Trains - that you learned about from Wendy Low just a few minutes ago - SOTA students who come to perform for school 23 students each year have so inspired my girls that they both talk excitedly about attending SOTA one day. But I am here to tell you that SOTA is in the immediate blast zone of these trains and already, every time I hear a train whistle, my heart skips a beat, wondering "Is that another bomb train? Will it derail and explode today? how many children will be killed?" Every. single. time. I hear a train whistle.

We know rail traffic is a federal issue so there is one thing I am here to ask you to do.

The Petroleum Storage Surety Bill would require shippers to prove they could cover the cost of a disaster, just as we are required to carry car insurance. The bill has passed the Assembly

twice, with overwhelming support, but it has NEVER BEEN VOTED on in the Senate. Our two local Senators Joe Robach and Rich Funke have not yet agreed to sponsor or support the bill. Senators Funke and Roach are concerned about the cost to business - putting business expenses above the safety of children. So our first ask is this: that as the City of Rochester School Board, you send a letter to Senators Robach and Funke expressing your concern about the risk to city school children and urging both Senators to become co-sponsors of this bill.

On behalf of all children I urge you to act now and communicate with Senators Roach and Funke. Thank you.