FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Five Years Living with Fukushima

After the Great East Japan earthquake and tsunami precipitated a triple-reactor meltdown of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant, a family living in Fukushima City, 36 miles from the plant, voluntarily evacuated because of concerns about radioactive fallout. The family eventually moved back to Fukushima Prefecture, to a town with lower radiation counts, but they still confronted reports of airborne radiation in the schoolyard and restrictions on outdoor activities. Finally, they decided that the wife and third-grade child should relocate more than 400 miles away to Kyoto, while the husband continues his job 36 miles from the stricken reactors. Some 200,000 people who required evacuation—including 100,000 still in temporary housing—have worse stories. More than 300 square miles of Japanese countryside will not be resettled in this century, and approximately 300 tons of radioactive wastewater still flows unchecked into the ocean every day.

In March, PSR released a report, *Five Years Living with Fukushima*, written by the German affiliate of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) and co-edited by PSR. The report outlines the continuing underestimation by the Japanese power company TEPCO, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, and the Japanese government of the amount of radiation the disaster released. These institutions are disputing the findings of

**From the President:**

Natural Gas Leaks

**PSR/Chesapeake** Tackles Climate, Energy

**Health Provider Trainings** Address Household Toxins

Engaging Millennials in PSR's Work

**We’re Springing Forward—Thanks to You!**

**PSR’s Leadership Circle**

**PSR Spur Clean Energy Transition While Court Stalls Clean Power Plan**

By Barbara Gottlieb

In this tendentious election year, some people treat climate change like a political football instead of what it really is: a grave problem with multiple impacts on our health and, in the long run, our survival. With the whole planet reeling under temperature extremes, intense storms, sea level rise, and expanding disease ranges, the United States and the world spoke with one voice at the 2015 Paris climate talks: We need to take dramatic action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and we need to take it fast.

Unfortunately, the Supreme Court has placed our best vehicle for effective nationwide action—the Clean Power Plan (CPP)—in suspended animation. Continued on page 2

Let’s Not Tempt Fate with a New Nuclear Arms Race

By Martin Fleck

The danger of international nuclear combat by accident, design, or madness is increasing, carrying with it the risk of a profound humanitarian catastrophe. Nevertheless, here in the United States, both media attention and public knowledge about nuclear weapons remain scant. This is where PSR’s Security Program steps in. PSR is working to reduce nuclear weapons risks—reaching out to health professionals, millennials, and especially elected leaders.

**Heightened Dangers**

Fortunately, Iran has agreed to forego nuclear weapons development, Let’s Not Tempt Fate with a New Nuclear Arms Race. Continued on page 4

Former Secretary of Defense William Perry (left) and PSR Board Member Ira Helfand, M.D. (right) both presented at the “Reducing the Dangers of Nuclear War” conference held on April 2, 2016, at MIT.
FROM THE PRESIDENT

Natural Gas Life Cycle Is a Swiss Cheese of Leaks!

The recent natural gas leak at the Aliso Canyon facility in California, the worst man-made greenhouse-gas disaster in U.S. history, should give us all pause to think. Which of the other 400 gas storage sites across the U.S., with trillions of cubic feet of fuel, will be next? How are they maintained? Who regulates them? Who checks for leaks? And when sites do leak, who pays for the harm caused to public safety, health, and the environment?

The problem is that we pay—with our health. One market solution to reduce the use of fossil fuels is carbon pricing that reflects the health and environmental costs of fossil fuels use. By adding a fee to pollution from coal, oil, or even natural gas, the cost of these sources of energy becomes higher in comparison to non-carbon-polluting energy.

Gas. Current research shows that the delivery system for natural gas, from storage sites to underground pipes to homes across the country, is riddled with leaks. A draft study by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) scientists suggests that the agency significantly underestimated the amount of methane discharged from wells and storage facilities during normal operations. According to Schlumberger, one of the world’s largest companies specializing in oil drilling, about 5 percent of oil and gas wells leak immediately. 50 percent leak after 15 years, and 60 percent leak after 30 years. Leakage can continue for years after wells are shut down. With some 82,000 active fracking sites developed in the U.S. over the past decade, the associated methane leaks will only add to our already daunting job of curbing climate change. This is why PSR has raised the alarm, warning that use of natural gas may be as bad as burning coal.

Methane is a potent greenhouse gas; over its first 20 years in the atmosphere, it is 86 times more potent as a heat-trapping gas than carbon dioxide. Researchers have calculated that methane contributes 19 percent of the entire greenhouse gas inventory of the United States, and that methane from natural gas systems alone contributes more than 7 percent of that total. This is significant, because the next 20 years is exactly when we need to aggressively reduce greenhouse gases and begin to cool our planet.

The Aliso Canyon leak also raises many questions about the short-...
PSR/Chesapeake Tackles Climate and Energy

By Tim Whitehouse, Executive Director

PSR/Chesapeake is actively addressing climate change and the harmful health effects of our traditional sources of energy. The chapter’s initiatives are designed to achieve the goal of reducing Maryland greenhouse gas emissions by 90 percent by 2050. This will require dramatically curtailing fossil fuel use; advancing safe, renewable energy; and ensuring that the people most affected by the burning of fossil fuels and climate change are not left out of the transition to clean, renewable energy.

One of the biggest mechanisms to reduce carbon emissions in Maryland—and eight other Northeastern states—is the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), pronounced "Reggie," a carbon cap-and-trade program for the electricity industry. Current RGGI rules have instituted a 2.5 percent yearly tightening of the limit on carbon emissions from 2015 through 2020. The states auction permits for the allowable emissions, giving the industry an incentive to lower its use of fossil fuels by making it pay for emissions. States spend the auction proceeds on electricity subsidies, energy efficiency, renewable energy, and other initiatives. PSR/Chesapeake is pushing for a further 5 percent reduction in the current cap for all RGGI states; this may require a multi-year battle but is necessary to meet greenhouse gas reduction goals.

Chesapeake's health professional volunteers are regulars at the Maryland State House in Annapolis. This spring, their action helped the Maryland’s Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Act Reauthorization (GGRA) into law. The GGRA will require a 50 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from 2006 levels by 2030. PSR/Chesapeake’s Climate Health Action Team Leader Sara Via, Ph.D., testified in support of the bill, saying that GGRA and energy efficiency advances “exemplify Maryland’s success in reducing greenhouse gas emissions while boosting the economy and creating jobs.” The legislature passed the bill, and Governor Larry Hogan (R) signed it. The GGRA has been called “landmark” legislation.

The team is also supporting a proposed law to increase the target percentage of electricity in the state generated from renewable sources—the Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS)—from 20 percent by 2022 to 25 percent by 2025. The chapter is addressing some problems with the RPS, most notably the need to clean up the definition of renewable energy, which currently encompasses a host of dirty electricity sources, including the incineration of trash, black liquor from the paper milling industry, and poultry litter.

These sources constitute about half of the electricity in the RPS. Unfortunately, they all produce dangerous amounts of pollution, such as fine particulate matter, lead, and mercury, which threaten Maryland’s air quality and the health of its residents.

As part of this campaign, chapter leaders have been influential in a successful effort to stop a new incinerator in Baltimore that is subsidized as a form of renewable energy under the RPS. Owen Dubois, M.D., a chapter board member, was even arrested, along with six others, in February, as they worked to get an answer from the Maryland Department of the Environment on an expired permit to build the plant. The chapter also wrote to local municipalities and boards of education, asking them to stop signing power contracts with the owner of the incinerator. A number of these institutions have bowed to community pressure and backed out of purchase power agreements. On March 18, 2016, the Maryland Department of the Environment announced that the incinerator’s air permit had expired, which will effectively kill the project.

On the coal front, the chapter, with Earthjustice and the Sierra Club, is suing the state of Maryland for withdrawing rules that would have required all coal-fired power plants to install modern pollution control equipment.

Continued on page 8
but all nine of the existing nuclear-armed states are in the process of upgrading their nuclear arsenals. These nations point fingers at the others to justify their arsenal enhancements, reinforcing a web of irrational behavior. North Korea conducted its fourth nuclear test explosion in January and has been testing new ballistic missiles. Russia is deploying a series of new land-based missiles and has been dispatching bombers to probe the borders of NATO countries.

A leaked story revealed plans for Russian underwater nuclear “drones” with a range of 4,000 miles. China is testing “hypersonic” maneuvering vehicles and creating new islands in disputed waters to form operating bases. Military aircraft from a number of different nations—including Syria, the United States, Russia, Turkey, and Great Britain—have been flying for airspace over Syria, and in November, Russia lost a pilot after Turkey shot down one of its warplanes.

Meanwhile, the United States and the European Union have ramped up war-related economic sanctions against Russia—and, at the same time, reduced absolutely essential communications between military and intelligence communities that used to operate across the Iron Curtain during the Cold War. The rhetoric between the U.S. and Russia is the most belligerent it has been since before the fall of the Berlin Wall. Here is how Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev described it at an international meeting in Munich in February: “One could go so far as to say we have slid back to a new Cold War. Sometimes I wonder if it’s 2016, or if we live in 1962.”

The International Countercurrent

Against this backdrop of deteriorating world security, a majority of the world’s nations have teamed up to stave off catastrophe through the Humanitarian Impact Initiative. The devastating impact nuclear weapons would have on civilians—including the impact on climate—has been thoroughly discussed at Humanitarian Impact conferences in Norway, Mexico, and Austria; at the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty Review Conference in April 2015; and finally, by the United Nations First Committee in November 2015. In 2014, Austria launched the Humanitarian Pledge to “fill the legal gap” on nuclear weapons, since chemical and biological weapons are prohibited under international law but nuclear weapons are not. As of this writing, 127 nations have officially signed onto the Humanitarian Pledge.

When the UN First Committee established a new Open Ended Working Group (OEWG) to explore all roads to disarmament, it also established majority voting rules for the group. No country has veto power at the OEWG—not even the five nuclear-armed, permanent members of the Security Council. During 2016, the OEWG will convene three times in Geneva. The first session concluded on February 26 with an excellent start and strong participation from the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW). PSR’s international affiliate, will testify at the May OEWG session.

PSR’s Role in the United States

Internationally, momentum is building to stigmatize and prohibit nuclear weapons. But here at home, we see a stark contrast. Does it seem as though none of the presidential candidates are talking about a dangerous new nuclear arms race? That’s because none of them are. Meanwhile, despite President Obama’s 2009 pledge to pursue a nuclear-weapons-free world, the United States has adamantly opposed the Humanitarian Pledge and persuaded all NATO nations and many other allies to oppose it, as well. Furthermore, the Obama administration is plowing forward in the wrong direction. Current plans call for spending a trillion dollars on nuclear weapons over the next 30 years, including wholesale replacement of American bombers, land-based missiles, and ballistic missile submarines. This extreme level of spending is spurred by powerful economic interests (see sidebar).

Nuclear arms race

PSR’s research indicates that from 2012 to 2014...

PSR's top 13 nuclear weapons contractors

hauled in $334 billion

in government contracts

and spent a whopping $243 million

on lobbying

and another $44 million

on campaign contributions.


$243 million

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$334 billion

“We have a Doomsday Clock sitting there for 2016. Martin Fleck, PSR Security Program Director, flags the clock on the left.

“Three minutes to midnight is too close. Far too close,” said Laurence Hknauw (center), chair of the Board of Supporters of the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, on Jan. 26. But the current state of the world will keep the “Doomsday Clock” hovering there for 2016. Martin Fleck, PSR Security Program Director, flags the clock on the left.

To reach millennials, PSR is using the award-winning 4-minute video, Joining the Conversation on Nuclear Weapons. We’ve created a TED Ed lesson plan to accompany the video, and The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists and Encyclopedia Britannica are both featuring this film online. In February, PSR brought its message directly to college students with presentations by PSR/National Board Member Iris Helfand, M.D., at Cornell University and the State University of New York in Cortland.

To reach and educate decision makers, PSR chapters are maintaining relationships with U.S. representatives and senators in their districts. Over the last several months, chapters have lined up representatives and senators to oppose funding for the new nuclear-tipped cruise missile, called the Long Range Stand-Off, or LRSO.

The 15,500 nuclear weapons in the world’s arsenals are not in a state of suspended animation. Either they will all be dismantled, or else they will be used. What would you prefer?

To find out how you can help PSR rid the world of nuclear weapons, contact Martin Fleck, PSR’s Security Program director, at mfleck@psr.org or (202)587-5422.
New Health Provider Trainings Address Toxic Substances in the Home

With every new group of interns at PSR’s national office, we are surprised they don’t understand that running plastics through the dishwasher can release toxic substances. They don’t know about the toxicity of parabens in shampoo or the threat of pesticides in their apartments, yet these are toxins that can harm health. Most consumers believe the chemicals used to make products like toys, furniture, and cleaning substances have been tested.

In fact, the opposite is true. A majority of the thousands of chemicals around us are not tested for their health impacts. Some have been linked to increases in chronic diseases like asthma, learning disabilities, and childhood cancer.

To decrease the risk of toxic exposures and prevent the development of environmentally related diseases, health care providers can, and should, teach parents how to reduce exposures to hazardous pollutants. Yet very few health professionals have sufficient training. In a recent study, fewer than 20 percent of U.S. obstetricians reported routinely asking pregnant women about common environmental exposures to toxins such as the mercury in tuna. Only one in 15 reported any training on the topic.

PSR launched a “train-the-trainer” project that prepares health professionals to introduce these topics to new doctors and nurses-in-training. Beth Neary, M.D., a Wisconsin pediatrician, created the first lecture in our series, presenting an overview of vulnerable populations and using case studies to show how exposure to toxic substances such as mercury, lead, and pesticides damages health.

Johanna Congleton, Ph.D., a PSR/National board member, lent her expertise for the second talk in the series, addressing endocrine-disrupting chemicals that contribute to obesity and reproductive disorders and also impair neurologic development. A third and final webinar on prenatatal exposures and the special vulnerability of the developing fetus will be presented in May. Visit our website to view the series.

Our goal is to increase environmental education for medical residency programs, nursing programs, and community clinics by offering expert presentations. This training will convey important skills to new health professionals, allowing them to offer preventative environmental health guidance to their patients, and, we hope, piquing their interest in becoming policy advocates.

The trainings will supplement the revised Pediatric Environmental Health Toolkit, which has been updated by Marybeth Dunn, M.P.H., of PSR/Florida and Lauren Zajac, M.D., M.P.H. of PSR/New York and the PSR/National board. Lauren, Mark Miller, M.D., of Berkeley, California; and Nicholas Newman, D.O., M.S., F.A.A.P., of Cincinnati, Ohio, all work within the Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Units and have been instrumental in editing and endorsing this work, as has the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Health care providers play a key part in decreasing the risk of toxic chemical exposures and preventing the development of environmentally related diseases. PSR’s toxic training program will increase the number of health professionals actively playing that role.

Ideas for Engaging Millennials in PSR’s Work

By Allison Stradiotto (MS-1), Creighton University School of Medicine

Economists and psychologists have various descriptors for the millennial generation, those people born between the early 1980s and the early 2000s. Amidst their various characteristics, one certainty is that millennials were born into a time unlike any before in its breadth of technology, information accessibility, and connectivity. This poses obvious benefits and challenges for advocacy groups. One benefit is that social media makes it incredibly easy to reach people, but with this comes the challenge of standing out in a deluge of news and media updates. It is in this landscape that I set out to start a local Student PSR chapter at my school.

I quickly found that the way to attract students is to provide events that are simple, tangible, and gratifying, akin to the news and media updates that catch our attention. “Simple” means events shouldn’t require prerequisite knowledge and skills or long time commitments (two to three hours maximum). “Tangible” means events should focus on immediate, action-based activities. Lastly, “gratifying” means that participants should walk away from events feeling they’ve accomplished something.

Although PSR was founded in opposition to nuclear war, that can feel like an abstract and complicated topic, so to meet the above criteria, consider attracting newcomers with a community-based environmental health activity. For example, my first event was a volunteer effort to help families lead-proof their homes. It was simple (house and landscape remodeling, family education), tangible, and immediately gratifying because our actions in those few hours prevented lead exposure.

These kinds of events draw students to PSR. As students delve deeper into PSR issues, they broaden their interests; topics like nuclear weapons abolition, less commonly discussed in the academic setting, will interest them more as they learn more about PSR—from the inside.

www.psr.org
By Christine Herrmann and Amy Citora

Here's a giant THANK YOU to all of you who made December PSR's best ever. We started the new year strong with an influx of last-minute donations from PSR members. The year-end boom was followed by a $50,000 grant from the Craiglist Charitable Foundation, their third to PSR in as many years. We appreciate what our members and our friends at Craigslist have made possible: collaborative work to improve policy on climate change, nuclear weapons, and toxic substances in the environment.

The development team is seeking more foundation support and also tweaking our redesigned renewal process. You can help us by renewing your membership as soon as you receive your first renewal notice; then you won't get another notice until the following year. We hope that you've noticed that we're sending a lot less mail. (By the way, at least three of us read all your comments when you send us a note with your donation.)

The PSR staff is analyzing our January 2016 survey results. We loved hearing your ideas about engaging youth and how you'd like to be involved, so thank you for your responses. We hope to keep you busy with actions to suit your interests and needs. We've not received all the print surveys yet, but we'll be tallying those soon.

PSR's Legacy Society is growing because pledging a last gift is so easy to do. We hope to have an online tool available soon that will help you with your gift planning. If you're thinking about naming PSR in your will and would like to discuss it, just give Christine a call at (202) 875-5239.

And lastly, we'd like to thank the anonymous couple who donated $25,000 to start an endowment for PSR. When their bequest eventually comes to us, the fund will pay larger yearly dividends. People who give to our endowment will become investor-philanthropists who help us prepare for our long-term future. They're foresighted because PSR will always be tackling threats to global health.

We hope this finds you happy with the work you've been supporting—many of you for more than 30 years. Your support makes you a citizen of the world. Thank you! 

**Institutional Support**


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Leaving a bequest to PSR is a wonderful way to help continue the work you believe in so strongly. We suggest you check with an attorney or tax advisor to see how a bequest to PSR would fit into your estate plans. PSR’s Tax ID number and address for gift returns is: PSR ACCT #: 3106-0448. Drawer A, 1111 14th Street, NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20005.

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A gift of stock is also an excellent way to support PSR’s work. Listed below is PSR’s brokerage information. Please contact the Development Department by phone at (202) 667-4260 or by e-mail at psrnatl@psr.org for more information or to confirm receipt of your gift.

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Many companies provide matching gifts for employee charitable contributions. Please check to determine whether your gift to PSR will be matched, doubled or tripled by your employer. It’s a great way to make your gift go further to support PSR. Just include your company’s matching gift form with your contribution, and we’ll complete it, send it in, and let you know when your gift has been matched!

STAY ACTIVE

Would you like to be more involved in PSR’s advocacy efforts? A great place to start is PSR’s activist updates. Each of PSR’s program areas reaches out to members through Action Alerts and e-mail. Sign up to receive updates at psr.org.

Coming to Washington, DC, and have an hour to spare? How about visiting one of your elected officials to talk about the issues of most concern to you? Contact the PSR office at least a week in advance, and we’ll help schedule a meeting, provide you with background materials, and possibly even accompany you on your lobbying call.

Give Today

From our campaigns to reduce and eliminate the threat of nuclear weapons to our programs for stronger policies protecting human health from environmental threats, PSR is having an impact on the issues you care about most. There is much more to be done in preparation for the challenges that lie ahead. Please make a tax-deductible contribution to PSR today. Give online at psr.org and your gift will be put to immediate good use. It will ensure that we have the resources necessary to deliver the strongest effort possible in the months ahead.

Thank you!

www.psr.org

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Continued from page 1

independent scientists and physicians about the contamination of soil, the ocean, and food. The Japanese authorities want to put a premature end to discussion of the Fukushima disaster. Any sound scientific and medical exploration of the crisis, however, will have to last every bit as long as the isotopes the disaster unleashed. Despite a $13.5-billion effort to remove radioactive fallout by wiping down houses and scraping up soil—an undertaking abandoned because of the impossibility of making these areas safe—many people will never be able to return to their homes. The overall cost of bailing out TEPCO ($100 billion) and addressing the entire disaster now totals $900–500 billion. In comparison, the cost of Hurricane Katrina was $80 billion.

The problem with radiation is that you can’t see it, taste it, or smell it. But with accurate measurements of the radioactivity released, epidemiologists can calculate anticipated cancer rates. Five Years Living with Fukushima sets the lowest estimate for excess cancer cases throughout Japan from the disaster at 6,000 and the highest at 66,000. Based on the lowest estimates of the amount of radioactive iodine-131 that was released and contaminated the food supply, some 1,000 exposed children may develop thyroid cancer.

To monitor the development of thyroid cancer cases, Fukushima University undertook a large thyroid ultrasound screening of children. Critics of the study cite the financial relationship between the IAEA and the university, the exclusion from the study of exposed children outside Fukushima Prefecture (radioactive fallout reached the northern districts of Tokyo), and the exclusion of children whose families evacuated after the onset of the disaster. Nonetheless, the study found a ten-fold increase in the incidence of thyroid cancers in children after the meltdown that cannot be attributed to increased screening.

A voluntary survey is underway to evaluate other conditions—albeit without any direct medical evaluation. A rise in cardiovascular disease has been attributed to stress, though it could be caused by radioactive cesium. No thorough studies are underway to accurately evaluate the rates of cardiovascular disease or birth defects; however, well-executed animal and plant studies have found higher mortality rates, lower birth rates, and more frequent deformities, just as was the case near Chernobyl.

These outcomes persist over time. Among the issues not discussed in Japan are the number of women who were advised by their doctors to have abortions because they were pregnant at the time of the disaster. The report calls for better evaluation and treatment of the affected population, but also a deeper understanding of the threat posed by our own aging nuclear power plants. The United States, like Japan, has failed to plan for the permanent, safe storage of the nuclear waste it generates daily. Japan is surviving without its large fleet of nuclear power plants; only two of 54 are operational, and 14 located on earthquake faults will never return to service. The U.S. should learn from this lesson and close plants that show signs of disrepair, fully implement the safety measures recommended by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and ramp up the production of the safe, renewable energy we need to address climate change and protect public health.

Read the full report online at www.psr.org/ FukushimaReport2016

Catherine Thomson, M.D.

Physicians for Social Responsibility
FROM THE PRESIDENT
Continued from page 2
and long-term health impacts from exposure to airborne contaminants released with methane. These include volatile organic compounds (VOCs) like benzene—a carcinogen known to cause several forms of leukemia, as well as reproductive and developmental disorders—and other compounds that can cause damage to the liver and kidneys. Symptoms of short-term exposure range from eye and respiratory tract irritations to headaches, nosebleeds, dizziness, and memory and coordination issues. Vulnerable populations—children, the poor, the elderly, and those with chronic illnesses and compromised immune systems—are most harmed by VOC pollution. In addition, VOCs are precursors to ground-level ozone, a constituent of smog and itself a greenhouse gas. From a public safety and health perspective, we must move quickly to adopt truly clean energy sources and put in place rules that keep dirty, health-damaging fossil fuels in the ground. Concurrently, PSR is pushing the EPA to establish rigorous industry-wide standards that would significantly reduce leakage of methane and VOCs from not only new but also existing oil and natural gas wells, delivery systems, and storage facilities. A comprehensive assessment and action plan to update aging infrastructure and monitoring systems is critical. We also need well-designed, long-term epidemiologic studies to assess the ongoing health status of families living near oil-and gas-drilling sites and major gas leaks.

Lastly, as you know, PSR is working hard to pressure each state to implement a strong plan for the Clean Power Plan, but we cannot allow pivoting from reliance on coal to natural gas. Join us in learning more about this problem and how to get involved in your state.

LYNN RINGENBERG, M.D., F.A.A.P.

PSR/CHESAPEAKE
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controls that reduce nitrogen oxide (NOx) emissions. It also is working with the Environmental Integrity Project and other groups to pressure the state to issue new permits that would place stronger environmental restrictions on coal-fired power plants.

The chapter is pushing for an increase in solar power in Maryland. Last year, it helped ensure passage of a law to create community solar demonstration projects, which allow multiple businesses and individuals to offset their energy use through a shared solar project. Chapter members are underscoring the need for funding mechanisms to ensure that low-income neighborhoods have access to these projects.

PSR/Chesapeake is also supporting legislation to establish a “green bank” in Maryland. The legislation is modeled after legislation in Connecticut and New York that establishes public-private partnerships to provide lower-income individuals, small businesses, and apartment owners with the short-term loans they often need to make energy improvements to their buildings.

The Chesapeake chapter’s biggest success to date has been rallying the health community to win, in March 2015, a legislated two-year moratorium on fracking. With the Hogan administration promising to reopen the state to fracking, the chapter is girding for a new effort next year to stop fracking from coming to Maryland.

Get in touch with the Chesapeake chapter at www.chesapeakepsr.org.