

-My name is Diego Arene-Morley and I am 13 years old. I am currently attending Sidwell Friends School and am in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. My interest in the environment started when I first saw An Inconvenient Truth. Since that night I have been having non stop conversations with myself and with others about the climate crisis. At the time I thought that only the government can make a difference but I soon realized that no matter what people whether young, old, poor or rich have the right to make a difference in the world. I hope you enjoy this letter and I hope we can work together to solve the climate crisis.

Dear Mr. Fenty,

Global warming is often seen as an inevitable outcome with no solutions. Too many times I hear people say, "One fluorescent light bulb won't do anything anyway, so what is the point?" Or that our efforts don't have an effect anyway. However more and more environmentally good causes are appearing across the globe. More car companies are advertising based upon the miles per gallon their cars get. More concerts such as Live Earth. Movies like An Inconvenient Truth by Al Gore. Even the stage from the Teen Choice Awards was made out of recyclable material. But unfortunately America is still contributing most to global warming and emits 25% of all the earth's greenhouse gasses. People are starting to take matter into their own hands. Once in a while an article appears in the newspaper about someone whose house is completely solar powered or running on alternative energy. However an article once in a while is not going to stop the global warming problem.

I am a co-founder of the Mt. Pleasant Solar Co-op. me, my dad, my friend and his mom are the other founders. Our overall goal is to have a large percent of Mt. Pleasant neighborhood running off completely clean solar energy. Solar energy is a wide growing way to power people's house around the earth from California to Nicaragua. Not only will our project serve as an investment to make the value of our houses go up, but houses also consume more energy than automotives and would greatly reduce emissions. We started by collecting information about average energy consumption in the Mt. Pleasant area. We currently have about 50 members in the neighborhood. We greatly researched solar energy and its aspects. After our research, we concluded that using possible grants of up to 50% and a \$2,000 Federal tax rebate does not cause the price to become affordable for middle class families in Mt. Pleasant. We began to search for other solutions. We are now exploring a new idea that involves working directly with Pepco. But we need your help.

The next more practical project involved distributing compact fluorescent light bulbs to light the average whole Mt. Pleasant house. This approach may seem to have less of an impact on global warming, but aggressive conservation will have to precede any larger projects and does not involve many financial problems. Converting only one incandescent bulb to fluorescent light bulb saves 300 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> per year. So if on average a Mt. Pleasant house has 50 light bulbs changing on house completely to fluorescent bulbs would save 15,000 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> a year and if at least 60 people (a conservative number) convert, then 900,000 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> would be saved from

damaging the environment even further. And this is only from changing light bulbs. We are currently working on dropping the price to be more affordable than any stores using bulk purchases and city discounts.

However more can be done but Mt. Pleasant and the rest of the world are in need of leaders who are willing to work for change. Citizens are starting to do their part by electing more environmentally conscious mayors, congressman, senators and now they must follow suit. Now only is a leader's job to put his own ideas but to listen to the people as well. The Mt. Pleasant Solar Co-op would be very grateful if you could get back to us. We like to talk to you about how people can come together and solve this problem. We would greatly appreciate if you could possibly attend one of our meetings. We would also enjoy discussing further solutions and problems concerning global warming. We admire the things you have done for the city already such as to start an automobile- free day and are looking forward to meeting you. **Perhaps you or one of your staff could attend our meeting planned for Tuesday November 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM.**

The largest problem with solving global warming is as so many people say the economy, the economy and the economy. However most people forget the definition of the economy: The system in which people use the environment to produce and distribute goods to meet people's needs. The key being the environment part! Without the environment we don't even have an economy. Without the environment we don't have resources. Without the environment we don't have places to live or places to raise our children. Without the environment our lives could not exist. So we the people have an obligation to the earth that gave us so much.

Thank you for your time.