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To: House Environment and Natural Resources Committee
Subject: Testimony in Support of H5217 – The Rhode Island Clean Air Preservation Act

Testimony in Support of H5217 – The Rhode Island Clean Air Preservation Act

Good evening esteemed members of the committee. My name is Jen Sherman Bach, and for eight years, I have made the journey here to testify in support of this bill. Each year, it gets harder. But each year, I come anyway—because this fight is too important to abandon.

I was appointed by Speaker Mattiello to the Rhode Island Geoengineering Study Commission in 2018. I have read the reports. I have listened to the experts. And I have lived long enough to know that when pollution—especially *unregulated* pollution—is dismissed as harmless, it is the most vulnerable who suffer first.

I know this firsthand.

I have multiple sclerosis. I rely on a wheelchair to be here today. And while my body has become weaker over the years, my resolve has only grown stronger.

Unregulated Pollution Has Consequences

Our skies are being used as a dumping ground for aerosols, PFAS, and other pollutants—without transparency, without consent, and without full understanding of the consequences. The **GAO’s 2024 report** confirms that atmospheric modification programs lack proper oversight. ([GAO Report 2024](#)).

And let’s be clear: PFAS, the so-called *forever chemicals*, do not belong in our air, our water, or our bodies. The **Department of Defense has identified PFAS as critical substances**, yet acknowledges their widespread contamination and the devastating impact they have on human health. ([DoD PFAS Report](#)).

How Many More Years Will We Wait?

I don’t know how many more years I will be able to sit before you and deliver this testimony. But what I do know is that we cannot afford to wait.

Every breath we take should be free of *forever chemicals*. Every drop of rain should be untainted by pollutants that poison our soil and our water. Every Rhode Islander—whether standing or seated, walking or rolling—deserves air that is safe to breathe.

H5217 is about accountability. It is about protecting the air we rely on, not handing it over to those who treat it as an open-air laboratory.

I am here today, as I have been for the past eight years, asking you to do what is right. Pass this bill. Protect Rhode Island’s air. And let my testimony not be in vain.

Thank you.

Jennifer S. Bach

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