



March 1st, 2023

The Honorable Bruce Westerman  
Chairman  
Natural Resources Committee  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Raul Grijalva  
Ranking Member  
Natural Resources Committee  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Westerman and Ranking Member Grijalva:

We want to start this letter by acknowledging the deep loss that Congress and the public is experiencing in the wake of Congressman A. Donald McEachin passing. He was an ardent advocate for environmental justice and, during his time in the House of Representatives, dedicated extensive time learning from and with environmental justice communities. His leadership and support positioned environmental justice as a priority with leadership, in caucuses, and committees including the Energy and Commerce Committee and Select Committee for the Climate Crisis. We applaud Ranking Member Raul Grijalva and Senator Tammy Duckworth for honoring his legacy by renaming the Environmental Justice for All Act to the A. Donald McEachin Environmental Justice for All Act.

As members of the Environmental Justice Leadership Forum, we write in strong support of the A. Donald McEachin Environmental Justice for All Act. We are a national network of 50 community-based organizations representing 22 states that work to ensure a diverse grassroots perspective is active in federal, state and local policy decisions. Our members are based in red, blue and swing states, including those in the Appalachia, Deep South, Northwest, Midwest, Northeast and Southwest regions and represent Black, Latinx, and Indigenous communities in large, midsize and small cities.

Our communities face a long legacy of pollution and are already confronting the worst impacts of climate change. The need for comprehensive legislation like the A. Donald McEachin Environmental Justice for All Act cannot be overstated. The A. Donald McEachin Environmental Justice for All Act addresses systemic barriers—including redlining, intentional disinvestment, and unregulated pollution—that have had devastating impacts on communities of color and low-income areas.

The A. Donald McEachin Environmental Justice for All Act is one of the most extensive federal environmental justice bills with robust support from environmental justice communities. This broad support from grassroots organizations comes from the critical provisions of the bill and

the intentionality and commitment to public participation that created the bill. The process of drafting the A. Donald McEachin Environmental Justice for All Act was guided by the Jemez principles of democratic organizing, which many environmental justice communities use in their own organizing practices. The bill has gone through multiple rounds of public input, including a series of stops through environmental justice communities in New York City, Detroit, Tucson, Southeastern Louisiana, Richmond, Southern California and a virtual roundtable with Tribal leaders in 2022. We appreciated the opportunity to meet with Chair Grijalva, the Late Congressman A. Donald McEachin, Senator Duckworth and other elected officials during these tour stops to share the challenges we face and to improve the bill.

This legislation contains changes that will critically benefit environmental justice communities. Among these, we want to highlight the importance of cumulative impact consideration for federal permitting and the restoration of the private right to action under the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by overturning *Alexander v. Sandoval*, which will allow for discriminatory disproportionate environmental burdens to be tried as Civil Rights violations. Environmental justice communities need to be protected and relieved from the constant burden of fronting our nation's pollution. In addition, the A. Donald McEachin Environmental Justice for All Act further expands opportunities for community engagement in environmental decision-making.

Amidst continuous attacks against democratic processes, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, we affirm that communities deserve the right to be involved in actions that will impact their health and wellbeing. While the National Environmental Policy Act is a bedrock environmental act that serves to involve communities in the permitting process, over the past few years it has undergone multiple rollbacks that weakened the NEPA process. We are grateful to the late A. Donald McEachin for his introduction of the McEachin amendments in July of 2022. These additions to the A. Donald McEachin Environmental Justice for All Act are grounded in community input and serve to strengthen the National Environmental Policy Act.

We write in strong support of the introduction of the A. Donald McEachin Environmental Justice for All Act.

Sincerely,

Arbor Hill EJ  
Ayika Solutions, Inc  
Center for Earth Energy and Democracy (CEED)  
CleanAirNow\_Environmental Justice  
Coalition of Community Organizations  
Duwamish River Community Coalition  
Environmental Justice Health Alliance for Chemical Policy Reform  
Flint Rising  
Green Door Initiative

GreenLatinos

People Organized in Defense of Earth and her Resources (PODER), Austin, TX

South Bronx Unite

T.e.j.a.s (Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services)

WE ACT for Environmental Justice

West Atlanta Watershed Alliance

### Allied Organizations

1000 Grandmothers for Future Generations

198 methods

350 Bay Area Action

350 Montana

350 New Orleans

350.org

350Brooklyn

7 Directions of Service

A Community Voice

Action for the Climate Emergency

Add CleanEarth4Kids.org

AFGE Local 704

Alianza Americas

Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments

Animals Are Sentient Beings, Inc.

Black Millennials 4 Flint (National)

Center for Biological Diversity (National)

Climate Reality Project, NOLA Chapter

Coalition Against Death Alley

Color Brighton Green, Brighton, NY

Concerned Citizens of St. John

Concerned Health Professionals of Pennsylvania (Physicians for Social Responsibility)

Creation Collaborative, National

Defend Our Future

Earth Ethics, Inc.

Earthjustice

Earthworks

EcoMadres

Energy Justice Network

Environmental Defense Fund

Evergreen Action

Extinction Rebellion San Francisco Bay Area

Fair Housing and Neighborhood Rights, Houston, TX

Fatherhood Mentoring Foundation, Houston, TX

Fridays for Future Orange County  
Greater New Orleans Interfaith Climate Coalition  
Greece Baptist Church Sustainability Team, Rochester, NY  
Green New Deal Network  
Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition  
Healthy Ocean Coalition  
Hispanic Access Foundation  
Hispanic federation (National)  
Inclusive Louisiana  
League of Conservation Voters  
Los Padres ForestWatch, Santa Barbara, CA  
Louisiana League of Conscious Voters  
Media Alliance-San Francisco Bay Area  
Moms Clean Air Force  
Nassau Hiking & Outdoor Club  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
Nuclear Information and Resource Service ("for a nuclear-free, carbon-free world"), Takoma Park, MD  
Occupy Bergen County, New Jersey  
Oceana  
Our Revolution Ocean County, NJ  
Pennsylvania Interfaith Power & Light  
Puvunga Wetlands Protectors  
Rachel Carson Council, Bethesda, MD  
Rise Up WV  
River Valley Organizing  
Sierra Club  
Social Eco Education (SEE), Los Angeles, CA  
Start:Empowerment  
Sunnyside Community Redevelopment Organization  
The Wilderness Society  
Tishman Environment & Design Center at The New School  
Toxic Free NC  
tUrn Climate Crisis Awareness & Action, Santa Clara, CA  
Union of Concerned Scientists  
Unitarian Universalists for a Just Economic Community  
Unite North Metro Denver  
Voices for Progress  
Waterspirit  
Zero Hour