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SENT VIA FED EX AND EMAIL

October 25, 2023

Michael S. Regan
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460
Regan.Michael@epa.gov

Joseph Goffman
Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460
Goffman.Joseph@epa.gov

Re: Make Sunsets Inc. Intends to Use Planes to Release Sulfur Dioxide – Follow Up

Dear Mr. Regan and Mr. Goffman:

We write again on behalf of our client, Informed Consent Action Network (“ICAN”), regarding the activities of Make Sunsets, Inc., (“**Make Sunsets**”) and ask that the Environmental Protection Agency (“**EPA**”) respond as to whether it has any concerns regarding these activities.

In our prior letter, dated October 16, 2023, we explained that Make Sunsets engages in for-profit experimental solar geoengineering by launching balloons filled with sulfur dioxide into the air. They hope these balloons will reach the stratosphere, burst, and release sulfur dioxide gas therein which is intended to react with water vapor to form droplets that reflect incoming sunlight back to space.¹ As of the date of this letter we have not received a response to our prior letter notifying the EPA of these activities.

As explained in our prior letter, the solar geoengineering activities Make Sunsets engages in are potentially hazardous to human health and the environment. Further, the practice of solar geoengineering is controversial within the scientific community because of its environmental and geopolitical risks. Some scientists conclude based on existing research that solar geoengineering could be dangerous to our environment.² It is therefore concerning that Make Sunsets is undertaking these activities with an apparent lack of government oversight.

Make Sunsets claims in a September 18, 2023 blog post on their website that they are already “launching monthly.” They also indicate they want to do solar geoengineering on a much

¹ See <https://makesunsets.com/>.

² See [The Dangers of Mainstreaming Solar Geoengineering: A critique of the National Academies Report](#).

larger scale. They are considering using airplanes to expand their operation and release far greater amounts of sulfur dioxide into the stratosphere.³

We reiterate our prior request and urge the EPA to review and address Make Sunsets' ongoing for-profit solar geoengineering activities. We look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,



Catherine Ybarra, Esq.
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³ See [Move Smoke to Cool Earth – Make Sunsets](#).

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Re: Make Sunsets Inc. Releasing Sulfur Dioxide from Balloons

Dear Mr. Regan and Mr. Goffman:

On behalf of our client, Informed Consent Action Network (“**ICAN**”), we write to address the activities of Make Sunsets, Inc. (“**Make Sunsets**”) and ask that the Environmental Protection Agency (“**EPA**”) respond as to whether it has any concerns regarding these activities.

A. Make Sunsets Releasing Sulfur Dioxide into the Air

Make Sunsets is a small startup company founded in October 2022 that engages in for profit experimental solar geoeengineering. Make Sunsets launches balloons filled with sulfur dioxide into the air. They hope these balloons will reach the stratosphere and release the sulfur dioxide therein to cool the earth.¹ To date, they have launched balloons in California and Nevada. They began this venture by launching balloons in Mexico but have since been banned from doing so by the Mexican government due to the experimental and potentially harmful nature of their activities.² Make Sunsets provides the following description as to how the balloons work:

We currently use biodegradable latex balloons filled with helium and sulfur dioxide (SO₂). The amount of helium we put in is based on the size of the balloon, the weight of the payload, and when we want the balloon to burst to release the reflective cloud.

Once launched from the ground, the balloon expands from the decreasing air pressure as it gets higher until it bursts. Once the

¹ See <https://makesunsets.com/>.

² See <https://www.gob.mx/semarnat/prensa/la-experimentacion-con-geoingenieria-solar-no-sera-permitida-en-mexico>.

balloon bursts, the parachute opens and the instrumentation floats down.

The general flight time is three to five hours. We carry instrumentation to retrieve the balloon and collect data on the deployment.³

The company's website allows customers to purchase "Cooling Credits" for \$10 each or commit to a "Monthly Cooling Credit Subscription" of \$10.00 per month. In exchange, Make Sunsets deploys balloons filled with sulfur dioxide into the atmosphere.

B. Harmful Effects from Release of Sulfur Dioxide

EPA recognizes that releasing sulfur dioxide into the air can adversely affect human health and the environment. Per EPA's website, "short-term exposures to [sulfur dioxide] can harm the human respiratory system and make breathing difficult. People with asthma, particularly children, are sensitive to these effects of [sulfur dioxide]."⁴

EPA also recognizes sulfur dioxide can damage the environment including soil and surface water acidification, acid rain, the destruction of ecosystems, leaching of harmful aluminum from the soil, and weakening the ability of plants and trees to absorb sunlight.⁵

C. EPA Can Influence State and Local Policy

EPA's stated mission is to protect human health and the environment and work to ensure that all Americans have clean air, land and water. To accomplish this goal, EPA sets national standards that states and local public health and air quality authorities may rely upon and enforce through their own regulations.

As states and localities across the nation strive for a cleaner future, we respectfully urge the EPA to review and address the fact that Make Sunsets is launching balloons into the air to release sulfur dioxide that is hazardous to human health and the environment. Make Sunsets is not only intentionally releasing these pollutants into the atmosphere to increase the amount of sulfur dioxide therein, it is also doing so for profit. We look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,



Catherine Ybarra, Esq.
Helena Dollanarte, Esq.
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³ See <https://makesunsets.com/products/join-the-next-balloon-launch-and-cool-the-planet>.

⁴ See <https://www.epa.gov/so2-pollution/sulfur-dioxide-basics>.

⁵ See <https://www.epa.gov/acidrain/effects-acid-rain>.