

EXHIBIT 5
DATE 2/14/11
HB HJ 12

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Statement concerning Montana Resolution HJ 12
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Dear Montana Legislators:

I am writing this statement to urge you to support Montana Resolution HJ12, which would in turn support passage of a new, and stronger, federal Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA). The current law allows many toxic chemicals to be manufactured and sold as ingredients in products we use every day, from the paper diapers that hug my grandson's bottom to the liquid hand soap you used this morning in the capitol restrooms. For most people, the negative effects of these chemicals will not be fully realized for many years, but be assured that they will be realized eventually, for, as recent medical evidence shows, we all carry these toxins in our body tissues, even the yet unborn, to whom they are passed by their mothers.

For many of us, the effects of these chemicals are experienced every day. In 1998, at the age of 47, I was officially diagnosed with multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS), sometimes referred to as environmental illness (EI), but I had been experiencing the symptoms of this disease for several years previously—phantom skin rashes that responded to no medication, migraine headaches that would last for days, and asthmatic attacks that would send me to the local emergency room gasping for breath—to name but a few. I will never forget the day I sat across the desk from a doctor and was told that the chemicals in my environment had caused permanent damage to my heart, adrenal glands and overall immune system.

Through some reparative therapies and lifestyle changes, I have been able to regain a measure of health that allows me to be with my family and work from home. However, I live in a virtual bubble, venturing away from home only to visit family members and make an occasional trip to Target or The Real Food Store, and then only in the middle of the day, when customers are few. It is because of my chemical injury that I cannot present this statement in person. Something someone is wearing here today—your hand lotion, hairspray, deodorant, or dry-cleaned clothes—or a cleaning product used to polish the wood in this room could cause me to have a painful, if not life-threatening, reaction. I would not wish this malady on anyone. The only way to prevent it, and/or a host of other diseases, is by limiting your exposure to toxic chemicals. This is why I urge you to support this resolution.