

House Finance Subcommittee on Agriculture Development and Natural  
Resources

HB 49

Interested Party Testimony

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Response Agency

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Let me give you a scenario: You and your team get called out to an emergency scene. You have basic information on what has occurred. When you get there, it looks like a bomb just went off. You see coal-black smoke just rolling up the hill. There appears to be lines of fire spread across several acres of a well pad as you approach. You notice coming up on the site that there are explosives on the site as the fire burns nearby. When you try to find out what chemicals are on site, you learn from other first responders that the list burned up in the trailer that was onsite. A list is trying to be recovered from the next nearby town. And once you receive this list, it lacks all of the chemical information needed to effectively assess and mitigate the problem. Can you imagine how difficult this makes our job?

This is exactly the situation that first responders entered into on June 28, 2014 when they responded to a StatOil chemical fire on well pad in Clarington, Ohio.

Under current state law, the identify of chemicals can be protected as trade secret, and not disclosed to first responders and state agencies responding to emergencies. We are asking our first responders to respond to emergencies without key pieces of information to accurately assess the situation and make the best decision possible to help the public so long as the chemical reporting loophole remains in Ohio law.

This loophole prevents first responders from getting access to the *full list* of chemicals from industry or the Ohio Department of Natural Resources - including those trade secret protected chemicals. This information is critical for first responders to get in order to mitigate damage and reduce the impacts to neighbors and the public as they respond to fires, spills and other emergencies.

First responders have a huge responsibility to the public, and they carry this responsibility bravely despite the risks. We should be striving to make their jobs easier, not putting barriers between them and the information they need to protect themselves and us.

Today I am asking this committee to do all that you can do to advance an amendment in the state budget bill which would close the chemical reporting loophole and make sure that first responders and others who help protect public health have access to *all chemical information*.

Thank you for allowing me to speak to the committee. I'd be happy to try to answer any questions you may have.