

April 25, 2017

Chairman Anielski, Vice Chair Hambley, Ranking Minority Member Bishoff, and members of the Ohio State & Local Governments Committee, I want to thank you for allowing me to speak today. My name is Douglas Keller and I am an employee of Equistar Chemicals, a LyondellBasell Industries Company and a resident of Mason, Ohio. On behalf of LyondellBasell, I am testifying today in support of House Bill 121, a bill that

1. Increases choice and competition; and
2. Allows effective use of state funds which will reduce infrastructure costs and improve the quality of projects.

LyondellBasell is one of the largest plastics, chemical, and refining companies in the world. LyondellBasell employs 13,300 employees worldwide and operates 57 manufacturing sites in 18 countries on five continents. In the state of Ohio, we have 165 employees at locations in Cincinnati and Fairport Harbor. LyondellBasell is a leading supplier of polyethylene raw materials for the potable water piping, wastewater and groundwater management, and plumbing markets – and has been so for over 50 years in the United States and around the world.

House Bill 121 is important legislation that will remove the non-engineering based preference of piping materials used in construction or rehabilitation projects in the state. As an active member of the American Water Works Association, ASTM International, as well as other plastic pipe-related organizations I understand the need to have proper engineering-derived performance requirements for piping materials. I also understand that there is not a single material that meets all of the situations encountered in the potable water and wastewater management industries.

I believe it is important that state funds are used effectively and efficiently when fixing our state's aging infrastructure. All piping materials need to be considered for public projects. This bill would increase choice and competition which in turn will reduce infrastructure cost that benefits consumers and citizens. Furthermore, this bill does not mandate use of any particular pipe material, nor does it restrict the ability of project engineers to use any piping material that meets each project's specifications. It simply requires that all piping materials that meet the specifications of the identified project be considered.

The high density polyethylene pipe raw materials that Equistar Chemicals produces and supplies to pipe producers provide many benefits to water and wastewater engineers including:

- Corrosion resistance
- No toxic components
- Leak-free system without mechanical joints

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- Resistance to earth movement due to drought or seismic activity
- Trenchless techniques that minimize project costs for installation and also social costs such as disruption of access and property restoration for citizens

Project engineers in the potable water and wastewater management fields should be allowed to select the most durable, efficient, suitable and cost effective material that meets the engineering needs of the system design. Model specifications for plastic piping materials are available from trade organizations, pipe manufacturers and other American municipalities to aid Ohio project engineers in updating their purchasing specifications. Laws and construction codes that favor one material over another can create situations where tax dollars and water revenue are wasted leading to increased burdens upon the citizens of Ohio. A bias towards one material can lead to the installation of piping products that waste tax dollars via installation, maintenance and/or premature failure. By allowing contractors to bid on alternate pipe materials that meet technical performance criteria, the state will instill accountability in the procurement process, which will reduce costs, improve quality and foster innovation in the form of new products and services, spurring economic growth.

Chairman Anielski and members of the committee I thank you for your time and would be glad to answer any questions that you might have.

Sincerely,

Douglas D. Keller
Technical Lead, Pipe – Americas
Application Development & Technical Service

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