



April 25, 2017

**SUBJECT: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 121**

Dear Chairwoman Anielski, Vice Chair Hambley, Ranking Minority Member Bishoff, and Members of the Ohio House of Representatives Committee on State and Local Government,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of House Bill 121. My name is Matthew Kuwatch and I am Vice President of Marketing and Business Development at Aurora Plastics, LLC. Aurora Plastics was founded in 1997 in order to fulfil an unmet needs in rigid PVC compounds. We are based in Streetsboro, Ohio where we headquarter our Corporate Offices, Research & Development, and one of two manufacturing facilities. We employ 80 employees, 65 of which are located in Streetsboro and others at our Welcome, North Carolina manufacturing facility. We are a merchant compounder of PVC – that means we are in the marketplace, competing every day. Specific to water infrastructure we manufacture plastic pipe and fitting compounds which are supplied to PVC pipe and fitting manufacturers.

Aurora Plastics supports House Bill 121 to give local governments’ additional flexibility to consider all piping materials for water infrastructure projects.

I have been in the construction materials industry for 25 years and have seen the walls put up by legacy materials, whether it is water mains, sewer lines, or even the small diameter pipes in your house. I’ve seen it across the U.S. and abroad. And whenever those walls come down so do the costs to consumers and the barriers to entry for small businesses. We are a company of innovators and technicians and know that the best answer isn’t for regulation to stymie business but to enable a level playing field where businesses can compete fairly.

That is why this bill is so important. In requiring consideration of all materials that meet the “engineering specifications” of a project you set a technical standard not a material standard. I believe that if a technology is proven and meets a reference standard approved by the local engineers for specific projects, all products regardless of material should be allowed to compete. If there are questions about material safety I would be happy to answer them. In fact, I have conducted extensive research and done exhaustive life cycle assessment analysis of piping materials. But it shouldn’t be necessary in this forum because that is what the standard setting bodies do.

House Bill 121 is a simple solution to a very real problem. There are market barriers and regulatory monopolies holding us back. And while it impacts our business and employees, it also impacts every citizen of Ohio who pays higher water rates.

I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have. Thank you.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. R. Kuwatch".

Matthew R. Kuwatch  
Vice President, Marketing & Business Development  
Aurora Plastics, LLC