



House Ways and Means Committee  
Rep. Tim Schaffer, Chairman

WITNESS FORM

Today's Date: 2-24-2019

Name: CRAIG TIMM

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Representing: PONTAN CORPORATION

Position/Title (If Applicable): MANAGER, REGIONAL PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Testifying on bill number: HB 60

Testifying as:  Proponent

Opponent

Interested Party

Are you a registered lobbyist?  YES  NO

Are you submitting written testimony?  YES  NO

Comments: APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITY

**Please note:** No photography or electronic recording of committee proceedings permitted without the consent of the chairman prior to committee.



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**Domtar Corporation Testimony to the Ohio House of Representatives Ways and Means Committee**

**3 p.m., Tuesday, February 26, 2019**

Domtar Corporation would like to thank Chairman Tim Schaffer and the members of the Ways and Means Committee for giving us the opportunity to comment on House Bill 60. This bill would make exempt from sales and use tax the sale of diapers for infants and toddlers.

Domtar, with facilities in Delaware and Washington Court House, is a leading provider of a wide variety of wood fiber-based products, including communication, specialty and packaging papers, market pulp and absorbent hygiene products.

Domtar is the largest integrated marketer of uncoated freesheet paper in North America, which in industry jargon means your typical white office paper. With approximately 10,000 employees serving more than 50 countries around the world, Domtar is driven by a commitment to grow, manage and harvest wood fiber in a sustainable matter to be turned into useful products that people rely on every day. Domtar is a strong proponent of diaper affordability and would like to express our full support for the bill currently being considered before this committee.

The issue of diaper affordability is getting increased visibility across the United States, with many state legislatures, as well as Congress, considering legislation that would reduce the burden on the country's neediest families.

Diaper costs vary across geographies in the United States, but the average cost is roughly around \$80 per month per child, or approximately \$1,000 per year. The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that the percentage of income spent on diapers at 14% for low-income families when you take into account some of the additional challenges.

Federal assistance programs such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which is commonly referred to as “food stamps”, and the Women, Infants and Children program (WIC), consider diapers as non-essential hygiene items, and as such diapers may not be covered under these poverty reduction programs. Another federal program, the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families allows its recipients to use those monies for diapers, but due to the relatively small amount a family receives coupled with the high cost of diapers, many essentials for which TANF is intended are no longer affordable. Unlike other common necessities, diapers are not subsidized under TANF.

No parent wants to be faced with the decision of having to choose between food and diapers, or heating your home and diapers. In such situations, families can try to “stretch” the period between changing diapers, in some cases even attempting to clean diapers for ultimate reuse.

Please consider some of the adverse effects of not changing an infant as needed. A diaper rash can begin as relatively mild, but soon other health risks may arise by leaving an infant in a soiled diaper too long, such as a bacterial or yeast infection that begins with a diaper rash or dermatitis.

Much beyond just the physical health of the child, not being able to properly diaper your infant can have an adverse impact on the mental health of the mother. A study conducted by Yale University, “Diaper Need and Its Impact on Child Health” was published in *Pediatrics* – the official journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics. The study surveyed 877 low-income, pregnant or parenting women in New Haven, CT, shows a significant correlation between “diaper need” and incidences of stress, sadness or anxiety. Further, beyond just maternal mental health, “maternal stress and depression are significant contributors to child development” and can have a direct impact on “parenting quality and overall child outcomes”.

I hope members of this committee can see this is a broader public health issue that does not just afflict infants, but parents as well. When looking at diaper affordability holistically, we argue any expense to the state in not-collected sales tax will be offset

by the range of avoided costs in the medical sector. Far beyond simple dollars and cents, diaper affordability can be traced back to the emotional and physical well-being of both parent and child. Domtar asks that this committee give HB 60 a favorable report, in order to advance this very important measure that will help thousands of Ohio residents.

Sincerely,



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