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Dear Chairman Burke, Vice Chairman Beagle, Ranking Member Tavares and Members of the Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid Committee:

On behalf of the more than 1,100 International Paper employees in Ohio, I respectfully urge your support for Senate Bill 210 which would prohibit municipalities from imposing any tax, fee, or assessment on “auxiliary containers” which includes paper and plastic bags, cardboard, corrugated material, and other packaging used to transport or protect merchandise, food or beverages.

At International Paper, we transform renewable resources into recyclable products that people depend on every day. Our entire business depends upon the sustainability of forests. We tackle the toughest issues in our value chain, reduce our environmental footprint and promote the long-term sustainability of natural capital. We are committed to strengthening our people and the communities where we live and work using all resources responsibly and efficiently, and ensuring our businesses are safe, successful and sustainable for generations to come.

We support preempting local jurisdictions from enacting bans or taxes on these products because it prevents the patchwork of local ordinances that penalize paper and paper-based packaging—a material that is highly recycled, compostable and renewable. In 2016, 67.2 percent of all paper consumed in the U.S. was recovered for recycling, and the recovery rate has met or exceeded 63 percent for the past six years. Today, paper is the most-recycled material in the United States.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of our views. If Committee members are interested in learning more about International Paper and our sustainability programs, we always welcome the opportunity to host tours at our 11 manufacturing facilities within the state.

Sincerely,

David Kluesner
Regional Manager, Government Relations