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May 25, 2021

Ohio Chemistry Technology Council Written Testimony In Support of House Bill 201

Chairman McColley, Vice Chair Schuring, Ranking Member Williams and members of the Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee, my name is Andy Swaim. I am the Director of Government and External Affairs for the Ohio Chemistry Technology Council (OCTC). Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 201 (HB 201).

OCTC is the leading advocate for Ohio's chemistry industry, which is the third largest manufacturing sector in the state. Ohio is also the third largest chemical manufacturing state in the United States. In Ohio, the chemistry industry employs nearly 40,000 people, pays an average wage of over \$85,000, and ships more than \$5.6 billion in products worldwide annually.

The OCTC represents manufacturers that require access to affordable, reliable energy sources to remain competitive in the marketplace. One of the recent competitive advantages in this state has been the abundant supply of natural gas. The chemistry industry is a large consumer of natural gas, which is used to heat our facilities, as well being a valuable input in the manufacturing process. Amongst others, natural gas is the primary energy source for heaters, boilers, and other heat transfer systems.

House Bill 201 prohibits a local government from banning a business or residence from limiting, preventing, or prohibiting any consumer within its boundaries from obtaining natural gas service. As a result, the bill will ensure that our member companies can have a choice when it comes to their energy consumption needs. Energy choice and Ohio's competitive energy markets provide Ohio businesses the opportunity to thrive by minimizing their costs and adapting to new and emerging technologies. While local governments have shown that they want to contribute more sustainable policies in the energy sector, it is wholly unreasonable that they would be able to infringe upon consumer choice for every resident, business, and organization within their entire jurisdiction.

OCTC urges passage of House Bill 201 to preserve energy choice in Ohio. Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony today.