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Testimony before the House Homeland Security Committee, June 21, 2023

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the Committee, thank you for allowing Cenovus Energy to testify in strong opposition to HB 205. I hope you will consider Cenovus's testimony carefully, because – as the bill's proponents pointed out last week – this legislation was carefully written to impose new hiring mandates *specifically and solely* on the two refineries Cenovus now owns and operates.

My name is Claudio Ingaramo, the Interim Regional Vice President of Cenovus Energy's US operations. Before this role, I served as the plant manager for Cenovus's Lima Refinery, the longest continually operating refinery in the United States. Unlike others who have testified in support of this bill and claimed to work for Cenovus Energy, I am **actually** a full-time Cenovus employee – not a contracted employee. So I fully understand and appreciate Cenovus's mission and commitments to the community, to its employees, and – above all else – to safety.

Cenovus owns the refinery in Lima, and in February of this year, we purchased BP's interest in the Toledo refinery that we now operate. Cenovus is now the largest refiner in Ohio, and currently employs more than eleven hundred union-affiliated workers at our two Ohio refineries. We also own a refinery in Superior, Wisconsin, and a 50 percent interest in two other refineries in Texas and Illinois. Cenovus is the new operator in Toledo, and some of the issues being discussed before this committee occurred under prior operatorship. However, it is clear to us that this bill is designed to force major changes in how Cenovus hires contract workers at our Ohio refineries. These changes have nothing to do with improving safety. Instead, they are designed to take hiring decisions out of our hands and put them in the hands of a few union bosses.

Every member of this Committee was sent a copy of my June 12 letter, which corrects a number of the inaccurate and misleading statements that supporters of this bill continue to make about Cenovus and our industry. I am submitting that letter for the record. However, in case you did not take the time to read the letter or meet with our staff in person, I will correct the record on a few things here as well.

Cenovus is deeply concerned about HB 205. This legislation will not improve safety in our refineries and will do nothing to protect Ohio's workers. Instead, HB 205 will limit the scope of who Cenovus can contract with for turnarounds and other large-scale projects to a less-qualified pool of workers.

Cenovus does not base our contracting decisions on whether a firm is union or non-union. We base our contracting decisions on the scope of work and a firm's ability to perform that work according to our high safety and quality standards. By limiting the scope of who Cenovus can contract with, this legislation will have a negative impact on our ability to meet those safety and quality standards. There are no metrics showing that union-affiliated contractors perform better than non-union contractors. In

fact, some of our historical metrics indicate the opposite, as my colleagues will speak to in their testimony today.

I would like to thank Representative Mohammed for addressing the English proficiency provisions in this legislation. Mr. Mohammed is correct: A person who is trained to perform a craft generally should not be excluded from employment based on their ability to speak a certain language. We must not forget: This is America, the nation with the strongest economy in the world. The foundation of that economy was built by people who came here from all over the world in search of opportunity.

I am a first-generation American from Argentina. You may have noticed that English is not my first language. Some of the members of this committee are the sons and daughters of immigrants. Their parents were trained to perform a craft, and hopefully, they were not excluded from practicing their livelihood because of an arbitrary language test.

Every member of this committee must know that references to “Gulf Coast and Texas workers” in the sponsors’ testimony – and in particular, to workers from the “Deep South” – are nothing but anti-Hispanic and anti-Latin American rhetoric. As someone from the even deeper South, I take particular offense at these statements and urge committee members to reject this kind of harmful, divisive rhetoric.

The requirement for English proficiency also raises concerns regarding how a company might define “English proficiency” and administer such a test, and would open the door for accusations of unfair practices and outright discrimination. We already work closely with our contractors to ensure everyone on-site can communicate clearly with workers, management, and safety professionals. During my 30-year career in the refining industry, I have worked closely with contractors and workers from all over the world, and I am not aware of a single safety incident that was caused by a language barrier.

Cenovus values its strong and longstanding partnerships with unions. We employ approximately 550 USW-affiliated workers in Ohio, including Process Operators, skilled maintenance employees, and Laboratory Technicians. Our Lima Refinery hosts as many as 300 building trades-affiliated maintenance workers and contractors onsite every day. Cenovus’s Toledo Refinery has hosted as many as 600 building trades-affiliated workers on site daily in this year, and expects to host up to 300 union-affiliated maintenance workers and contractors daily. The vast majority of the full-time workers at our refineries live right here in Ohio.

However, this legislation will do nothing to ensure jobs for Ohio workers. What the proponents of this bill have not told you is that union-affiliated contractors bring in large numbers of out-of-state workers for turnarounds and large-scale projects.

Under previous ownership, the Lima refinery hired union-affiliated contractors for its 2016 turnaround and the 2019 crude oil flexibility project. For the 2016 turnaround, **70 percent of the work was completed by union contractors, and 80 percent of those workers came from outside of the region.** For the 2019 crude oil flexibility project, **95 percent of the work was completed by union contractors – and again, 80 percent of those workers came from outside of the region.** Let me repeat that, because this is what HB 205’s supporters don’t want you to know. For those two projects that were completed using mostly union labor, 80 percent of the workers were brought in from outside the region.

Last week, Mr. Szollosi stated that similar legislation was passed in Minnesota because of “what happened to the refinery in Superior.” Cenovus has been rebuilding the Superior Refinery after an incident five years ago, which happened as the Superior Refinery was completing a turnaround planned by Calumet. That turnaround was awarded to a union contractor. And for the rebuild project, we contracted with a union-affiliated contractor that is employing 100 percent union workers. **Ninety percent of those union workers are from out of state.**

In short: Union-affiliated contractors bring in out-of-state workers. And for large projects, they bring them in in large numbers. They do so now, and they will continue to do so if HB 205 is enacted.

This legislation is not about safety or protecting Ohio’s workers. It is about mandates that would guarantee the affiliated construction trades a monopoly on a specific segment of Ohio’s jobs market. Whether those workers are local or not, and whether they are qualified or not, will not matter under this legislation.

Members of the Committee, I hope you will actually consider these facts instead of simply continuing to push this deeply flawed bill through the legislative process as quickly as possible. I urge you to put good policy ahead of politics by rejecting this anti-safety, anti-free market bill.

Thank you for your time.