

# WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you representing: Yourself  Organization

Organization (If Applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

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Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): \_\_\_\_\_

Specific Issue: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you testifying as a: Proponent  Opponent  Interested Party

Will you have a written statement, visual aids, or other material to distribute? Yes  No

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How much time will your testimony require? \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide a brief statement on your position:

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House Transportation and Public Safety Committee  
House Resolution 13  
Testimony of Matt Velker  
March 16, 2021

Good morning Chairman Baldrige, Vice Chair McClain, and Ranking Member Sheehy and thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify today on the importance of Ohio House Resolution 13. My name is Matt Velker. I live in Sylvania, Ohio and have worked at the Toledo Refining Company for nearly 17 years. I am also the Vice President of the United Steelworkers Local 912 representing the nearly 350 hourly workers who safely operate and maintain the Toledo Refinery for PBF Energy.

Ohio House Resolution 13 supports the continued operation of Enbridge Line 5 while the Great Lakes Tunnel Project to bury the pipeline deep within the bedrock below the Straights of Mackinac is completed. Enbridge Line 5 is a hydrocarbon pipeline that currently crosses through the Straits of Mackinac to transport petroleum and liquid gas products to Michigan and Ohio from Wisconsin and Canada. For our refinery (which resides in both Oregon and Toledo, Ohio) to operate we receive the bulk of our raw material supply through Line 5. Without Line 5, these family and community sustaining jobs will be gone. All of the additional community employment our refinery supports will also be at risk. There are no feasible and prudent alternatives of supply that would sustain operation of the PBF Toledo Refinery. Our refinery processes the equivalent of close to 1000 tanker trucks daily and the equivalent of 2000 trucks full of product move daily, one way, through Line 5. The street system where the refinery is located is not capable of handling the traffic increase it would take to move that amount of product, and even if it were, the refinery doesn't have the infrastructure to move that amount of material by truck. Put simply, a premature shutdown of Line 5 means a shutdown of my refinery and further economic collapse of the Northern Ohio/Southern Michigan economy, while forcing more petroleum products onto Ohio and Michigan Roadways.

In my years at the Toledo Refining Company, I have become heavily involved in our Health and Safety department, and for the last 5 years I have helped to manage the facility's incident investigation program in conjunction with the USW Tony Mazzocchi Center's Triangle of Prevention Program (TOP). The focus of the TOP Program is to look for systemic root cause failures when incidents occur rather than assessing blame upon the workforce, and the Toledo Refining Company leadership is very supportive of this methodology. The reason I offer this information is to demonstrate how committed this facility and its workforce are to operating in a safe and environmentally sound

manner. Not all refineries can offer the same. When we have high potential incidents here, we investigate them thoroughly with the honest and aggressive intent of preventing those incidents from happening again. We do not simply stop at punishing someone and keeping our fingers crossed. We are driven by the concept of hazard elimination and prevention. When it comes to the environmental impact of a release of a hazardous material this is the ultimate mindset, and again, one that we specialize in at the Toledo Refining Company. When called for, we execute high level and meaningful corrective actions to protect our neighbors, our communities, and our environment. Both the USW and the Toledo Refining Company (PBF Energy) are committed to environmental excellence. Neither entity would put its reputation on the line to support a project that did not have the same commitment. The Line 5 Tunnel Project is about more than just money to us. The future of Green Energy is an admirable goal but one that comes with a challenging and lengthy transition. Someone has to help keep our communities and our country moving forward until we reach those goals. To do this we need facilities that are committed to operating as cleanly and responsibly as possible during this transition. USW Local 912 and the Toledo Refining Company is a great example of the type of partnership and facility that our country needs to move forward.

Passage of House Resolution 13, supporting the Great Lakes Tunnel Project and line replacement while allowing the existing Line 5 to remain in operation will ultimately accomplish the goal of removing the current line from the Straits of Mackinac while continuing to deliver energy and jobs. While I support this project, I am also committed to holding Enbridge accountable to follow strong labor and environmental standards.

I urge you to pass House Resolution 13 to support the continued operation of Enbridge Line 5 and the completion of the Great Lakes Tunnel Project. This is a commonsense solution to further protect our environment and provide the energy that we all rely on with no additional cost to taxpayers and the added economic benefit of providing good, family sustaining jobs to Michigan residents. Keeping the existing Line 5 operational during this project will directly secure hundreds of full-time jobs at the Toledo Refinery as well as thousands of secondary jobs in the surrounding communities and safeguarding the over 5 billion dollars of economic activity in the region that the Toledo Refining Company provides.

In closing, I urge this committee to pass Ohio House Resolution 13 and recommend its swift passage on the House floor. Thank you for allowing me to testify here today.