

**Before the
UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C.**

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IN THE MATTER OF)	
)	
MELAMINE FROM CHINA)	ITC Inv. Nos. 701-TA-526-527 and
AND TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO)	731-TA-1262-1263 (Final)
_____)	

TESTIMONY OF BRENT PETIT

November 3, 2015

Good morning. My name is Brent Petit. I am the International Staff Representative for the United Steelworkers Local 13-447. The USW is the largest industrial union in North America with approximately 650,000 active members. My primary responsibilities are to negotiate and oversee labor contracts and represent employees in the grievance and arbitration process. I oversee 21 different labor contracts, one of which is Cornerstone's, and I am responsible for approximately 3,400 employees in south Louisiana.

I have worked in various roles with Cornerstone Chemical Company and its predecessors for over 33 years. I began working at Cornerstone's facility in 1979, when it was owned by the American Cyanamid Company. I continued working at the facility after Cytec Industries was spun off from American Cyanamid in 1993. Around the time that Cytec Industries became Cornerstone in 2011, I left my position at Cornerstone to assume a full-time role with the USW. While working at Cornerstone's facility, I was the President of PACE Local 4-447, which covered approximately a dozen businesses. I also served as Chair of the Cytec Group.

During my 35-plus years in the chemical industry, I have seen a number of tremendous changes. The chemical industry is very competitive, and the business climate is constantly changing. This has forced the workforce to evolve along with technology and market forces. We have faced and overcome many challenges over the years. Today, we are facing a challenge created by an unlevel playing field. The lone domestic manufacturer of melamine is injured and threatened by unfair trade practices.

Our facility in Louisiana is a shining example of advanced manufacturing where melamine is produced in a flexible, self-directed, and high-performance workplace that focuses on lean manufacturing. We have taken a number of measures to respond to changes in the industry and improve productivity at our facility. Specifically, we have improved our maintenance and operations training programs to expand skills and reduce overall training costs. We set baselines and targets for maintenance skill sets and invite vendors to come to our facility to work with our hourly trainers to provide the most current training available. Our hiring standards are more stringent than ever. We have upgraded our distributed control systems. Operations personnel work with maintenance personnel to make adjustments to continuously improve productivity. Our workers are skilled problem solvers, have extensive decision-making responsibilities, and have expanded duties over safety and the operations of the facility.

Many of these improvements were made to reduce costs in response to low-priced imports from Trinidad and China. Despite our efficient operations, however, these unfairly priced imports used low prices to take substantial sales and market share from Cornerstone. Although we always look for opportunities to

make adjustments and become more efficient, our operations are not sustainable if these imports continue to enter at such low prices.

Cornerstone is the largest manufacturing facility in Jefferson Parish, and its economic impact reaches far beyond the parish borders. Cornerstone's employees and contract workers are drawn from the immediate area as well as a large region around the plant. Cornerstone currently has approximately 130 employees for its melamine manufacturing operations, with over 330 represented employees and over 500 total employees at the site plus many temporary contractors. Thus, Cornerstone makes a significant contribution to the economy of the immediate Gulf Coast region.

Without relief, we are certain to suffer more lost sales and lost revenues to subject imports. Melamine producers in Trinidad and China are highly export-oriented. They also have enormous excess capacity. Solely with excess capacity, these producers could flood the U.S. market many times over with low-priced melamine. These dumped and subsidized imports pose a significant threat to the preservation of the highly-skilled and well-paid U.S. manufacturing jobs that support the sole U.S. melamine producer.

On behalf of the USW members and their families who depend on Cornerstone for their livelihood, I ask the Commission to reach an affirmative determination in these investigations.