



April 16, 2012

Senator Sherrod Brown
713 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Brown:

On behalf of Spangler Candy Company's 440 employees and its 296 members of the Teamsters Local 20, we beg you to reform the current sugar policy program so that it does not stifle job creation and the ability of hardworking Ohioans to compete globally. There are 23,000 jobs in the State of Ohio which use sugar, and we write on behalf of these Ohioans as well.

Spangler Candy has announced it will double the size of its business within 5 to 10 years of being able to buy sugar on the free market. This would bring hundreds of desperately needed jobs to Northwest Ohio. In addition, Spangler has 254 suppliers located all around Ohio and does over \$16 million annually with these suppliers. Imagine the economic benefit to Ohio of doubling that figure!

Spangler cannot buy sugar on the free market because of the US Sugar Policy which costs three manufacturing jobs for every job saved in the sugar growing industry. **Over 120,000 jobs have been lost because of this policy, it harms GDP by \$514 million per year, and it costs American consumers over \$50 per year for a family of four.** (These are US government figures.)

As you know, the sugar industry is the "first family of corporate welfare". They give tens of \$ millions to politicians. The benefits of the policy go primary to large corporations, large seed and fertilizer companies. Very little actually trickles down to the family sugar farmer (of which there are only 4,700 farms in the entire US; zero in Ohio).

When we tell these facts to our community, employees, and suppliers, people get really frustrated. We are going to keep telling this story, because it needs to be told and people need to understand how our government is choosing to support corporate welfare under the guise of protecting a few farmers at the expense of many Ohioans.

We have tried creatively working with our sugar farmers in Michigan to address this issue together. Unfortunately, their hands are also tied by this restrictive policy as it will take an act of legislation to allow them to work with us.

Both Spangler Candy and the Teamsters Local 20 are ready to spread the message far and wide about who is supporting job creation and who isn't.

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We understand the politics are complicated although urge you to consider that this is really a pretty simple issue about good manufacturing jobs in Ohio. We're not asking for a full-blown repeal of the sugar policy immediately, as that would unfairly disrupt the family sugar farm too quickly. We do support gradual reform leading to the eventual elimination of the program. A start could be as simple as repealing the new restrictions on sugar imports that were imposed in 2008 which have widened the gap between U.S. and world prices even more than before.

We fight for this cause not because we are greedy, but because we think our government should embrace equal economic opportunity. Our labor force has worked hard to be globally competitive, and they are. Despite this, we cannot get new business when our main ingredient is over twice as expensive as in Canada or Mexico.

Spangler Candy and the Teamsters Local 20 are ready to double our business right here in Ohio. We are ready to help our community grow and prosper. We know we can do it. Will you help us?

We hope we can arrange a joint meeting with you in a few weeks to discuss this issue in person. Feel free to contact either one of us should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Kirkland B. Vashaw
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President & CEO
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Bill Lichtenwald
Ohio Conference of Teamsters
President
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Cc: Senator Rob Portman
Representative Bob Latta