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In Support of LD 416

LD 416

An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue for Research and Development and Commercialization

24 April 2023

Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs:

My name is Shawn Champagne. I am the Operations Manager for Compounding Solutions, LLC located in Lewiston, Maine. I am here today to present testimony on behalf of Compounding Solutions ("CS") in support of LD 416.

Compounding Solutions was founded in 1999 by Scott Neal who remains the sole owner. Since inception, the focus of Compounding Solutions has been to provide the medical device industry with custom thermoplastic compounds of the highest quality. Currently out of our Lewiston, ME facility, CS supplies medical grade compounds into 26 different countries. Against strong competition to supply into the rapidly advancing, technically driven, and quality focused medical device marketplace, Compounding Solutions well understands the need for continual improvement and investment in R&D and self-growth.

Below are details about Compounding Solutions' devotion to R&D and innovation, which is very much in-line with the principles and intents of LD 416.

- CS continually invests in the latest plastics processing equipment to maintain a technical advantage over our competition. Oftentimes, CS custom fabricates our own highly advanced pieces of equipment that are not available elsewhere.
- CS sets aggressive departmental goals to continually better our products, facility, employees, and team.
- 30 out of the 100 total employees at CS work in the Quality and R&D Departments alone. 33 employees company wide have a degree from a college or university. This technical backing is necessary for CS to be able to support our customers' technical needs and quality standards.
- CS supports our employees to further their education and expand their skillsets in areas such as Plastics Engineering, plastics processing, electrical, IT, analytical testing, leadership, etc.



- CS's own IT team has programmed a 100% custom ERP system to facilitate our processes, provide company-wide visibility to order statuses, automate data collection, storage, and reporting, etc. This innovative ERP system will be an integral part of CS's future success.
- CS's Innovation Department assesses material needs and commercial opportunities in the medical device marketplace to determine which material developments to work on. CS takes pride in front-leading innovative material technologies that extend the design space for medical device manufacturers, improve device performance, and/or provide enhanced patient comfort, safety, or quality of life.

Historically CS has always self-funded the innovative efforts described above. Now in the modern day where R&D world-wide is faster, more competitive, and more expensive than ever, CS is realizing financial support may be necessary, or at minimum would greatly assist, in realizing certain business opportunities and growing our position as a global leader in medical thermoplastic compounding.

CS has recently applied for a grant through MTI to support our development of novel thermoplastic compounds that would offer lower coefficient of friction and anti-fouling performance to devices that would be used within the human body. With this financial support, CS could potentially arrive at a better performing product by allowing us to afford custom synthesis of specific additive chemistries to use within our compounds if we were to run into performance limitations with commercially available additives. Furthermore, funding assistance would allow CS to generate a more complete dataset to support the commercialization of our material technologies. Without sufficient evidence to support functional performance, processability, biocompatibility, regulatory compliance, and risk mitigation, customers may not be willing to try a new material technology due to the financial risks, risks of underperformance and time loss, or unknown Regulatory challenges.

CS is proud to be a Maine based company and avidly supports LD 416 for our own potential future benefit and for the benefit of other innovative companies throughout the state. Maine has a skilled workforce capable of competing globally across many different industries. Access to supportive funding for innovative efforts is essential to help Maine companies succeed and to keep the talented workforce within the state. In the recent few years, companies are trying to best manage the higher expenses in labor, raw materials, equipment, packaging, freight, and utilities. Let's not let these essential expenses inhibit an active, motivated, and knowledgeable company from being innovative if R&D funding can be the key to their success. For these reasons, I urge you to support LD 416. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

Sincerely,  
Shawn Champagne  
Compounding Solutions