



01/24/2020

I am writing to you today in opposition of Governor Cuomo's proposed Styrofoam ban and urge both the assembly and senate to not include as part of their respective budget proposals. My name is Dustin Pusatere, my family owns Shelter Enterprises, Inc which manufactures and recycles Expanded Polystyrene in Cohoes, NY for the construction and packaging industries. Our company has been business for over 50 years with 60 employees in the capital region. **Banning Expanded Polystyrene will have detrimental impact on the city of Cohoes, the families we employ, and the various businesses we supply in the state of New York that make up over 75% of our sales.**

I had the opportunity to take part in New York State Chemistry Councils' Lobbying Day on January 22, 2020 where I heard firsthand from advisors to Governor Cuomo on Energy and the Environment. In the first minute, it was stated "Styrofoam is not recyclable." That's the narrative the Governor and his advisors are polluting the taxpayers and media with. As expected, with many Expanded Polystyrene manufactures and lobbyists in the room, tempers flared, and the audience was heated. I on the other hands was not, I was embarrassed. Embarrassed for the democracy of the state of New York and the hard-working taxpayers, that in that one sentence, the people who are supposed to be helping create the Governor's budget and policies, could continue to spread propaganda and fail voters. What they didn't realize or maybe didn't care to, is that 10 miles down the road there is a family owned and operated company recycling Expanded Polystyrene daily. I'd like to also clarify why I am not using the word 'Styrofoam.' 'Styrofoam' is actually a trademark product for extruded building insulation. What the Governor and his advisors is after, is Expanded Polystyrene – the two are not interchangeable.

As I mentioned above, my family and I have been **recycling Expanded Polystyrene for over 50 years**. As part of our closed loop manufacturing process, all Expanded Polystyrene is either recycled back into future products or sent to a 3rd party recycling company. In addition, we recycle materials from our customers, as well consumer products from people like you in surrounding communities. This includes **take-out containers, foam coffee cups**, and various other Expanded Polystyrene products. Today I am proud say our company is recycling upwards of a **million pounds** of Expanded Polystyrene back into our products each year. Products that include packaging, wall/roof insulation, and Geofom applications. Various environmental projects across New York state include recycled Expanded Polystyrene material. For instance, the previous Yankee Stadium which is now home to a parking garage includes a green roof built directly above a base of recycled Expanded Polystyrene. Or the Croton Water Treatment facility that was built subterranean for the community was enabled by recycled Expanded Polystyrene. In addition to recycled content in our products, we also recycle up to an additional

Eight Hundred Thousand Pounds of Expanded Polystyrene. By working with 3rd Party recyclers we are able to find additional lives for Expanded Polystyrene. This includes products such as picture frames, furniture, or car automobile parts to name a few. It is my hopes that I have been able to change the narrative and re-write the takeaway that Expanded Polystyrene is recyclable and part of the solution to preserving the environment.

It may seem short-sided that a business in the construction and packaging industries is coming out in opposition to Governor Cuomo's intentions to ban Expanded Polystyrene. However, my business relies on the ability to use recycled material from things like take-out containers and coolers to keep costs down and stay competitive. Governor Cuomo's proposed ban on Expanded Polystyrene is already having a negative impact on industries outside of the food services space. An Expanded Polystyrene manufacturer in Central New York lost two key customers immediately after the announcement. There will be a collateral effect on all industries using Expanded Polystyrene. This in turn will impact New York States ability to expand and maintain the environment. You may not realize it, but every bridge and on/off ramp has an application of Expanded Polystyrene. It allows for expansion in confined areas.

We use Expanded Polystyrene as insulation in walls or as fill in roadway projects because it does not biodegrade. The narrative on Expanded Polystyrene is that it has multiple lives. Let's work on expanding on this opportunity and not diminishing it.

Sincerely Yours,

Dustin Pusatere

Dustin Pusatere, Vice President
Shelter Enterprises, Inc