



Statement of Textile Management Associates and its Subsidiaries

to the

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry

Growing jobs in Rural America Hearing

Washington, DC

July 14, 2011

Good morning Chairwoman Stabenow, Ranking Member Roberts and all Members of the Committee. Textile Management Associates (TMA) and its subsidiaries that include: Universal Textiles Technologies (UTT), AstroTurf, Syntec, SynLawn, Global, ChemTech and my company, Signature Crypton Carpet, appreciates the opportunity to submit a statement to this hearing on growing jobs in Rural America through the utilization of bio based products.

I am pleased to report to you that our bio based products are used across the nation, including by Hospital Purchasing Service of Middleville, Michigan as well as on the Kansas Jayhawks baseball field.

Textile Management Associates currently employs 1,100 of the finest men and women in northwest Georgia and Alabama. Eight years ago the senior management team, led by Tom Peeples, Larry Mashburn and Doug Giles began exploring the possibility of utilizing bio based technology to replace existing petrochemicals used in the production of high performance backing systems. Through their exploration, they were lead to the United Soybean Board (USB) New Uses Committee, resulting in a new and dynamic partnership with America's farmers and their soybean checkoff. Through these efforts, the industry's first high performance backing system, "BioCel" was introduced, and has become a standard in the specified commercial carpet industry.

Our soy-backed carpets were one of the first bio based products listed by the U.S. General Services Administration. Thanks to the federal Bio preferred program that this Committee created in the Farm Bill, our bio based carpets are to receive preference for procurement in the 500,000 buildings that the U.S. government owns and operates. That is 3 billion square feet of space.

Today, "BioCel" can be found in some of the most prestigious installations in the U.S. including the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Patent Office. Walk off matting systems by EcoPath are used at the Pentagon, Landscape turf by SynLawn, St. Louis Rams football field, the University of Cincinnati baseball field by AstroTurf and most recently, The Snow Lodge at Yellowstone National Park by Signature Crypton Carpet.

All totaled, UTT through its use of "Polyols" extracted from American grown soybeans, displaces millions of pounds of foreign dependent petrochemicals each year. By depending on U.S. agriculture, we are depending on U.S. chemists and chemistry. More importantly, the use of "soy" in BioCel backing technologies has shown no increase in costs, while at the same time increasing performance resulting in a cost neutral environmentally responsible solution for our customers.

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Due to the success of BioCel, UTT has now made a tremendous investment to develop its own Polyol manufacturing facility, creating even more opportunity for employment in Northwest Georgia.

Over the past 4-5 years, the carpet industry in northwest Georgia has been hit hard with recent economic downturns, with unemployment rates hovering around the 12% mark for most of 2011. Through these tough times, TMA and UTT through its investment in new soy based technologies, have been able to grow its workforce by almost 10%. The trickledown effect of the increase demand of these soy based technologies, also adds value to the American farmer, while continuing to lessen our industry's dependence on foreign petroleum.

Growth of our line of bio based products reaches across America's economy. Carpet installers, landscape firms and many others realize business opportunities as our products are used from coast to coast.

Innovations like BioCel, often spur collaboration with others to create meaningful change. The USB introduced us to Mr. Jim Evanoff, Environmental Protection Specialist for Yellowstone National Park. Jim became concerned when he learned that over 43 tons of post consumer plastics taken out of Yellowstone National Park each season were being shipped out of the country. He felt that they needed to remain in the US, and be recycled by an American manufacturer for American consumers. UTT entered into an agreement with Yellowstone National Park, Four Corners Recycling, CPE, Inc. and the USB creating "Project Yellowstone" to take back all of Yellowstone's plastics utilizing them in our BioCel high performance carpet backing system. Recycled plastics have been utilized in our technologies for the past 8 years, with over 300 million bottles being diverted from America's landfills.

The guiding principles behind "Project Yellowstone" are to increase awareness to recycle in the United States. And further, by keeping 43 tons of Yellowstone plastics in the U.S., and recycling them back into carpet backing, we estimate that hundreds of jobs throughout the supply chain will be created.

Inspired by such innovation, my company, Signature Crypton Carpet has created a dedicated line of products celebrating the accomplishments of "Project Yellowstone". We sought out new fiber technologies by Aquafil USA resulting in a 100% recycled content nylon fiber system. When combined with BioCel, we now offer our customers the most environmentally responsible product in the commercial flooring industry that is 82% green by weight. Signature also realized that industry must also become more socially responsible as well. To that end, Signature formed a partnership with The Yellowstone Park Foundation to donate 50 cents per yard of all product sold back to the Foundation, to help protect and preserve one of America's most pristine natural resources.

We believe firmly that "if you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always gotten". Job creation will be driven by new innovations inspired by the only perfect system on earth: "Nature". Through increased awareness and strategic partnerships, we can realize resurgence in our ability to lead the world in doing well, by doing good!

Thank you again for holding this hearing and the opportunity to submit our statement.

Respectively,

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