Statement of Scott Vitters
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The Coca-Cola Company
United States Senate Committee on Agriculture Nutrition and Forestry
United States Senate
June 17, 2014

Good morning Chairman Stabenow, Ranking Member Cochran and Members of the Committee. My name is Scott Vitters and I am the General Manager of The Coca-Cola Company's Global PlantBottle Innovation Platform. On behalf of our company's 130,000 employees and more than 700,000 system associates, it is a pleasure to be here today and have the opportunity to discuss our commitment and investment in helping to advance the renewable chemicals and bio-based manufacturing sectors here in the United States and abroad.

Inside every bottle of Coke is a story of creating new value through increasing efficiency and advancing innovation. We have a long-term vision to help realize a world in which creating and using products wastes nothing. To achieve this zero waste vision, we are designing more resource efficient packaging, supporting community recycling systems and increasing our use of renewable materials through breakthrough innovations like our PlantBottle package – the first ever fully recyclable PET plastic bottle made with plants.

Coca-Cola introduced the world to PlantBottle in 2009. The technology uses natural sugars found in plants to make ingredients identical to the fossil based ones traditionally used in polyester fiber and resins. PlantBottle packaging looks, functions and importantly recycles just like traditional polyester (or PET) plastic, but with a lower dependence on fossil fuels and a lighter environmental footprint on the planet.

Thomas Edison is quoted as saying "that the value of an idea is in the using of it." Our measure of success with PlantBottle is in advancing commercial solutions that go beyond pilot tests or niche green product uses. Our expectation is to realize the technology's full potential and deliver meaningful positive change everywhere we do business.

Our first generation PlantBottle technology has already been launched in 31 countries across more than 25 billion bottles. It has helped to reduce our dependence on fossil-based materials and remove over 190,000 metric tons of CO2 emissions - or the equivalent of more than 400,000 barrels of oil. In just four years, Coca-Cola has become the world's largest bio-plastic end user through PlantBottle and we are committed to going even further with our goal to have all new PET plastic we use contain PlantBottle technology by 2020.

Commercializing bio-based materials, and specifically our PlantBottle technology, are a material part of our Company's 2020 Vision and Roadmap for Winning. At the heart of this vision and plan is a commitment to double our business in this decade. We see a world of opportunity and growth in areas like a rising middle class. We also see a world of challenge and need in areas like population, poverty, and the growing stress on finite resources. Put those together, and it's obvious that the only way we can hope to double our business is to double it sustainably.

Packaging has a huge impact on those aspirations. Every one of the 3,500 different beverage offerings we produce, for every consumer, in every market requires some form of package. Over half of our global volume today is delivered through PET plastic beverage bottles. Behind this demand is a desire for lightweight, shatter-resistant, resealable, cost-effective and highly recyclable packaging. To continue meeting these beverage needs in the years ahead - while maintaining public trust and sustaining growth - requires moving beyond traditional fossil based materials to renewable and recyclable bio-based sources.

Coca-Cola today is partnering with companies to build manufacturing capacity for PlantBottle technology in local markets around the world. Until this supply chain is optimized locally, in most markets we pay an added cost to use PlantBottle. We view this premium as an investment – an investment in both the future competitiveness of our business and the health of the local communities we serve. As a result, we have not increased the price of our products in PlantBottle. Instead we have challenged ourselves to get the supply chain built out under the timeline we have set – or even better do it faster.

To help accelerate investment in the PlantBottle supply chain and further expand the positive sustainability impact of the technology, Coca-Cola is

rethinking traditional approaches to innovation. For example, instead of holding the technology to ourselves we are actually enabling other early adaptors to join with us on our PlantBottle journey. In fact, we even envision a future where our competitors also have ready access to the technology.

In 2011, Coca-Cola formed a strategic partnership with H.J. Heinz to produce ketchup bottles made with PlantBottle technology. In 2013, we joined forces with the Ford Motor Company to showcase a Ford Fusion plug-in hybrid with its interior fabric made from PlantBottle polyester. And just this year, we have partnered with SeaWorld Parks and Entertainment to debut the first ever refillable plastic souvenir cup made from PlantBottle technology.

I want to pause and thank leaders from both the Senate and House Agriculture Committees for the tireless work on reauthorizing the Farm Bill. Specifically we applaud the extension of eligibility to renewable chemical technologies under the Biorefinery Assistance Program and Biomass Research and Development Program, and the support for new purpose grown energy crops. These efforts are truly helping open doors to new bio-based manufacturing opportunities and jobs here in the US.

For some the growing emergence of renewable chemicals and bio-based products may raise questions regarding the sustainability of using harvested agricultural biomass. As one of the largest buyers of sugars and starches in the world I can assure that any trend with the potential of negatively impacting food and feed supplies would be of significant concern to our company.

Through transparency and credible third party partnerships we can advance breakthrough bio-based manufacturing opportunities that deliver better environmental and social performance without negatively impacting local food security. Working with the World Wildlife Fund last year we launched the BioPlastics Feedstock Alliance, a new collaboration with several other leading consumer brand companies focused on guiding the evaluation and sustainable development of plant-based feedstocks for plastics. And last year our efforts focused on advancing the use of agricultural residues for PlantBottle was selected as an official eco-partnership within the US-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue.

Ensuring the sustainability of the agricultural ingredients we source for our products is a critical area of focus for our business. Through collaborative programs like Field to Market we are working across the entire agricultural supply chain to measure and improve environmental and social performance. These measures are also helping to inform and guide the responsible use of biomass for industrial materials.

Investing in the bioeconomy is good for our business, the communities we serve and our shared environment. Today our first generation PlantBottle technology replaces one of the two ingredients that make PET plastic. Our long-term target is to realize a 100% renewable, fully recyclable plastic bottle. To realize this goal, Coca-Cola is investing millions in local technology companies – companies like Virent in Madison, Wisconsin; Gevo in Englewood, Colorado and Avantium in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. We have already demonstrated the potential for producing such bottles and are now focused on advancing commercial pathways for successfully scaling the technology.

These are truly exciting times. Thank you for allowing me to share Coca-Cola's progress here today and for your continued commitment to helping realize the transformative potential of the renewable chemical and bio-based manufacturing sector.