News Release

For Immediate Release

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ACC: VERMONT BAN COULD INCREASE WASTE, ENERGY USE, AND GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

WASHINGTON (June 18, 2019) – Today, the American Chemistry Council issued the following statement following Governor Phil Scott’s (R-VT) signing of S.113 that bans certain polystyrene foam foodservice packaging and plastic bags. (This statement is attributable to Adam S. Peer, senior director, packaging, Plastics Division):

“ACC supports efforts made by states and businesses to reduce the amount of waste that can litter our nation’s lakes, streets, and waterways. Unfortunately, this legislation will do little to actually eliminate litter in Vermont. Banning of certain types of foodservice packaging and bags does not reduce litter, but merely changes what is found in the waste stream. Comprehensive legislation that increases curb-side recycling, advances new technologies, and helps educate the public on littering and recycling is the best course of action to tackle the nation’s and state’s litter problem. Additionally, the use of alternatives for products like polystyrene foodservice containers and bags will increase environmental impacts, as plastics have a smaller environmental footprint compared to available alternatives.

“ACC is committed to helping end plastic waste, which is why we have set goals to have 100 percent of plastics packaging be recyclable or recoverable by 2030 and re-used, recycled, or recovered by 2040. Many of our members helped found the Alliance to End Plastic Waste, which aims to invest over $1.5 billion to deliver waste management solutions where they are needed most. Experts say up to 60 percent of marine plastic comes from just five countries. And while the U.S. accounts for less than one percent of litter in the ocean, ACC is committed to working with communities so that 100 percent of plastic packaging is reused, recycled or recovered.

“It is our sincere hope that Governor Scott and the Vermont Legislature will reconsider this legislation after they see how it will negatively impact the environment and local businesses and consumers.”

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The American Chemistry Council (ACC) represents the leading companies engaged in the business of chemistry. ACC members apply the science of chemistry to make innovative products and services that make people’s lives better, healthier and safer. ACC is committed to improved environmental, health and safety performance through Responsible Care®; common sense advocacy designed to address major public policy issues; and health and environmental research and product testing. The business of chemistry is a $526 billion enterprise and a key element of the nation's economy. It is among the largest exporters in the nation, accounting for ten percent of all U.S. goods exports. Chemistry companies are among the largest investors in research and development. Safety and security have always been primary concerns of ACC members, and they have intensified their efforts,
working closely with government agencies to improve security and to defend against any threat to the nation’s critical infrastructure.