

***Quick Updates*** ***from*** ***Your HF Team***

***Breaking News--Hardwood Access Legislation Gets a Bill Number***

The HF-crafted Hardwood Products Access and Development Program Act was assigned the bill number-- [**H.R. 6880**](https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/6880?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%22Hardwood+Products+Access+and+Development+Program+Act%22%7D&s=3&r=1). Keep your eyes open for our grass roots alerts in the coming days to promote the bill in our efforts to recruit bipartisan Congressional support.

***USFS Proposes to Amend Land Management Plans***

On December 20, the USFS released a [notice](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/12/20/2023-27875/land-management-plan-direction-for-old-growth-forest-conditions-across-the-national-forest-system) stating its intent to amend all land management plans in an attempt to maximize conservation of old growth forests. The latest agency action ignores industry [comments](https://hardwoodfederation.wildapricot.org/resources/Documents/USFS-ANPRM-Climate-Resilient-Forests%20-Final-2.pdf) submitted in 2023, urging federal regulators to avoid treatment of old growth and mature forests in a manner that undermines forest management. The Federation is reviewing details related to the proposal and exploring submission of joint comments to be signed by a broad spectrum of forest products industry groups.

***Federal Spending Deadlines Loom Large***

Congress kicked off the second session of the 118th Congress on a relatively high note this week, reaching a broad deal between the House and Senate on so-called “top line” budget numbers, which would cap funding of federal programs at about $1.6 trillion during Fiscal Year (FY) 2024. Despite the deal, which reduces the possibility of a federal shutdown, Congress only has eight calendar days in which to pass four appropriations bills, including funding for USDA, that will expire on January 19, per the two-track continuing resolution that currently funds government operations at last year’s levels. Under the current CR, the second funding deadline falls on February 2 and covers six appropriations bills, presenting lawmakers with another hurdle to jump before the possibility of a shutdown in early 2024 can be completely ruled out.

***Tax Chairs Prepare Package for Tax Filing Season***

While ironing out the details of an umbrella budget for FY 2024 has proven to be elusive (see article above), congressional tax writing chiefs, Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR) and Rep. Jason Smith (R-MO) are working on a framework that would restore some of industry’s top business priorities in exchange for a more robust child tax credit, a popular item for most Democrats. The tax chiefs are focusing on restoration of business interest deductions, the R&D tax credit and full expensing of equipment for possible passage prior to the beginning of the tax filing season. HF will keep you posted on developments as they unfold.

***Make your voice heard!*** The Hardwood Federation wants your feedback on federal policies that impact your business. To identify the industry’s top priorities for 2024, please click [here](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fu19539728.ct.sendgrid.net%2Fls%2Fclick%3Fupn%3D-2B73de0dREQUDGWQfTM3mhgl6fyr5ipQoQDbWQFUcwkmQTAyLUvwvBvyW2vxyVQJmSArr_DfShkWCAhoLGP-2FJNrdlPJdV-2FLULhdq7A2Mns4NO8kAbKoy2hBWCjup-2FdSJ4mtav3QZgwkC4yOhBCK4lj-2B12aQlf7HKpGXptozpupXgoFvVMSbi9KVKPQaYCilZ-2FXGVdvqjeyVMiE-2FhdV-2BaUYzgskYPEDOluA-2FdmQaSHFJBcXvryJPURy9INJjk4e7IIq0oa87lUqR8S9we-2Bw-2FZVI18Dp5iVxKRLdO1YJ-2FRv2bi-2BgBOvlptWRsSf0hwkTdmSDwNKF0fejzkhh3WiRLYYqC62QkCakiYZE4TgXp4Y4PoybVWTT67QTOI-2FSDYW6F4eGuX8gPiHPAUAcCPYPPL5P5TCvTfjWxf9z1lc3jKIhiK2WgD0ImjQgpufUcoqZy-2Fa6VTEZWGvuiEL7P9OAYbO4ehwtlzd7ZdJ089YNhlvAlxYOi67znRtnAJxxLipppqD5adjYGNgY5tYbe-2F6OYCgUqXewM7m8n6hAf2vg54G5ruMmBfs7rJ5SCZaV-2BfC41KU-2B8ZeJZhJcWPhCW1rPXIyrf79gHN1x-2B6YZjJIyJyHg7-2FKtp9FNx789DYEkeVsz-2F659juxne9YO8WFYIpeTYrLDmzgadCYKrIxWawCPfGGcu6W11yjsbO5prGE4PYQUekEJnFG4OXtbrYAqG7Es7XH1wBQW1A-3D-3D&data=05%7C02%7Cbryan.brendle%40hardwoodfederation.com%7Cf252924f1a304851b59b08dc1125d2f8%7C21432cc7b4084b2d92409f556e3dd6cb%7C0%7C0%7C638404101378198857%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=jMEopVFPzo8f%2Bi7QQrUgmLJRAhinmFNBBqpEcdVUYuE%3D&reserved=0).