

D.C. Cheat Sheet



Quick Updates from Your HF Team

USDA Puts Industry Priorities into Writing

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Tom Vilsack signed an Executive Memo this morning entitled “Climate Resilience and Carbon Stewardship of America’s National Forests and Grasslands.” The Hardwood Federation met with USDA officials on Wednesday afternoon to receive an early preview of the document. USDA specifically noted that they fully recognize the need to harvest federal forest lands to sustain forest health and prevent extreme wildfires, the importance of forest products to forest-based solutions to carbon in the atmosphere, and the need to employ science-based decision making in developing and implementing policies to promote climate resilience. The memo also confirms USDA’s commitment to protecting old growth and mature forest lands (while acknowledging that the vast majority are already protected under current regulations and rules), fighting wildfires, and wildlife and watershed protection and conservation. The Hardwood Federation team will be analyzing [the full text of the Memo](#) to assess the potential impacts on the U.S. hardwood industry. The USDA announcement is available [here](#).

House Lawmakers Introduce “Bat Bill,” Promote Forest Management

On June 16, Reps. Bruce Westerman (R-AR) and Pete Stauber (R-MN) introduced the “Endangered Species Flexibility Act,” also known as the “Bat Bill,” that would create common-sense guard rails around the scope of endangered species regulations. The bill would prevent an “uplisting” of the Northern Long Eared Bat” (NLEB) from “threatened” to “endangered,” a step that would shut down logging in most of the continental U.S. The bill would also shore up the Federation’s advocacy and comments on the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service’s proposed rule to re-designate the NLEB as “endangered,” triggering a variety of land-use restrictions that would hinder the industry.

Port Contract Negotiations Create Hurdle for Supply Chains

Even though President Biden signed the “Ocean Shipping Reform Act” into law last week, contract negotiations between dock workers and port operators on the west coast threaten to overshadow progress made on the legislative front. With union contracts on the west coast set to expire on July 1, the executive director of the Port of Long Beach predicts that negotiators will fail to reach an agreement by the approaching deadline. Failure to finalize a contract could exacerbate delays caused by already existing labor shortages. The Federation will keep you posted on major developments at our nation’s ports, including the status of contract negotiations.