

D.C. Cheat Sheet



Quick Updates from Your HF Team

Congress to Break in August – U.S. Representatives and Senators will be in their home states for the traditional August recess break, starting next week through Labor Day. If you see your federal officials at a public or private event, here are **four key messages** you can deliver to support the Hardwood Federation's efforts at the federal level:

Grow Markets for Hardwood Products. *We seek opportunities to build markets and add value to hardwood products.*

- *Wood Products are Part of the Climate Solution.* With the federal government putting a climate twist on almost every policy that takes shape, tell your lawmakers to keep wood products in their toolbox. Hardwood floors, lumber and other products store carbon and prevent its release into the atmosphere. *Lawmakers cannot hear this message often enough.* Delivering it repeatedly will make sure that the industry gets credited, instead of penalized, by climate policies moving at the federal level.

- *Protect and Expand International Markets.* The hardwood sector is a powerful exporter of products "Made in the USA" and relies on foreign

customers to support high quality jobs at home. To that end, remind your lawmakers of the importance of increased funding for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Market Access Program (MAP) and the Foreign Market Development (FMD) Program which support U.S. hardwood exports.

Oppose Tax Hikes that Harm American Hardwood Companies! It's important to communicate the benefits of the small business tax deduction and the flexible estate tax provisions included within the tax reform law of 2017 and oppose any efforts to roll them back. Also, lawmakers must reject the idea of imposing a surtax on small business, a proposal which has recently been floated in the halls of Congress.

Fix the Driver Shortage. Fortunately, the "Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act" enacted last year addressed some of the challenges related to the driver shortage. Despite this progress, federal policy makers can do more. This includes passage of the LICENSE Act—HR 6567 and S. 3556 - which would help expedite the issuing of commercial driver's licenses. Ask your lawmakers to cosponsor these important bills to help the industry.

Help Wanted! Fix the Worker Shortage. Rep. Elise Stefanik (R-NY) has introduced the "Employer Directed Skills Act" (H.R. 6255) to alleviate the worker shortage. The bill seeks to fill the gap between employer needs and employee skills by making existing workforce development programs more employer friendly and flexible. Urge your House lawmaker to join as a cosponsor!