

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

February 3, 2021

The Honorable Kevin Shea  
Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Acting Secretary Shea,

The resolve of America's agricultural producers and harvesters is constantly being tested and among the hardest hit – and, unfortunately, overlooked – agricultural sectors has been timber harvesting and hauling. The plight of our forest products industry has increasingly worsened since March of last year, when the onset of the pandemic crashed global pulp and paper markets and housing starts dwindled. In the months that followed, domestic paper mills across the country have drastically slashed output or shut down their operations altogether – which the American Loggers Council projects led to a reduction of \$1.83 billion (or 13 percent loss) in the value of logger-delivered wood.

The federal government has provided much-needed COVID-19-related assistance to various agricultural harvesters and producers, including fiber producing commodities such as Christmas Tree Growers, through the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program established in the CARES Act. Against our urging, however, USDA deemed loggers ineligible for this relief. That is why, in addition to introducing the *Loggers Relief Act*, we worked to include in the *Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021*, “\$200,000,000 to provide relief to timber harvesting and timber hauling businesses that have, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, experienced a loss of not less than 10 percent in gross revenue during the period beginning on January 1, 2020, and ending on December 1, 2020, as compared to the gross revenue of that timber harvesting or timber hauling business during that same period in 2019.”

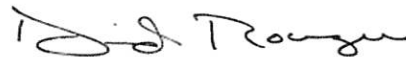
Given the severity of the situation and the fact that no forest product is produced without a timber harvester and hauler, we urge you to implement quickly this critical provision in order to distribute this assistance as soon as possible. We also recommend that you strongly consider the input that the American Loggers Council has provided to your transition team on implementation (attached), as they have proven to be a reliable and responsive resource for the industry. We look forward to working with you on this important issue and stand ready to provide guidance and answer any questions that you might have.

Sincerely,



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Rep. Jared Golden



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Rep. David Rouzer



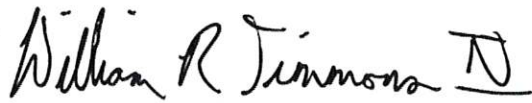
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Rep. Steven Palazzo



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Rep. Trent Kelly



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Rep. William Timmons



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Rep. Chellie Pingree



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Rep. Doug LaMalfa



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Rep. Tom Tiffany



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Rep. Greg Murphy, M.D.



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Rep. Michael Guest



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Rep. Anne McLane Kuster



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Rep. Abigail D. Spanberger