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# Grow the VoteNews

A monthly grassroots newsletter from AF&PA



[www.GrowTheVote.org](http://www.GrowTheVote.org)  
*Your source for information  
on the forest products industry*

We hope your New Year's resolutions include active engagement in communicating with your legislators. It is an election year, and every voice counts. Please contact your Members of Congress on issues of importance to the forest products industry. Below are a few issues and activities we thought you might find interesting.

## **The United States Promises to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions by 17 Percent**

As part of the Copenhagen Accord reached at the end of the United Nations climate change conference in December, the Obama Administration submitted by January 31 the U.S. voluntary commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 17 percent below the 2005 level by 2020. In making the pledge, the top U.S. climate negotiator indicated that the final figure could change depending on the outcome of U.S. legislation.

The Copenhagen Accord is a nonbinding agreement negotiated among the leaders of the U.S., Brazil, China, India, and South Africa in which national delegates agreed to "take note" of the Copenhagen Accord instead of formally approving it. The accord:

- Encourages the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions but sets no hard targets;
- Commits developed countries to report by January 31, 2010 on targets for reduction by 2020. Developing countries only are to report mitigation actions;
- Provides for the reporting and verification of mitigation actions but it is less rigorous for developing countries;
- Calls for developed countries to fund developing countries' efforts to stop deforestation and undertake other mitigation projects, and;
- Encourages technology development and transfer to developing countries.

No deadline was set for converting the Accords to a binding agreement, but negotiations are expected to resume by the middle of this year.

AF&PA joined the global forest products industry at the December international climate change conference in a unified effort to promote forests and forest products as effective tools for addressing climate change.

### **AF&PA CEOs in D.C. Met with Senators, Administration**

Fifteen CEOs of AF&PA's member companies met with key Senators on Capitol Hill to discuss climate and renewable energy issues important to the forest products industry. Senators Graham (R-SC), Kerry (D-MA), and Lieberman (I-CT) asked the AF&PA CEOs for their help in identifying legislative solutions that will help keep the country's manufacturing base competitive, while encouraging adoption of technology to reduce GHGs. The CEOs also had productive meetings with Senators Blanche Lincoln (D-AR), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Susan Collins (R-ME), and Olympia Snowe (R-ME). All of the Senators agreed to help advance the industry's section 45 objectives and to work to protect our competitiveness through upcoming climate legislation.

The AF&PA Board of Directors met, on January 28, with Lisa Jackson, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator, to discuss her priorities at EPA, as well as press the industry's case for EPA to exercise its discretion in numerous upcoming EPA clean air regulations. The Environment Resource Committee will have a follow-up meeting on February 10 with EPA officials to discuss the impact of cumulative air regulations and to further educate the agency on the carbon neutrality of biomass.

### **Section 45**

S. 870, a bill to extend and expand the section 45 tax credit, gains additional co-sponsors as a result of recent CEO visits. Senators Klobuchar (D-MN) and Murray D-WA) are the most recent additions bringing the total number of sponsors to 17. Additionally, we remain engaged with current co-sponsors in seeking personal messages of support to Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus, Ranking Member Grassley, and Senate Leadership. Additional Senators who need to be asked to co-sponsor include: Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Kay Hagan (D-NC), Claire McCaskill (D-MO), Barbara Mikulski (D-MD+), Bill Nelson (D-FL), Mark Pryor (D-AR), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Mark Warner (D-VA), Jim Webb (D-VA), Ron Wyden (D-OR), Lamar Alexander (R-TN), Richard Burr (R-NC), Bob Corker (R-TN), and Lindsey Graham (R-SC).

In the House, AF&PA is continuing to pursue co-sponsors of H.R. 622 (Section 45 expansion), and H.R. 2528 (Section 45 extension). Congressman Steve Scalise (R-LA) has signed on as a co-sponsor for H.R. 622 bringing the total to 62. AF&PA is conducting Member-level meetings between AF&PA's CEO and key House Democrats on Ways and Means including, Davis (AL), Blumenauer (OR), Thompson (CA), Etheridge (NC), and Lewis (GA). The goal is to strengthen our relationships and ask that they weigh in with House Leadership in support of Section 45. Please contact AF&PA if your organization can weigh in with those offices on this issue.

### **Climate Change**

Much of the work on climate change legislation is taking place in the Senate with legislation currently under development by Senators Kerry (D-MA), Graham (R-SC), and Lieberman (I-CT). Growing uncertainty about the support for and timing of climate legislation is causing a shift in the debate. For the first time in a long time, policymakers are talking about alternatives to cap-and-trade for some sectors. AF&PA continues to

educate Members of Congress about our priority issues in order to underscore the flaws in the current cap-and-trade bills. Concurrently, in concert with other energy-intensive manufacturers, we are exploring sector-specific alternatives and their potential effect on the industry.

Recent EPA moves to regulate greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act have driven discussion of legislative action to limit or prohibit federal rulemaking. On January 21, 2010, Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Ranking Member of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, introduced a bi-partisan "Resolution of Disapproval" to effectively revoke EPA's authority to regulate greenhouse gases. The timing and status of any floor vote is unclear, but it is a good sign that Senator Murkowski has gotten the support of Democrat Senators Mary Landrieu (LA), Blanche Lincoln (AR), and Ben Nelson (NE).

### **Rail**

AF&PA is working with the Consumers United for Rail Equity (CURE) to maintain the momentum for rail reform in Congress after the historical passage of S. 2889—the Surface Transportation Board Reauthorization Act of 2009—out of the Senate Commerce Committee in December. AF&PA supports reforming the federal Surface Transportation Board to more effectively regulate freight railroads and address shortcomings in rail service suffered by shippers that lack another rail service option. AF&PA also supports removing the special antitrust exemption freight railroads enjoy which has allowed them to avoid competition and keep rates artificially and unfairly high. We will be working with CURE to ensure clarity in the Commerce Committee report language and with relevant House Committees to move quickly on introducing their own bill language in order to pass meaningful and needed rail reform. Congressional supporters are determined to see final action on this issue in 2010 because of the favorable political climate.

### **Truck Weights**

AF&PA and its member companies will be participating in the Truck Weights Fly-In to be held in Washington, D.C. February 2-3. The event is being run by the Coalition for Transportation Productivity, The Agricultural Transportation Efficiency Coalition, and the Americans for Safe and Efficient Transportation. Participants will seek more co-sponsors for H.R. 1799 (Rep Michaud-ME), which increases truck weights from 80,000 lbs to 97,000 lbs with the addition of a sixth axle. Please see [www.transportationproductivity.org](http://www.transportationproductivity.org) for more details.

The HUD/Transportation Appropriations Bill containing Senator Susan Collins' (R-ME) gross vehicle weight "pilot project" in Maine, as well as a similar amendment for Vermont, received the President's signature December 17. The pilot projects increasing truck weights in Maine and Vermont started implementation in mid-December. Media stories have been relaying positive reactions by local communities to the change in getting trucks off the local roads and onto the interstate. The positive results from those projects will bolster our efforts to implement nationwide truck weight reform. The 2010

goal continues to be getting more co-sponsors on H.R. 1799 and attaching it to the Highway Reauthorization Bill, which may be considered as early as March.

### **Video Promoting the Importance of Timber Industry**

KBJR TV in Duluth, Minnesota ran a recent story on logging and the importance of the timber industry in maintaining healthy forests. Click on this link to watch the video:

<http://www.northlandsnewscenter.com/greenlife/82254302.html?video=YHI&t=a>

*If you have any news from your state, please e-mail the AF&PA Grassroots team and we'll be happy to include it in our next issue.*

### **Massachusetts Senate Race: What does it Really Mean?**

On January 19, the voters in Massachusetts sent a message to the rest of the country by voting a Republican to a Senate seat that hasn't been held by the party for over 50 years. The highly contested seat, which was on political pundits radar screens weeks before Election Day, has Democrats very concerned about their odds come November. Historically, every first-term President loses seats in both Chambers in the mid-term election preceding their own election, but no one is certain exactly what is at stake come this November. With President Obama's approval ratings down and with the controversial health care legislation on the horizon, it looks as if Democrats have more of an uphill battle to fight. However, before everyone starts talking about Republicans taking back the House and Senate, let's look at the true numbers in Massachusetts.

Click [Here](#) for a detailed and in-depth look at the Massachusetts race and what it does or doesn't mean for Democrats.

### **Quiz:**

- What state officially became one of the United States on January 3, 1959?

**The first person to answer the question correctly wins a prize! Send your guess to [grassroots@afandpa.org](mailto:grassroots@afandpa.org).**

The answer to last month's quiz question (country that poinsettias originally came from) was Mexico. The plants were named after America's first Minister to Mexico Joel Poinsett; he brought the plants to American in 1828. Congratulations to the December quiz winner—Mr. Craig McFarlane, from Warroad, Minnesota!

### **Get involved!**

Do you have a grassroots update from your home state? Got an idea to make our voice more prominent on the Hill and in state and local governments?

Contact AF&PA's PAC/Grassroots Director Anita Peduzzi if you wish to get involved or for additional information (202-463-2755, [anita\\_peduzzi@afandpa.org](mailto:anita_peduzzi@afandpa.org)).