



Past, Present, PAPER

By Donna Harman, President and CEO, AF&PA

Paper products are a constant presence in our lives, and they are ever-evolving to meet people's needs. Under the theme – Past, Present, PAPER – the June 24, 2015 AF&PA Fly-In provided a platform for the industry to educate members of the U.S. Congress about the importance of the industry's issues. Held every other year, the AF&PA Fly-In is an important element of our advocacy efforts.

House Leaders, including Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA), the third-highest elected leader in the Republican Party, met with industry leaders and explained the importance of coming to Washington, D.C. to help lawmakers understand first-hand the business implications of policies. Reps. Greg Walden (R-OR) and Patrick McHenry (R-NC) gave an overview of issues Congress hopes to address in the remainder of the year and encouraged executives to “make it real” by giving specific examples of the potential effects of proposed laws and regulations.

Executives met with policymakers in numerous meetings where they called for action on the following AF&PA priorities:

Recognition of the industry's use of biomass as carbon-neutral. Paper and wood products mills use biomass residuals from their manufacturing operations to produce bioenergy that provides significant carbon-reducing benefits to the environment. As a result of the meetings, more than 45 senators have written to the Obama Administration calling for clear recognition of biomass carbon neutrality.

Oppose regulations that could impose as much as \$14 billion in new capital obligations on the industry over the next 10 years. Paper and wood products manufacturers face challenges from recently released and expected new regulatory proposals, including lower ozone limits, that are driven by lawsuits or petitions under the Clean Air Act. Our members have already invested billions to improve performance and air quality. This cumulative regulatory burden is unsustainable.

Increase America's freight capacity through truck and rail policy changes. Transporting raw materials to our mills and finished products to the marketplace is costly and difficult. Our national highway system cannot accommodate projected surges in increased freight without also making changes to reduce the number of trucks hauling that freight.



Industry leaders met with policymakers in numerous meetings and as a result more than 45 senators have written to the Obama Administration calling for clear recognition of biomass carbon neutrality.

By safely increasing the maximum weight trucks can carry from 80,000 pounds to 97,000 pounds, the forest products industry could reduce truck trips by nearly 2 million. Executives told lawmakers that railroad service is at historic lows, mostly as a result of the railroads' monopoly status and no leverage for shippers. Pending Surface Transportation Board legislation would provide new investigatory authority, rate review timelines, and other improvements.

Preserve paper options for federal government information and services. Federal agencies are eliminating services and communications such as social security documents, tax documents and forms, prescription drug labels, and savings bonds in paper formats. Such digital-only policies discriminate against millions of Americans, many of whom are in rural communities and/or low-income households: 45 percent of seniors do not own a computer and 30 percent of citizens do not have online access at home.

The launch of the congressional Paper and Packaging Caucus. More than 20 lawmakers and 40 industry executives celebrated the launch of the newly formed House and Senate Paper and Packaging Caucuses. Caucus co-chairs Senators John Boozman (R-AR) and Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), and Reps. Reid Ribble (R-WI) and Gwen Graham (D-FL) spoke about the importance of the industry to local communities in their districts, states and the nation. The caucuses will work to raise awareness among members of Congress about the policy issues facing our industry workers and facilities across the country.

Paper and paper-based products are an important part of our past, our present, and our future. AF&PA will continue to advocate for policies that promote competitiveness for our industry, allowing us to continue the innovation and manufacturing of products that people across the country and around the world rely on to make their lives better.