

# AF&PA 2014 Federal Policy Priorities Address Industry's Biggest Challenges

By Donna Harman,  
President and CEO, AF&PA

Each year presents a new set of challenges in Washington, D.C. and in state capitols. Some issues carryover from one year to the next; others shift with public opinion and legislative results from the prior year.

The AF&PA board of directors ensures that our policy priorities are in line with the political environment and with business needs. We concentrate our advocacy efforts with lawmakers and regulators on the industry's highest priorities.

AF&PA's winter board meeting took place at the association's new office space at 1101 K Street, NW in Washington. Sen. Jeff Sessions (R-Ala.), Rep. Michael Michaud (D-Maine), and U.S. Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker met with the board to hear some of the industry's most pressing concerns. Our messages for 2014 include the following key issues.

**Greenhouse gas regulations:** We will work with key stakeholders and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to support recognition of the carbon neutrality of biomass in greenhouse gas regulations, including in prevention of significant deterioration rules and new source performance standards.

**Air regulations:** We will work with lawmakers, EPA, and other stakeholders to support development of practical and sustainable air regulations, including ozone national ambient air quality standards, boiler maximum achievable control technology and non-hazardous secondary materials rules.

**Energy:** We will support energy policies that take into consideration the carbon-reduction benefits provided by the industry's use of biomass in energy production as well as cost and supply



U.S. Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker addresses the AF&PA board of directors along with AF&PA President and CEO Donna Harman and Domtar President and CEO and AF&PA Board Chairman John Williams.

implications for the paper and wood products industry.

**Rail and truck transportation:** We will support Congress' work to create better and more efficient rail and truck transportation options for the industry through the Federal Highway Reauthorization Bill or other related legislation. Specifically, we will advocate for an increase in the Interstate truck weight limit to 97,000 pounds when trucks are outfitted with a sixth axle. This configuration will allow for more efficient and safer trucks to use the Interstate system and not be on local roads. Additionally, we will support enacting comprehensive rail reform that includes changes to anti-trust laws and the Surface Transportation Board to ensure that railroads provide AF&PA members, especially those with facilities "captive" to just one rail line, with competitive rates and reliable service.

**Forestry and agriculture:** We welcomed passage of the Farm bill in early February and will work with legislators, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and others to ensure industry concerns are addressed in a variety of forestry and agriculture programs, including advocating for adequate funding of the

Forest Inventory Analysis program and for inclusion of forest products in the USDA's BioPreferred program.

**Tax:** We will track and work to ensure that any tax changes improve economic growth, job opportunities, and the competitiveness of U.S.-based businesses.

**Postal:** We will continue to advocate for postal reform, as one-third of all paper produced in the U.S. goes into the mail stream, worth \$6 billion in industry revenues. Stable postal rates are important to the mailing industry supply chain.

**Paper options:** As government pushes toward digitization, we will engage with legislators to ensure that those without access to Internet – or those who simply prefer an option – are able to obtain paper documents for a variety of government services, including social security statements, checks, tax forms, savings bonds, and prescription drug labeling.

In addition to these areas, AF&PA staff will continue to track, engage, and report on many other issues of importance that come up on Capitol Hill throughout the year, both at the federal and the state levels. For more information about the issues we work, visit [www.afandpa.org](http://www.afandpa.org). ■