



Empire State Forest Products Association

The people behind New York's healthy forests and quality wood products

www.esfpa.org

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Memorandum of Support

A 161/ S 31

Honorable Carrie Woerner
Member of Assembly
502 LOB
Albany, NY 12248

Honorable Dan Stec
Senator
408 LOB
Albany, NY 12247

January 30, 2023

Dear Assembly Member Woerner and Senator Stec:

The Empire State Forest Products Association (ESFPA) represents over 350 businesses, industries and landowners engaged in forest resource production and stewardship of New York's 19 million acres of forest. In total, \$22.9 billion dollars in annual industry production and nearly 100,000 jobs are attributable to operations of various industries within the forest related sectors. There are over 200,000 private forest landowners who also depend on sound forest and timber management and production to help them keep their forests as forests.

ESFPA supports this legislation (**A. 161/S. 31**) as it addresses one of the most important issues facing private forest landowners – annual carrying costs of keeping their forests as forests (i.e. taxes) – and encourages sustainable forest management practices through third party certification programs (e.g. Sustainable Forest Initiative, Forest Sustainability Council, and American Tree Farm Program).

New York has 19 million acres of forest land (64% of the State's total land area). Fourteen million acres of New York's forests (75% of all forest land) are privately owned. Largely in family-owned forest woodlots. New York's forests are one of the State's most significant natural landscapes and afford a wealth of ecosystem benefits. Our State's forests are the largest terrestrial sequester of carbon (about 83 tons of CO₂ per acre), protect air and water quality, provide storm resiliency and critically important wildlife habitat. But it is not enough to keep forests as forests. To maximize ecosystem benefits requires sustainable forest management, which includes timber harvesting.

In addition, New York's private forest lands are the primary source for timber in support of New York's forest economy. The State's forest economy has an economic impact of \$22.9 billion (up over \$2 billion since 2010), employs nearly 100,000 people, with an average labor income per worker of \$61,526.

This legislation would establish a forestry stewardship and habitat conservation credit for personal income and business franchise taxes for landowners in New York State. Over 200,000 private forest wood landowners and 7 million acres of privately owned forests could potentially take advantage of such a credit. More importantly, this legislation encourages active forest stewardship and saves money for landowners who hopefully will invest in stewardship activities.

For the above aforementioned reasons, the Empire State Forest Products Association supports this legislation. We look forward to working with you on enacting this legislation and other policy that recognizes the value that all our forests provide to the people of the State of New York.

cc: Assembly Ways & Means Committee Members
Senate Budget & Revenue Committee

For More Information Contact:

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