

November 22, 2024

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair
Senate Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Susan Collins
Vice Chair
Senate Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee

Dear Chair Murray, Chairman Cole, Vice Chair Collins, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

We write to urge your support for disaster assistance that will address the critical needs of private forest landowners and the broader forestry and forest products sectors. Recent natural disasters, including hurricanes, wildfires, floods, pests, and diseases have severely impacted working forests and the industries that rely on them, threatening jobs, rural economies, and the many environmental benefits these forests provide to our nation.

Private forest landowners own and manage the majority of our nation's forests, which play a vital role in supporting the forest products value chain. From landowners to manufacturers, stakeholders across this sector depend on healthy and resilient forests to provide carbon sequestration, biodiversity, clean water, and sustainable raw materials. The continued health of these forests is essential to ensuring socioeconomic stability and environmental wellbeing.

Past disaster assistance packages, such as the support provided following Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, Maria, and Michael, have proven critical in helping this sector recover. As Congress considers disaster relief, we urge you to include robust funding to ensure landowners, mills, and other stakeholders can recover from recent disasters and continue contributing to the nation's economy while also achieving our environmental goals.

Federal disaster assistance will provide the certainty needed to stabilize this vital sector and safeguard the long-term health of our working forests. Thank you for your leadership and commitment to supporting communities and industries affected by natural disasters.

Sincerely,

American Forest Foundation
American Wood Council
Association of Consulting Foresters
Forest Landowners Association
Forest Resources Association
Hardwood Federation
National Alliance of Forest Owners
National Association of State Foresters
National Woodland Owners Association
Society of American Foresters