October 28, 2026

The Honorable Brooke L. Rollins
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Rollins:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations representing private forest landowners and the broader forest products supply chain, we urge the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to ensure that timber producers and forestry operations are eligible for assistance under the Harvest Fuel Relief Program.

America's private working forests are an essential part of our nation's agricultural economy, supporting rural communities, domestic manufacturing, and multigenerational family businesses. Unlike traditional agricultural crops, timber requires decades of investment before a return can be realized. Yet private forest landowners lack many of the federal safety net and risk management tools available to other agricultural producers.

Despite these challenges, timber producers were excluded from USDA's Farmer Bridge Assistance Program. We are concerned that forestry could once again be overlooked as USDA provides relief to agricultural producers facing rising fuel and operating costs.

The forest products supply chain is particularly vulnerable to elevated diesel prices. Harvesting, logging, and transporting timber are fuel-intensive operations, and increased costs further strain an industry already confronting declining timber markets, continued pulp and sawmill closures, and devastating natural disasters. These challenges threaten the economic viability of working forests and the rural communities that depend on them.

We respectfully request that USDA explicitly include private forest landowners, timber producers, and eligible forestry operations in the Harvest Fuel Relief Program. Assistance should recognize the unique production cycles and fuel-intensive nature of timber harvesting and transportation, ensuring forestry is not inadvertently excluded by eligibility criteria designed primarily for annual agricultural crops.

We appreciate the Trump Administration's commitment to supporting American agriculture and stand ready to work with USDA to ensure that forestry receives equitable consideration. Providing meaningful relief to the forest products supply chain will help keep America's working forests healthy, productive, and resilient for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Alabama Farmers Federation
American Forest and Paper Association
American Forest Foundation
American Forest Resource Council
American Loggers Council
Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers, Inc.
Arkansas Forestry Association
Arkansas Timber Producers Association
Associated Oregon Loggers
Association of Consulting Foresters
Calforests
Florida Forestry Association
Forest and Woodland Association of Missouri
Forest Landowners Association
Forestry Association of South Carolina
Georgia Forestry Association
Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association
Illinois Forestry Association
Kentucky Forest Industries Association
Louisiana Loggers Association
Maryland Forests Association
Massachusetts Forest Alliance
Michigan Forest Association
Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation
Mississippi Forestry Association
Missouri Forest Products Association
National Alliance of Forest Owners
National Association of State Foresters
National Hardwood Lumber Association
National Wild Turkey Federation
National Woodland Owners Association
New Hampshire Timberland Owners Association
Okefenokee Swamp Park, Inc.
Oregon Forest Industries Council
Pellet Fuels Institute
Pennsylvania Forestry Association
Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests
Society of American Foresters
South Carolina Timber Producers Association
South Dakota Family Forests Association
Southeastern Wood Producers Association
Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation
Tennessee Forestry Association
Texas Forestry Association
Virginia Forestry Association
Washington Farm Forestry Association