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“Hardwood Federation On Advocacy”

By Dana Lee Cole

Hardwood Federation Executive Director

“**Best Business Practices Soundbytes**,” a session at HMA’s 2019 National Conference and Expo, included a segment on advocacy presented by Hardwood Federation Executive Director, Dana Lee Cole. Here’s Dana’s ‘short clip’ on a very BIG subject – advocacy.

“Representing 27 Hardwood trade associations and organizations from across the country, the Hardwood Federation is the Voice of the U.S. Hardwood Industry on federal policy in Washington D.C. Established in 2004 by Hardwood business leaders from several state and national organizations, our charge is to:

- Educate Congress, the Administration and Department staff about the issues that most impact the hardwood business in the U.S.
- Monitor federal policy and legislative development through many different avenues.
- Provide written and verbal input on legislation and policy.
- Present testimony at Congressional hearings and coordinate with our allies.
- Meet with allies and experts on the Hill, in the Administration and in our partner wood products industry groups. (This helps us coordinate efforts, amplify the message and allocate the work load!)
- Run a Hardwood Federation Political Action Committee (HFPAC).

Why does Advocacy matter ...

It matters because the balance of power changes quickly, and as the saying goes, ‘If you are not at the table, you are on the menu!’ Consider this:

There are 435 Members of the U.S. House of Representatives. They are ALL up for election every two years. What that means is that the balance of power can...**and will**...change overnight. Perhaps you remember that:

- In 1994, Bill Clinton lost 52 seats in the House...shifting to Republican Control
- In 2010, Barak Obama lost 63 Democratic seats in the House...shifting to Republican Control
- In 2018, Donald Trump lost 43 Republican seats in the House...moving back to Democratic Control

Also, there are 100 Members of the Senate. **One third** is up for re-election every two years. That means that the balance of power will change.

Additionally, in the House, there are 21 Standing Committees. There are 104 Subcommittees. In the Senate, there are 20 Standing Committees and 71 Subcommittees. There are also 5 Joint Committees with members of both the House and Senate. And in the last Congressional Session (2017-2018), 13,556 pieces of legislation and resolutions were introduced. 443 or **three percent** were enacted.

Here's the bottom Line: Congress is not a static entity. It changes. People come and go. New laws are introduced and debated. And in this ever changing environment, it is extremely important that **our perspective** is being heard - because there are between 11,000 and 12,000 federally registered lobbyists working Capitol Hill - all of them trying to make their point! People lobbying AGAINST the hardwood industry are active and engaged!

Enter the Hardwood Federation – Your advocacy Voice in Washington!

Our job is to Educate Congress, the Administration and Department staff about the issues that most impact the hardwood industry in the U.S. And you can help.

Politicians care about votes. Constituents and economics matter. Voters and employment opportunities get attention. Hearing from constituents is crucial. Owners of small and medium sized companies are often of special interest because you are employing other constituents.

Your opinion matters. You are the local connection. And your PAC contributions help open doors; get attention; make a difference!"

Visit the **Members Only** section of www.HMAMembers.org for Dana's Powerpoint presentation and audio recording.

Editor's Note: During the National Conference and Expo, the Hardwood Federation conducted this HFPAC fundraiser - **Support the Hardwood Federation PAC** - \$100-\$499=1 chance, \$500-\$999=2 chances, \$1000-\$1499=3 chances, etc. - **and win a 5x8 ft. flag flown over the U.S. Capitol Building! The flag comes with a certificate of authenticity and is appropriate for indoor or outdoor display.** And the lucky winner was: **Norm Steffy**, Cummings Lumber Company, Inc., Troy, Penn. Congratulations!