

Now is the Time to Take Action

By Dana Lee Cole

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The ongoing trade war with China has sent many in the industry reeling. And as we go to press, the Administration continues to push hard, with no end in sight. The Hardwood Federation (HF) Team continues to talk to Administration and Congressional officials about how their actions are affecting the hardwood industry, and the need for assistance. Here's how you can augment our efforts - **At Home, On-Line, In DC!**

Talk to Your Elected Officials Personally

Until after the Labor Day holiday, members of both the U.S. House and Senate will be in their home states and districts – many on the campaign trail. Here's your opportunity to make your voice heard!

Talk with them. Attend town meetings. Make appointments to meet with them while they are home. Even SHOW them the impacts of the trade dispute by inviting them to visit you and your employees at your business. (Worried about what to say? Don't be. You'll find a list of suggested 'talking points' at the end of my article.)

For information about your elected officials, district office locations and contacts, and information about upcoming schedules, visit <https://whoismyrepresentative.com>. You can also use this link to send electronic messages to your representatives.

Engage with the Press

- Write a letter to your home town newspaper. HF is happy to work with you to craft the message.
- If you're interested in taking calls from the press, we can put you in touch with the [Tariffs Hurt the Heartland](#) (THTH) campaign, a D.C. based coalition that HF has been working with closely. THTH is collecting stories, organizing listening sessions, and getting businesses and farmers in touch with media outlets to relate how tariffs are affecting the lives of real people. Simply let us know if you would like to be added to their data base of impacted businesses.

Participate in the Fly-In!

Come to DC, September 17-19, for HF's annual Fly-In. Walk the halls of Congress. Meet with Representatives and Senators and staff from your - and other important - states. Tell them how their actions are affecting **you**, and relate the most important issues impacting our industry. For additional Fly-In information and to register to attend, click [here](#). I hope to meet up with you, soon.

As promised, here are those 'talking points.'

- Prior to the trade dispute, half of the grade lumber exported by U.S. hardwood companies went to China. Over \$2 billion, if you include all hardwood products. U.S. hardwoods enjoyed a \$1.5 billion trade surplus with China.
- China imposed 10 percent retaliatory tariffs on U.S. hardwoods last summer, leading to an immediate and severe drop in exports - between January and June of 2019,

exports of U.S. hardwood to China declined by 40 percent (valued at \$452 million) compared to the same time period in 2018.

- The increase of tariffs to 25 percent in June 2019 is escalating losses - Hardwood exports to China for the month of June 2019 were down 50 percent compared to June 2018 exports.
- We expect the situation to continue to worsen as China is shifting away from U.S. hardwoods to materials from other countries.
- Jobs, mostly in rural areas, are at risk as companies struggle with declining sales and low prices.
- U.S. hardwoods are not receiving financial support from USDA to help weather the storm. Ask the USDA to include U.S. hardwoods. Help our industry to survive this!