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## Looking to the Months Ahead

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In addition to taking up an already packed agenda—transportation bottlenecks, inflation, pandemic management, forest management, trade, and taxes—House lawmakers and Senate incumbents “in-cycle”—that is, those running to keep their seats—are kicking fundraising efforts into high gear prior to the November election. Here’s why.

### The Midterm Elections

As a rule, midterm elections present the minority party with a built-in advantage to gain seats in Congress, largely by messaging and shifting ownership of current challenges to the party holding the majority.

And recent history shows us that elections that coincide with extraordinary policy challenges and changes tend to go badly for the party in power by delivering landslide majorities to their opponents.

### For Legislative Year 2022

The election cycle also impacts the chances of proposed bills moving through the legislative process. Nonetheless, Congress is poised to move at least some legislation that will have impacts on the hardwood industry.

- **Build Back Better 2.0** | Even with the President’s 1.75 trillion tax and social spending plan broken up/modified, funding remains unclear. If smaller packages materialize, the Hardwood Federation (HF) will closely track the revenue raisers identified to pay for these provisions, and urge lawmakers away from increased taxes on small businesses.
- **Shipping Reform** | Last December, the House passed the “Ocean Shipping Reform Act of 2021” by an overwhelming and bipartisan majority. In February, Sens. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) and John Thune (R-SD) introduced a companion bill, building more momentum for the legislation. HF strongly supports passage of the Act, and has communicated our support with House and Senate offices. We’ve also made this a key talking point during recent meetings with Members of Congress.
- **Farm Bill** | While the current farm bill, “Agriculture Policy Act of 2018,” doesn’t expire until 2023, Congress is conducting hearings and stakeholder meetings in 2022. HF is already laying markers with committee leaders on the need to quantify the important role of forest products in capturing and storing carbon, within the context of federal climate policies. The industry will also fight for full funding of the Market Access Program and Foreign Market Development Program, within the context of the upcoming legislation.

In the months ahead, HF will continue to track and report on these and other issues that impact the hardwood industry. For questions, visit [www.HardwoodFederation.com](http://www.HardwoodFederation.com) or email [hardwood.federation@hardwoodfederation.com](mailto:hardwood.federation@hardwoodfederation.com).