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Hardwood Federation Industry Tidbits

by Dana Lee Cole, Executive Director, Hardwood Federation

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House Delivers Supply Chain Package

On May 23, House transportation panel members approved several measures to strengthen the nation's supply chain. According to Chairman Sam Graves (R-MO), the package will remove "regulatory barriers, improve supply chain efficiency, and promote smarter infrastructure investment."

The industry-supported SHIP IT Act ([H.R. 471](#)) and also [H.R. 1836](#), the Ocean Shipping Reform Implementation Act of 2023, are included in the package. However, two noticeable omissions are the Drive Safe Integrity Act ([H.R. 3408](#)) and Strengthening Supply Chains through Truck Driver Incentives Act ([H.R. 2450](#)). As the Federation continues to monitor House floor activity this summer, stay tuned for a possible "call to action" to make your voice heard regarding legislation that will help the sector.

Senate Votes to Rescind Bat Rule

On May 11, the Senate narrowly approved two measures that would overturn new ESA regulations on the Northern Long-Eared Bat (NLEB) under the Congressional Review Act.

- The [first measure](#) overturned the repeal of the Trump Administration's definition of what qualifies as a protected habitat.
- The [second measure](#) rescinded the November 2022 reclassification of the NLEB as "endangered," rather than "threatened."

Although the House may take similar action on the NLEB, President Biden has already promised to veto the legislation that would reverse his Administration's ESA policies.

HF Endorses "Main Street Tax Certainty Act"

The Hardwood Federation is joining dozens of other business groups in a letter endorsing "The Main Street Tax Certainty Act of 2023," legislation to make permanent the 20% deduction for small and family-owned businesses. The letter cites recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, inflation, labor shortages, and supply chain disruptions as ongoing challenges that warrant keeping the deduction in place. (The tax reform law of 2017, which established this important tax break, is scheduled to sunset at the end of 2025.)

Other Hardwood Federation Activity in May

HF and its partners in the Wood Products Coalition turned to House and Senate appropriations staff to promote a USDA study that will quantify the amount of carbon stored in wood products, emphasizing that:

- The Forest Products Laboratory, which specializes in researching wood products and their applications, is well suited to break down the amount of carbon stored annually in finished goods.
- Increases in the amount of carbon stored in wood products could then be measured, and their ability to mitigate a changing climate quantified, thereby assuring that industry would be rewarded, rather than penalized, in climate programs.

The Federation joined the Decorative Hardwoods Association and Composite Panels Association in comments to EPA's Request for Information related to low-carbon construction materials, urging federal regulators to:

- Consider sustainable forest management, and recognize the low carbon footprint of finished wood products, especially when compared to other materials such as glass and concrete.
- The coalition also cited two [Environmental Product Declarations](#) (EPDs) from the Decorative Hardwoods Association and National Wood Flooring Association outlining the "total cradle-to-grave global warming potential" for solid and engineered wood floors compared to alternatives.