



July 25, 2017

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

U.S. Lumber Coalition Applauds Senate Finance Committee Members' Push for Fair Trade Agreement with Canada

WASHINGTON, DC - In a letter today, Senators Michael Bennet (D-CO), Mike Crapo (R-ID), Mike Enzi (R-WY), Johnny Isakson (R-GA), Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Mark Warner (D-VA), and Ron Wyden (D-OR) of the Senate Finance Committee urged Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross and U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer to negotiate a softwood lumber trade deal with Canada that would lessen the harmful impact of subsidized Canadian lumber imports on the U.S. economy. The Senators' letter also expressed strong support for fair competition and the enforcement of existing U.S. trade laws.

"The U.S. Lumber Coalition applauds the efforts by members of the Senate Finance Committee to push for a fair trade deal, especially the letter's provision calling for a clean quota agreement to hold Canada to its commitments and maintain a stable, enforceable system," U.S. Lumber Coalition spokesperson Zoltan van Heyningen said. "We applaud the Senators for speaking up on behalf of the over 350,000 hard-working men and women in the American lumber industry. An equitable trade deal will ensure that U.S. lumber companies can compete on a fair playing field, and start to mitigate the damages of subsidized Canadian imports."

The [letter](#) reads as below.

Dear Secretary Ross and Ambassador Lighthizer,

We write concerning ongoing U.S.-Canada discussions over softwood lumber trade issues.

As representatives serving many lumber producers, we understand the importance of ensuring any future agreement addresses unfairly traded softwood lumber from Canada and meets the specific needs of the domestic industry. It is also critical trade policies support our economy and American jobs, including through enforcement of U.S. trade laws.

Any long-term agreement must stop the harmful effects of subsidized and unfairly traded Canadian lumber on fair competition with the U.S. producers. We urge you to negotiate a clean quota agreement, holding Canada to its June 2016 commitment to negotiate a new agreement that is "designed to maintain Canadian exports at or below an agreed market share" and resist provisions that undermine a stable and a clearly enforceable system.

You must also consult closely with Congress throughout any negotiations. The Senate Finance Committee must be briefed fully and regularly on the details of proposals before they are made

to Canada. The confidence of the public in any proposed agreement can only be secured through meaningful engagement with the people's representatives in Congress.

The American economy depends on a vibrant domestic lumber industry – from the thousands of workers tied to the wood industry and many private landowners managing forestlands that provide material for mills. Completing a fair agreement will support these jobs and the American economy, particularly in rural communities across the nation. It is also an issue of fairness in trade and competition, a principle that must be upheld and backed by enforcement of U.S. trade laws.

We look forward to working with you as your discussions continue.

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Additional information and background:

In April, the U.S. Department of Commerce ruled that Canada subsidizes softwood lumber production, distorting the U.S. softwood lumber market to the detriment of U.S. sawmills, their employees and communities. The U.S. Lumber Coalition's statement on the countervailing duty determination can be found [here](#).

Additionally, in June, the U.S. Department of Commerce ruled that exporters from Canada have sold softwood lumber to the United States at less than fair value based on factual evidence provided by the interested parties. The U.S. Lumber Coalition's statement on the antidumping duty determination can be found [here](#).

About the U.S. Lumber Coalition

The U.S. Lumber Coalition is an alliance of large and small lumber producers from around the country, joined by hundreds of thousands of their employees, and tens of thousands of woodland owners. The Coalition is united in opposition to Canada's unfair lumber-trade practices, including the gross under- pricing of timber on government-owned lands. For more information, please visit the Coalition's website at www.uslumbercoalition.org.