



August 24, 2020

CONTACT: Zoltan van Heyningen
zoltan@uslumbercoalition.org | 202-805-9133

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WTO Softwood Lumber Panel Report Is Posterchild for Need to Reform the WTO -- The United States Must Reject this Blatant Attempt by a WTO Panel to Diminish U.S. Rights

A World Trade Organization (WTO) dispute settlement panel published its report in the U.S. countervailing duty case against unfairly subsidized Canadian lumber imports. Unfortunately, this WTO panel report represents the latest example of judicial overreach within the WTO seeking to undermine the U.S. trade laws, which makes it harder for U.S. producers to address unfair trade. Proper enforcement of the U.S. countervailing duty laws under the U.S. trade laws are essential for U.S. industry, workers, and their communities to combat unfairly subsidized imports. Canada's unfair trade practices in softwood lumber are well documented, and the harm these practices cause to the U.S. forestry industry and workers is undisputed.

U.S. Lumber Coalition Executive Director Zoltan van Heyningen expressed deep disappointment that "the WTO panel with this report, like other WTO Appellate Body and panel reports, has added to U.S. obligations and diminished U.S. rights, addressing issues it has no authority to address, taking actions it has no authority to take, and interpreting WTO agreements in ways not envisioned by the WTO Members who entered into those agreements."

"While this decision is not binding upon the United States, and thus has no immediate effect on the ongoing Commerce Department proceedings, these deeply flawed WTO panel reports undermine the credibility of the entire WTO system and are harmful to U.S. workers and their communities who depend on the full and effective enforcement of the U.S. trade laws," added U.S. Lumber Coalition Co-Chair Jason Brochu.

"The U.S. government must reject this blatant attempt by a WTO panel to diminish U.S. rights and the panel's attempt to deviate and expand from original WTO obligations," said Brochu.

Concluded Brochu, "the U.S. Lumber Coalition deeply appreciates the efforts by the United States Trade Representative (USTR) to combat the judicial activism of the WTO and strongly supports USTR's demands for systemic changes to the WTO dispute settlement system."

About the U.S. Lumber Coalition

The U.S. Lumber Coalition is an alliance of large and small softwood lumber producers from around the country, joined by their employees, and woodland owners, working to address Canada's unfair lumber trade practices. Our goal is to serve as the voice of the American lumber community, and effectively address Canada's unfair softwood lumber trade practices, including its gross underpricing of timber. For more information, please visit the Coalition's website at www.uslumbercoalition.org.