

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 20, 2024

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C 20500

President Biden:

We are writing to formally request that you appeal to the new EU government about the need for a delay of implementation of the EU deforestation regulation (EUDR). Like you, Congress strongly supports efforts to combat deforestation throughout the globe. However, with less than four months left before enforcement of EUDR many questions from U.S. stakeholders remain unanswered. We strongly urge you to request a twenty-four-month delay of implementation and subsequent penalties to ensure that transatlantic trade disruptions are minimized, and sustainable forestry practices are recognized and encouraged.

With less than four months before shipments to the EU must comply with a complex new law, many constituent companies still lack critical clarity from EU officials on specific data requirements, data input systems and formats, and underlying definitions that will affect the entire U.S. forestry supply chain. While we collect and share an immense amount of data and information already, compliance with EUDR will require significant changes in how we collect, share, and report data – something that cannot happen overnight. Following our letter to Ambassador Tai in September 2023, many companies who export to the EU market have been hard at work over the last year trying to figure out how to comply with guidance documents that are incomplete, incompatible with U.S. practices, and confusing. Many stakeholders in the EU are raising similar concerns.

Without more time for implementation, billions of dollars of trade are at stake. Forest product exports from the U.S. to the EU are valued at over \$3.5 billion USD. Without legal certainty that U.S. producers can place products on the EU market according to EUDR compliance requirements, significant trade disruptions will result. The inability to ship to the EU will have cascading negative economic impacts, including devaluing U.S. timberlands, U.S. manufacturing job losses, reduced economic activity with trusted low-risk trading partners, raw material availability issues, and inflationary pressures for EU consumers.

Moreover, the U.S. Forest sector is pivotal to the EU-U.S. trade relationship, supplying key raw materials essential for numerous European industries including construction and paper goods. The U.S. forestry industry is the largest global supplier of specialty pulps for production of diapers and feminine hygiene products to Europe. Of the 1.6 million tons of fluff pulp used in the EU, 1 million tons come from the U.S. Furthermore, approximately 85% of global fluff pulp production comes from the U.S. Southeast.

A recent USDA assessment that found that U. S. agricultural and timber production is not driving deforestation in the United States: “Over the past 10 years, overall U.S. Forest and cropland area has been stable, with forest area at or near the largest than at any other time in nearly a century.” This is great news, and further proof that sustainable forest practices work. The United States is a global leader in modern sustainable forest management, and we are deeply concerned that well-intentioned regulations from Europe will disincentivize the huge investments U.S. Forest owners have made in the long-term health and sustainability of our forest resources.

We all must work together to effectively address global deforestation. However, failure to immediately address stakeholder questions and concerns could have significant negative economic effects on both producers and customers on both sides of the Atlantic.

It is imperative that you and your administration engage regularly with the European Commission (EC) and European Union (EU) member states through this process to ensure that the U.S. forest and forest products industry, and the 2.5 million Americans livelihoods that depend on it,, are not be harmed by the rushed implementation of a well-intentioned regulation.

Sincerely,



Michelle Steel
Member of Congress



Terri A. Sewell
Member of Congress



Bruce Westerman
Member of Congress



Glenn "GT" Thompson
Member of Congress



Adrian Smith
Member of Congress



Donald G. Davis
Member of Congress



Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Member of Congress



Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress



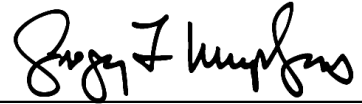
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Nicole Malliotakis
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Jim Costa
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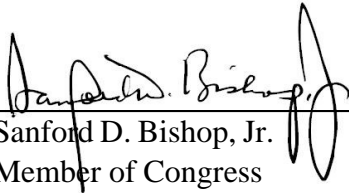
Gregory F. Murphy, M.D.
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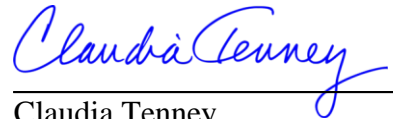
David Scott
Member of Congress



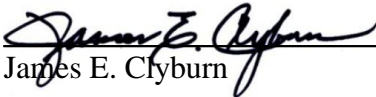
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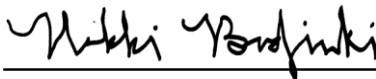
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Beth Van Duyne
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Val Hoyle
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Darin LaHood
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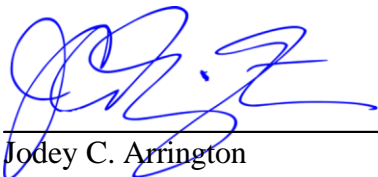
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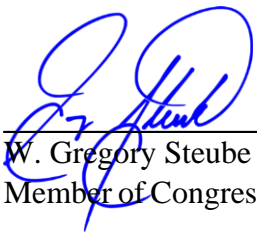
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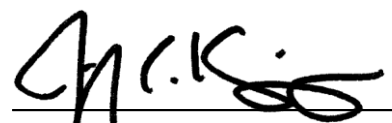
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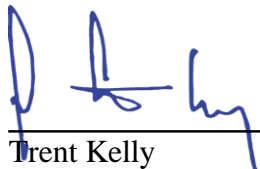
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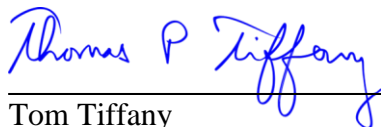
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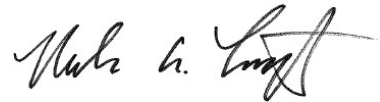
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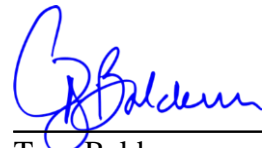
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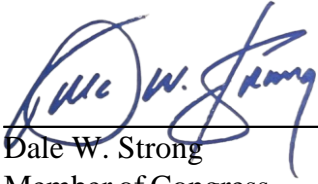
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Julia Letlow, Ph.D.
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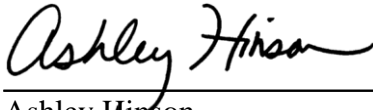
Aaron Bean
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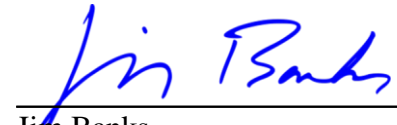
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