

JUNE 16, 2021

THE HONORABLE ANDY BESHEAR
GOVERNOR OF KENTUCKY
700 CAPITAL AVENUE
SUITE 100
FRANKFORT, KY 40601

Dear Governor Beshear:

We write to share our concerns regarding workforce availability and our struggle to recruit qualified applicants. The forest products industry faces enormous pressure across the country to produce a variety of goods including building materials, interior millwork, flooring, pulp and paper, as well as other materials that support the market. We have tremendous opportunities before us and need more workers to staff our businesses.

Nearly half of Kentucky is covered by forests that provide a wide range of economic benefits to the Commonwealth and our nation. According to the *Kentucky Forest Economic Impact Report of 2020*, forest and wood industries contributed a direct economic impact of \$9.55 billion with nearly 60,000 individuals employed statewide. Our companies operate in all parts of the state with many employing folks in rural and distressed counties.

We support the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce in their request to phase out Kentucky's participation in the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation program from their letter to you dated May 28, 2021. Our economy is rebounding at a record pace, and we cannot compete with our state government paying people to remain out of the workforce. We must get employable applicants off the sidelines and back to work so the forest products industry can supply their customers and remain competitive with offshore producers.

Your effective leadership would be well received amongst countless industry stakeholders. We look forward to a response from your office and action on this critical issue facing our industry.

Sincerely,

Michael Thornberry
Powell Valley Millwork
Clay City, KY

Tom DeFilippo
H & S Lumber
Clay City, KY

James Wells
Greentree Forest Products
Wallingford, KY

Scott Anderson
Tarter Wood Products
Dunnville, KY

Greg Hubble
Prime Lumber Sawmill
Eastview, KY

Deron Harris
Premium Hardwoods, Inc.
South Carrollton, KY

Paul Maxwell
Maxwell Brothers Lumber
Lewisport, KY

George Crawford
Somerset Wood Products
Somerset, KY

Dan Allard
Domtar Paper
Hawesville, KY

Mary Conn
Paul's Saw Shop
Olive Hill, KY

Amy Middleton
Diamond Forest Resources
Morehead, KY

John Sleva
Woodcraft Industries
Bowling Green, KY

Jeff Perry
JW Perry Lumber
Leitchfield, KY

Cody Robbins
WR Hardwoods
West Liberty, KY

Chip Crush
Industrial Carbide
Louisville, KY

Robin Richardson Cady
Wayne Lumber Company
Monticello, KY

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Tyler Sandusky Sandusky Pallet Russell Springs, KY	Paul Byler Hart County Hardwoods Munfordville, KY	Eric Degenfelder UC Coatings Buffalo, NY	Steve Harvey Harvey Lumber Columbia, KY
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