



Minnesota Timber Producers Association

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Testimony
Minnesota Timber Producers Association
Transportation Conference Committee
HF2887
May 3, 2023

Conference Committee Members:

The Minnesota Timber Producers Association (MTPA) represents loggers, truckers, small sawmills, and allied businesses in the forest products industry throughout our state, from the northern border with Canada to our southern border with Iowa. We appreciate the opportunity to submit comments on the Transportation Finance Omnibus bill (HF2887).

MTPA supports inclusion of the language from HF2887 pertaining to the Forest Products Special Permit that begins on line 86.6. This language would allow MnDOT to issue a permit for logging trucks to haul loads of timber up to 114 inches wide, an increase of 12 inches from what is currently allowed.

Today's homes have taller ceilings, an increase from the previous standard of eight feet. Sawmills like PotlatchDeltic in Bemidji and Jake's Sawmill in Baudette need longer logs to meet consumer demand. In addition, longer logs enable pallet sawmills such as Savanna Pallets in McGregor to get three pieces of lumber from a log rather than two, meaning less waste.

These three sawmills are the only manufacturers we represent wishing to purchase timber longer than the standard 102 inches. We estimate less than 4% of the timber in Minnesota would be hauled at the greater length.

Wider loads are routine and safe. MnDOT offers permits for wider truck loads in many instances, such as farmers hauling haybales in loads up to twelve feet wide.

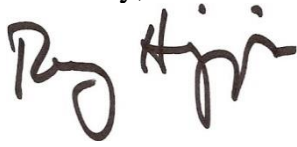
The language in HF2887 would only allow up to 114 inches (nine-and-a-half feet wide). It would require several safety measures with the extra width, including flagging on wider loads. It would also prohibit these loads in the Twin Cities metro and in inclement weather.

Please also note that this language would not change existing weight laws.

Including the language cited pertaining to the Forest Products Special Permit from HF2887 would help Minnesota's loggers and truckers economically, in addition to the

manufacturers referenced here. We urge you to include this language in the Transportation Finance Omnibus bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ray Higgins". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Ray Higgins
Executive Vice President
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