



Testimony
Minnesota Timber Producers Association
Minnesota Forest Industries
Omnibus State Government and Elections, Veterans, Pensions, and Transportation bill
HF 4293/SF 3975
May 7, 2022

Conference Committee Members:

The Minnesota Timber Producers Association (MTPA) represents loggers, truckers, small sawmills, and allied businesses in the forest products industry in our state. Minnesota Forest Industries (MFI) is an association representing the state's forest products companies, including manufacturers of paper, lumber, oriented strand board, utility poles, and other products. We appreciate the opportunity to submit comments on the Omnibus State Government and Elections, Veterans, Pensions, and Transportation bill.

MTPA and MFI support inclusion of the language from HF 4293 pertaining to the Forest Products Special Permit that begins on line 194.1. 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. Eight feet used to be the norm, but that isn't the case anymore as consumers want tall ceilings. Sawmills like PotlatchDeltic in Bemidji and Jake's Sawmill in Baudette need longer logs to meet consumer demand. In addition, longer logs also enable pallet sawmills such as Savanna Pallets in McGregor to get three pieces of lumber from a log rather than two, meaning less waste.

The three manufacturers referenced above are the only one we represent wishing to haul 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. By comparison the language in HF 4293 only allows for nine-and-a-half feet wide.

Please note: This bill does not change existing statute on logging truck weights.

Including the language cited pertaining to the Forest Products Special Permit from HF 4293 would help Minnesota's loggers and truckers economically, in addition to the manufacturers referenced here. We urge you to include this language in the Omnibus State Government and Elections, Veterans, Pensions, and Transportation bill.

Sincerely,

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