

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Joint Statement by American Softwood Lumber Industry And Workers
Urging Strong Enforcement Of U.S. Trade Laws And Agreements**

WASHINGTON, DC (March 20, 2009) – A wide-ranging group of American labor and lumber manufacturer organizations, lumber producers and forest landowners are encouraged that Ron Kirk, the new United States Trade Representative, and Commerce Secretary nominee Gary Locke both have pledged to strongly enforce the U.S. trade laws and trade agreements.

The Carpenters Industrial Council, the Forest Landowners Association, the Intermountain Forest Association, along with the Northeastern Lumber Manufacturers Association and the Southeastern Lumber Manufacturers Association, are united with the Coalition for Fair Lumber Imports with their long-standing concerns that Canada and its timber-producing provinces are not living up to the U.S.-Canada Softwood Lumber Trade Agreement.

"The Coalition for Fair Lumber Imports is delighted that USTR Kirk will follow up on the promises made by President Barack Obama to fully enforce U.S. trade agreements," said Coalition Chairman Steve Swanson.

American forestry workers and manufacturers have become increasingly concerned that Canada and the governments of its lumber-producing provinces are not fully honoring the 2006 Softwood Lumber Agreement that was designed to level the playing field against subsidized and unfairly traded Canadian softwood lumber imports.

"This is having a disastrous effect on U.S. companies, workers, their communities and private family forest landowners," said Scott Jones, Executive Vice President of the Forest Landowners Association based in Atlanta, Georgia.

Together, the group wants to see the new Administration effectively address willful trade agreement violations, strengthen U.S. trade laws and reform Chapter 19 of NAFTA, the dispute settlement chapter - which has undermined the effective enforcement of American trade law.

"U.S. trade agreements and laws must be enforced to ensure that rules-based trade creates fair, competitive conditions for America's sawmills, mill workers and forest owners," added Debbie Brady, president of the Southeastern Lumber Manufacturers Association.

"A fully honored and effectively enforced Softwood Lumber Agreement will save thousands of jobs across the United States," noted Mike Pieti, Executive Secretary of the Carpenters Industrial Council.

Most immediately, the group wants to see the Canadian government abide by a recent ruling by the London Court of International Arbitration that found that Ontario and Quebec were in violation of the U.S.-Canada Softwood Lumber Trade Agreement. The independent court said that damages - through increased export taxes from 5% to 15% - amounted to C\$68 million.

Attached is a joint statement from Carpenters Industrial Council, the Coalition for Fair Lumber Imports, the Forests Landowners Association, the Intermountain Forest Association, the Northeastern Lumber Manufacturers Association and the Southeastern Lumber Manufacturers Association.

Contacts are also attached.

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American Softwood Lumber Industry And Workers Urge Strong Enforcement Of U.S. Trade Laws And Agreements



This joint statement was released today by the Carpenters Industrial Council, UBCJA, the Coalition for Fair Lumber Imports, the Forest Landowners Association, the Intermountain Forest Association, the Northeastern Lumber Manufacturers Association, and the Southeastern Lumber Manufacturers Association.



- The U.S. lumber industry and workers are rated among the most efficient on the planet. We can compete against any lumber industry in the world, but we cannot compete against unfair trade practices that are funded and backed by foreign governments. The Reagan, Bush I, Clinton and Bush II Administrations each found that Canadian lumber producers receive massive subsidies and dump their product into the U.S. market.
- Efficient U.S. sawmills, workers, and communities across America are put in jeopardy as jobs fall victim to Canada's efforts to protect Canadian mills from free market realities and competition. This was supposed to end with the signing of the 2006 Softwood Lumber Agreement between the United States and Canada.
- Settling years of cross-border disputes, the multi-billion dollar Softwood Lumber Trade Agreement was designed to help companies and workers in the United States withstand the negative effects of Canadian governments' unfair softwood lumber subsidies during a down cycle in the housing market.
- Canada is not living up to its commitments under the agreement – with disastrous effect on U.S. companies, workers, their communities, and private family forest landowners.
- The U.S.-Canada Softwood Lumber Trade Agreement continues to have the potential to function as intended for American workers and companies -- but only if it is fully honored and enforced. Improved compliance and better enforcement must be a priority in 2009, and can be achieved if the Administration:
 - (1) Considers, and utilizes, all options to effectively address willful trade agreement violations for which the dispute settlement mechanism under the agreement is inadequate to remedy the violation – as it was not designed to remedy deliberate violations;
 - (2) Supports strengthening the U.S. trade laws to more effectively offset unfair trade practices and create leverage to compel Canada to comply with the trade agreement; and
 - (3) Supports reforming the NAFTA Chapter 19 dispute settlement system – which severely has undermined the effective administration of the U.S. trade laws.
- U.S. trade agreements and trade laws must be enforced and administered effectively to ensure that rules-based trade allows for fair competitive conditions for America's sawmills, mill workers and private family forest landowners. A fully honored and effectively enforced Softwood Lumber Agreement will save thousands of jobs across the United States.

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The Carpenters Industrial Council

The Carpenters Industrial Council (CIC) was chartered July 1, 2006, by the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America. The principal activity of the CIC is to develop and maintain a unified membership program to improve compensation, benefits, safety and work-related issues. The Council's jurisdiction includes Local unions across United States. The majority of the Union's members operate and maintain equipment and facilities essential to the forest products industry from initial forest workers to the production and distribution of lumber products. The Union also represents workers in other industries including millwork, cabinet making, trucking, health care and office/clerical.

The Coalition for Fair Lumber Imports

The Coalition for Fair Lumber Imports is an alliance of large and small softwood lumber producers from around the United States that formed in 1985 to respond to the devastating effects of Canada's lumber subsidies on the U.S. lumber industry. The aim of the Coalition is to effectively address Canada's unfair softwood lumber trade practices, including its gross under-pricing of timber.

The Forest Landowners Association

The Forest Landowners Association's (FLA) mission is to support, through advocacy, education, and information, forest landowners' responsible management of their private property. The FLA provides its members access to essential tools and resources that help them achieve their forestland management goals.

The Intermountain Forest Association

The Intermountain Forest Association is an organization of wood product manufacturers, timberland owners and related businesses in the northern Rockies. The Association develops and implements solution-oriented policies aimed at securing a stable and sustainable supply of timber on public and private lands.

The Northeastern Lumber Manufacturers Association

Established in 1933, the Northeastern Lumber Manufacturers Association (NELMA) has over 55 mill operating members in northeastern states, including Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Minnesota. NELMA also functions as the rules writing agency for Eastern White Pine Lumber and the grading authority for Eastern Spruce, Balsam Fir, Spruce Pine Fir species grouping and other commercially important eastern softwood lumber species.

The Southeastern Lumber Manufacturers Association

The Southeastern Lumber Manufacturers Association (SLMA) represents independent lumber manufacturers throughout the southeast. SLMA encompasses 17 states with the continued goal of helping perpetuate family-owned businesses - businesses that are the essence of many communities throughout the southeast.