

Media Release

How Can We Make Ontario Open for Business?

OFIA Director of Forest Policy, Ian Dunn, Presents to Standing Committee

Wednesday, January 23, 2019. The Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs held a hearing in Dryden on Monday, January 21, 2019 regarding Pre-Budget Consultations.

The Ontario Forest Industries Association (OFIA) presented to the Standing Committee and believes that by working with government, affected stakeholders and rightsholders, practitioners and professional foresters to strategically increase the sustainable use of our Crown forests will make Ontario a world leader in forestry. To maximize the full potential of Ontario's naturally renewable resource, create well-paying jobs and make Ontario open for business, OFIA addressed three key competitive challenges.

OFIA's Director of Forest Policy, Ian Dunn, stated, "First, roads are a vital component of society and the lifeblood of Northern and Rural Ontario. Without roads, development and economic activity critical to the modern quality of life would have been impossible. Roads remain central to virtually all forest uses today. We are asking government to recognize the importance of public investment into multi-use, Crown road infrastructure. We cannot open this province up for business without this essential investment."

For generations, Ontario's forest sector has been putting wood to work responsibly and playing a vital role in every region of Ontario, connecting and supporting over 172,000 hard-working men and women. By sustainably harvesting 0.2% of Ontario's renewable resource, our forest products sector generated a domestic economic impact of \$15.5 billion and total wages of \$2.3 billion.

Dunn continued, "To ensure we keep mills open and people working, we encourage government to establish a Made-in-Ontario Commercial Loan Guarantee Program. Because of US tactics and the collection of unfair and unjust tariffs, Ontario lumber producers have more than \$100 million in deposits sitting at the border that they can not use to support their employees and operations."

"Lastly," Dunn remarked, "Ontario's forest sector is totally committed to managing and protecting species at risk. However, we remain concerned about the potential social, economic, and environmental impacts of current and proposed species at risk (SAR) policy and, in particular, the current direction being proposed for caribou. We urge the government to consider the latest science and develop a path forward that will keep people working and provide a long-term and permanent solution to managing species at risk."

The sustainable use of a secure and affordable supply of renewable wood fibre, coupled with workable public policy, results in well-paying jobs and a wide range of social, environmental and economic benefits. It is the Ontario forest sector's ability to adapt and innovate that has allowed us to remain a foundational pillar in Ontario's economy for more than 150 years.

The following OFIA members are also confirmed to present to the Standing Committee:

Dryden (January 21, 2019):

- Erik Holmstrom, Weyerhaeuser (Chair of OFIA)
- Tom Ratz, Resolute Forest Products
- Rick Ksiezopolski, Norbord Inc.

Timmins (January 22, 2019):

- Sylvain Lévesque, GP North Woods LP

Peterborough (January 28, 2019):

- Jamie McRae, McRae Lumber Company

OFIA has made five constructive recommendations that are outlined in our complete 2019 submission. To read the full submission, please visit our website: www.ofia.com or call 416-368-6188.

About OFIA

Ontario's renewable forest products sector supports over 172,000 direct and indirect jobs in 260 Ontario communities. Since 1943, the Ontario Forest Industries Association has represented forestry companies ranging from multinational corporations to family operated businesses producing advanced manufactured products and technologies. OFIA believes that by working with government to address key competitive issues, secure long-term access to affordable and accessible fibre and promote the province's 21st century forest products sector, Ontario will be the number one jurisdiction in Canada for today's green and growing renewable sector.

To learn more about OFIA and its innovative forestry members, follow us on Twitter @OFIA_info, or visit www.ofia.com

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