

February 2021

American Forest & Paper Association (AF&PA) members make essential and sustainable paper and wood-based products that are used daily by people across the country and around the world — products that play an important role in literacy, education, hygiene, food safety, product marketing and protection, and construction.

The forest products industry is an essential industry and directly employs approximately 950,000 people. Our industry is built on principles of sustainability: producing recyclable products from renewable resources.

We are among the top 10 manufacturing sector employers in 45 states. More than 75 percent of all U.S. pulp and paper mills are located in counties designated by the Census Bureau as more than 80 percent rural.

AF&PA supports market-based policies and regulations that foster economic growth, job creation and international competitiveness in this vital sector. We believe public policies are most effective when they meet the economic needs, environmental concerns and societal expectations of our diverse communities.

AF&PA's 2021 advocacy priorities are:

COVID-19: An Essential Industry Working Safely During Pandemic Response. AF&PA members are committed to the safety of the industry's essential workforce and end-users. AF&PA remains engaged during the pandemic to address critical issues as they arise and will take proactive measures to ensure the success of the industry. AF&PA members are working to respond safely and efficiently to spikes in demand – from boxes and paper bags to transport goods to tissue products, meeting the needs of Americans across the nation and worldwide.

Achieving Sustainability. AF&PA was one of the first manufacturing industries to adopt a comprehensive, quantifiable set of sustainability goals, in 2010. Our initiative is a condition of membership and demonstrates AF&PA members' commitment to sustainability. To date, AF&PA members have surpassed three goals related to worker safety, greenhouse gas emissions and energy efficiency and have achieved our goal for sustainable forestry. AF&PA will soon launch 2030 goals that build on our sustainability successes to further advance the paper and wood products industry into the coming decade and beyond.

Sustainable Manufacturing Advancing the Circular Economy. The paper and wood products industry is a significant contributor to the broader circular economy. AF&PA advocates for policies promoting continued

Top AF&PA 2021 Advocacy Priorities include worker safety, sustainability, paper recycling, sustainable forestry and infrastructure. Visit afandpa.org/issues for more in-depth information about our engagement on a range of public policy issues.

progress in meeting the challenge of our changing climate, air quality, water stewardship, product stewardship and health and safety, while maintaining the competitiveness of our industry. These policies should recognize that our industry is based on a renewable and recyclable resource and our bio-based products are manufactured with bioenergy, improved efficiency and recycled at a rate far higher than other major commodities.

Continued Success for Paper Recycling. The paper industry has a demonstrated, measurable record of success in making products more circular and sustainable through market-based approaches. In 2019, the paper recycling rate was 66.2 percent, and the recycling rate for old corrugated containers (OCC) was 92.0 percent. The three-year average recycling rate for OCC is 92.3 percent. Paper and paper-based packaging are the most recycled materials by weight from municipal waste streams in the United States today. U.S. packaging and pulp producers are also committed to investing more than \$4.1 billion in manufacturing infrastructure, from 2019-2023, to continue the best use of recovered fiber in manufacturing our products. Efforts to ban, tax or restrict access to paper products are counterproductive to this achievement and discourage the use of products that are recyclable, compostable, reusable and made from renewable and recycled material. AF&PA supports efforts that recognize educating consumers on the right ways to recycle as one of the best ways we can increase the quantity and quality of paper in the recycling stream.

Keeping Forests as Forests. The U.S. grows more wood than it harvests. U.S. forest products manufacturers take steps to promote sustainable forestry and procure wood fiber from certified forestlands and through certified sourcing programs. Moreover, members procuring fiber must adhere to Sustainable Procurement Principles that also promote sustainable forest management practices. Paper and wood products manufacturers use as much of the tree as possible to make paper, packaging and wood products, while remaining residuals are used as a renewable energy source (biomass) to power mills. AF&PA has for many years advocated for science-based policies that acknowledge renewable biomass and provide regulatory certainty to level the playing field for global competition and the protection of rural American jobs. Together, these sustainable practices ensure the industry's fiber supply is protected while also helping mitigate one of the major factors of wildfire risk. Strong markets for paper and wood products also gives private forest owners confidence to continue replanting trees. And demand for these products increases the incentive to replant trees, decreasing the likelihood of conversion to other uses.

Infrastructure. Paper and wood products manufacturers face a nationwide shortage of transportation capacity, an aging infrastructure, and inefficient surface transportation policies. As a result, connecting our products, raw materials and consumers is difficult and costly. Specifically, AF&PA encourages necessary infrastructure enhancements, such as policies to enhance trucking efficiency including safely increasing weight limits on federal interstate highways.

Additional Advocacy Priorities:

In addition to these top priorities, AF&PA remains engaged in important advocacy discussions related to international trade, tax and sustainable regulation to allow our industry to compete in a global marketplace. Visit afandpa.org/issues for more in-depth information about the range of public policies in which we are engaged.