



Office of the President

March 4, 2024

OPEN LETTER TO 2024 U.S. ELECTION OFFICIALS

RE: Paper Supply for Elections

The American Forest & Paper Association (AF&PA) serves to advance U.S. paper and wood products manufacturers through fact-based public policy and marketplace advocacy. Our members manufacture about 87% of the pulp, paper, paper-based packaging, and tissue products made in the U.S. We are getting in touch to proactively update election directors and administrators regarding the capability of U.S. paper producers to support 2024 elections.

Recognizing the important role paper plays in elections, our members worked hard with election value chain partners to minimize the potential effects of supply chain shortages that were at play during the 2022 election period. Preceding that election cycle, dramatic effects of the pandemic included an unprecedented 22% drop in demand for printing paper and a major increase in e-commerce packaging needs. As each paper producer recalibrated their operations to uncertain realities of the pandemic, the sudden economic recovery created new challenges for the paper supply chain to adapt to an unforeseen surge in paper demand.

Going into the 2024 election cycle, we wanted to provide assurance that paper market dynamics have changed significantly, and to pre-empt potential misinformation related to paper availability that could lead to confusion or erode the public's trust in elections.

The period in 2022 when paper demand exceeded available supply was extremely rare. Printing paper capacity utilization rates have rebounded, with current production capacity readily available for printing papers like paper ballots, ballot envelopes, voter registration forms, instruction materials, and other essential

elections collateral. In addition, supply chain logistics are more predictable and paper inventories have recovered.

As election officials prepare for this year's election cycle, we encourage early planning and communication across the entire election material value chain, including the volume, timing, and type of paper needed. And to minimize waste or unnecessary last-minute changes, we urge proofing of all ballot materials before they are sent for print.

Paper is foundational to the American election administration process, providing reliability, security, and transparency of voter choices. Our industry remains committed to serving our customers, and continues to manufacture printing papers 365 days a year, by a dedicated and essential workforce. Please look to AF&PA as a trusted source of accurate information, or for questions about current paper demand and supply dynamics. Your AF&PA contact is Mark Pitts, mark_pitts@afandpa.org

Thank you for your service in our country's election process.

Kind Regard

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heidi Brock". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Heidi Brock
President and Chief Executive Officer