

Jobs in the Woods Act

Senators Angus King (I-ME) and Jim Risch (R-ID)

Background: The forest products industry employs about 925,000 people directly and supports about 2 million indirect jobs.¹ The industry is a major contributor to the national economy, representing about 5% of the US manufacturing GDP and annually contributes \$65 billion in payroll alone² and \$353 billion to the US economy³. However, labor shortages across the timber industry have limited investment and growth. Supporting targeted workforce education and training programs would help create a pool of talented, trained, and qualified applicants to fill timber industry jobs. This would help Americans obtain quality jobs, responsibly manage our forests, and secure the timber supply chain.

The Jobs in the Woods Act would:

- Provide grants of \$500,000 to \$2 million for the creation of education programs by states, non-profits, and colleges. Existing or new workforce training programs would be eligible.
- Focus these training programs in rural, low-income areas to help spur economic development in underserved communities. Communities with a population of 20,000 residents or less would be eligible.
- Create a pool of talented, trained, and qualified applicants to fill timber industry jobs in their communities.

Cosponsors: Senator Graham, Crapo, Klobuchar, Merkley, and Shaheen

Endorsed by: National Alliance of Forest Owners, National Association of State Foresters, Forest Resources Association, Maine Forest Products Council, Professional Logging Contractors of Maine.

¹ Our Economic Impact, American Forest & Paper Association. <https://www.afandpa.org/statistics-resources/our-economic-impact>

² *Id.*

³ Why the FRA Supports the Jobs in the Woods Act. https://forestresources.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Why-FRA-Supports-Jobs-in-the-Woods-Act_09192023.pdf