United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 19, 2025

The Honorable Scott Bessent
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20220

The Honorable Howard Lutnick
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20230

The Honorable Brooke Rollins
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20250

The Honorable Jamieson Greer
United States Trade Representative
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative
600 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Secretary Bessent, Secretary Rollins, Secretary Lutnick, and Ambassador Greer,

We are gravely concerned about the impact of the tariffs imposed on imports of timber and lumber on the forest products industry. This industry is part of Maine's heritage, boosting our state's economy, creating thousands of good-paying jobs in rural communities, and providing essential products to consumers across the United States. As such, we request that the Administration provide immediate and meaningful relief to this industry, which is already struggling to survive.

Over the years, the forest products industry has faced enormous challenges. Due to Maine's geographic proximity, our forest economy is deeply intertwined with our neighbor, Canada. Each day, our sawmills and pulp and paper mills move wood products across the United States-Canada border. Last year alone, Maine exported roughly two million tons of wood and imported 2.3 million tons, mostly to and from Canada. Shortly after the timber and lumber tariffs went into effect on October 14, 2025, forestry products and shipments from Maine exporters were unable to reach their destination, causing widespread confusion and disrupting supply chains.

We are aware that the Administration is considering measures to provide aid to agricultural industries that cannot weather the headwinds in global markets as a result of the tariffs. Accordingly, we believe that the forestry products industry should be eligible and included in any relief program. Maine's mills require certainty and predictability to plan, and the added costs from the tariffs are raising prices that they cannot absorb in a competitive global marketplace. The potential of retaliatory tariffs also poses a devasting threat. Our mills are holding back on future investments, and some are also cancelling planned expansions. We fear that it has already become financially unfeasible for some of our mills to operate at full capacity, and this challenge will only be exacerbated as time goes on. Our state has already lost more than half our mills over the past thirty years from our peak, and risk of future mill closures is high. The impact of these closures will be felt acutely by Maine people, nearly 30,000 of whom rely on this industry for their jobs, as well as Americans struggling with the ongoing affordability crisis and lack of adequate housing supply.

In closing, we are supportive of the Administration's goal to strengthen domestic manufacturing and the U.S. forestry industry. However, as trade negotiations continue, we ask that you provide prompt relief to our hardworking forestry product manufacturers so they can thrive now and for years to come. We welcome the opportunity to continue working with the Administration to ensure that the American forest products industry can compete, grow, and prosper. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Angus S. King, Jr.
Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator

Susan M Collins
Susan M. Collins
United States Senator