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BAUCUS, CHAMBLISS STAND UP FOR AMERICA'S LUMBER WORKERS IN FARM BILL

Key trade enforcement provision protects jobs, industry built on vital agricultural product

Washington, DC - Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) and Senate Agriculture Committee Ranking Member Saxby Chambliss (R-Ga.) have secured a provision in the farm bill that will significantly strengthen enforcement of international agreements relating to softwood lumber. Timber is a vital American agricultural product, and the inclusion of the Softwood Lumber Act of 2008 in the farm bill gives the U.S. Government an important tool to make sure importers abide by the terms of international agreements. The provision requires American importers of softwood lumber to declare that their imports are consistent with the terms of international agreements, obligates U.S. Customs and Border Protection to verify that the importer's declarations are true and accurate, and imposes penalties for knowing violations.

"For too long, American millworkers and softwood lumber producers have had the short end of the stick from softwood lumber trade," said Baucus. **"It is high time we enforce our softwood lumber agreements, so that Montana and all American lumber industries get a fair shake in a fair market. The farm bill is an appropriate place to address forest products issues, and this lumber provision is a timely response for a threatened U.S. industry."**

"The farm bill will help level the playing field for softwood lumber producers in the Southeast and across the country," said Sen. Chambliss. **"We must abide by our agreements, but that also means our trading partners must abide by theirs. The farm bill is an important vehicle to increase transparency and provide a foundation not only for free, but fair trade in softwood lumber."**

The United States both produces and imports significant amounts of timber-related products, including softwood lumber. The United States maintains international obligations relating to trade in lumber, but does not have specific mechanisms to enforce these obligations. The Softwood Lumber Act of 2008 ensures that American softwood lumber workers and producers can compete fairly in the global softwood lumber marketplace.

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