



**March 23, 2020**

The Honorable Chad Wolf  
Acting Secretary  
Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, D.C. 20528

c/o: Christopher C. Krebs  
Director  
Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)

Dear Secretary Wolf:

I am writing today on behalf of the lumber and building material dealer industry, which is essential to the COVID-19 response and the domestic American economy. NLBMDA with its state and regional association partners represent over 6,000 building material retail locations nationwide who operate single and multiple lumber yards and component plants serving homebuilders, subcontractors, general contractors, and consumers in the new construction, repair and remodeling of residential and light commercial structures.

As the country continues to stop the spread of COVID-19, we are seeing state and local governments promulgating quarantine orders and mandatory business closures. NLBMDA supports several public health measures that will help limit the spread of the virus. In addition, we appreciate and support the recent guidance issued by the Department of Homeland Security titled, "*MEMORANDUM ON IDENTIFICATION OF ESSENTIAL CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE WORKERS DURING COVID-19 RESPONSE*".<sup>1</sup>

DHS rightfully recognized those businesses involved in the manufacture and distribution of wood products as part of the essential critical infrastructure of the country and I am writing today to formally request that any subsequent guidance or revisions maintain this recognition and specifically identify lumber and building material dealers, by name, along with those businesses in their supply chain, as part the essential critical infrastructure of the country.

Lumber and building material dealers play a crucial role in providing critical infrastructure and we urge you to recognize and/or continue to recognize employees of these businesses as "essential" workers.

To further emphasize our position, the Governor of Pennsylvania recently **recognized building material dealers as "life sustaining"**<sup>2</sup>. There is widespread support for the LBM industry across the U.S. in its designation as essential. In light of this, we respectfully urge you to specifically include the lumber and building material dealer industry, including their supply chain, as "essential", which will simultaneously protect the public and keep your local economies strong.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cisa.gov/publication/guidance-essential-critical-infrastructure-workforce>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.governor.pa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/20200319-Life-Sustaining-Business.pdf>

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter. Please contact Kevin McKenney at [kevin@dealer.org](mailto:kevin@dealer.org) with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jonathan Paine". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Jonathan M. Paine, CAE  
President & CEO

cc:

Building Material Suppliers Association  
Construction Suppliers Association  
Florida Building Material Association  
Kentucky Building Materials Association  
Lumbermen's Association of Texas  
Midwest Building Suppliers Association  
Mid-America Lumbermens Association  
Mountain States Lumber & Building Material Dealers Association  
Northeastern Retail Lumber Association  
Northwestern Lumber Association  
Western Building Material Association  
West Coast Lumber & Building Material Association