



For Immediate Release  
November 7, 2007  
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## IWPA Praises Compromise on Illegal Logging Legislation in House; Urges Senate to Follow Same Path

Washington, DC – The International Wood Products Association (IWPA) praised a compromise approach to combat illegal logging that provides forfeiture liability protection for small businesses that have practiced due diligence in their supply chain. H.R. 1497, the Legal Timber Protection Act sponsored by Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR), would target illegal logging by amending the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 to extend protections to plants illegally harvested outside of the United States.

“We are pleased that Chairman Rahall and the committee understood and appreciated the legal and technical concerns raised by small, family-owned businesses within the original bill’s language,” said Brent McClendon, IWPA Executive Vice President. “The 745,000 businesses represented by our coalition partners are unified in the fight against illegal logging and welcome this amended legislation as it provides all U.S. consumers continued confidence that the wood products they use are legal.”

In a late development yesterday, Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR), sponsor of the Senate companion legislation to H.R. 1497, added his bill (S. 1930) as a proposed amendment to the \$288 billion farm bill (as SA 3502). As currently written, the amendment does not include the technical clarifications to H.R. 1497 that the House recognized and addressed. Most notably, SA 3502 provides no protection for “innocent owners”; does not clarify the definition of “any foreign law” to reflect natural resources laws; does not correct the grossly unfair fines of \$10,000 against exporters and importers who make even the simplest mistakes in filing required documentation; and does not solve the apparent discrepancy between the bill’s language as written and existing U.S. customs law.

“We hope the Senate will follow the leadership shown by Congressman Blumenauer and Chairman Rahall in the House and adopt similar compromise language. We note that these changes were included in the House language after a fair and open hearing, and we look forward to the same opportunity to engage in a similar process in the Senate.” McClendon continued, “We welcome the House and Senate joining together to help our coalition combat illegal logging and look forward to working on regulations that reflect the spirit of the compromise and intent of Congress.”

IWPA is joined in its efforts to encourage sound and fair legislation by the National Association of Home Builders, National Federation of Independent Business, National Lumber and Building Material Dealers Association, American Home Furnishings Alliance, and the National Marine Manufacturers Association

*Established in 1956, IWPA is the leading international trade association for the North American imported wood products industry, representing 220 companies and trade associations engaged in the import of hardwoods and softwoods from sustainably managed forests. Association members consist of three key groups involved in the import process: U.S. importers and consuming industries, offshore manufacturers and the service providers that facilitate trade.*

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