

# NCFA SUPPORTS HOUSE BILL 628 MOVES TO SENATE AFTER 70-43 APPROVAL VOTE BY HOUSE



The North Carolina Forestry Association **STRONGLY SUPPORTS House Bill 628, Protect/Promote NC Lumber.** The bill correctly identifies the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standard as a discriminatory construction standard that refuses to recognize other certified systems such as the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and the American Tree Farm System (ATFS) that are currently used by North Carolina landowners and manufacturers. As a result, the LEED standard discourages the use of North Carolina grown and manufactured products since less than one percent of the forests in North Carolina are under the LEED certification system, Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).

The bill was overwhelmingly approved by the House of Representatives by a 70-43 vote on Monday, May 13<sup>th</sup>. This strong support for North Carolina's top manufacturing industry and our only renewable natural resource, our forests, is a step in the right direction. We are asking for Senate approval as well.

*“Our forests here in North Carolina are grown, harvested and manufactured under the most stringent environmental standards in the world, yet the LEED certification system, due to its archaic and agenda driven requirements, fails to promote locally grown products,”* stated NCFA Executive Vice President Bob Schaefer. *“This legislation would put North Carolina’s wood products on an equal playing field.”*

The forest products industry continues to be North Carolina's top manufacturing industry, providing over 67,000 jobs across the state. **There are over 2,000 forest products facilities, many of which are small, family-owned and operated companies, with a presence in every county in North Carolina.**

# of manufacturing facilities	2,299
# of manufacturing employees	67,613
Contribution to NC Gross Product, \$ billion	4.5
Wages, \$ billion	2.7
Value of shipments, \$ billion	15.3
Economic benefits, \$ billion	23.8
Economic benefit, Number of Jobs	178,498

Not included in this data, but equally important, are the contributions that our forests make to the state's environment and to other industries such as tourism. **North Carolina boasts 18.6 million acres of forestland, roughly 60% of the state.** Roughly 68 North Carolina counties are more than 50% covered by forests and 23 are more than 75% covered by forests. **In terms of ownership, 85% of the state's forests are privately owned.** Two-thirds of that ownership is comprised of non-industrial private forestland owners (NIPF).

The strength of the forest products industry is one of the main reasons why we have so much forestland in our state today. Since colonial times, landowners have always had healthy markets for the trees that they are growing. Forest landowners invest growing trees not only to enjoy them for recreation and aesthetics, but also to earn a return at some point. Working forests and working farms are the keys to conserving green space without adversely impacting rural economies.

*“I grow my pines and hardwoods for various reasons, but at some point in the future, my trees will be harvested for a profit to justify my initial investment and continued land use of my property,”* explains Bob Cooper, a forest landowner from the Winston-Salem area who was the American Tree Farm System's National Tree Farmer of the Year in 2008. *“We are confident they will provide income and years of enjoyment for our families.”*

For more information on this issue, please contact Bob Schaefer, the NCFA's Executive Vice President at [bschaefer@ncforestry.org](mailto:bschaefer@ncforestry.org) or at (919) 980-1500 or Chris Brown, the NCFA's Director of Communications at (919) 337-6094 or [cbrown@ncforestry.org](mailto:cbrown@ncforestry.org). The NCFA's website is [www.ncforestry.org](http://www.ncforestry.org).

# **LEED PROGRAM DISCRIMINATES AGAINST NORTH CAROLINA WOOD IMPACTING OUR FORESTS, OUR BUSINESS, OUR TRADITION**

By Bob Jordan, President Jordan Lumber Company

North Carolina's forest products industry is the state's top manufacturing industry, contributing billions of dollars to our state's economy through the growing, selling, and harvesting of trees for the purpose of manufacturing countless forest products. This industry provides jobs in every county of our great state.

As president of Jordan Lumber Company and a former North Carolina Lieutenant Governor, I understand and appreciate how public policy and private business impact each other on a day-to-day basis. Environmental public policy should be promoted and established that will encourage the sustainability of our forests, not discourage it.

Unfortunately, the LEED (Leadership in Energy Efficiency and Design) building code that currently guides our state's "green building" initiative does just that. It discriminates against North Carolina forests. Developed in Washington, D.C. in 1994, the LEED building code only awards green credits to wood that is certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). Since FSC recognizes less than 100,000 acres our state forests, this policy undoubtedly provides incentives for the use of wood from outside of our state for any public building projects.

Recently, Lampe & Malphrus Lumber Company, which is located in Smithfield, North Carolina and sells SFI certified southern pine lumber, was denied the opportunity to sell lumber to a construction project for Tryon Palace, our first colonial and state capital building. The wood used for the deck project was imported. It's a shame that a flawed code can hurt a North Carolina business and prohibit locally grown timber to be used in such a special historical site such as Tyron Palace.

The good news is that there is a solution. There are other forest certification programs such as the American Tree Farm System (ATFS) and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) that are popular with North Carolina forest landowners. These certification programs have over 1.2 million acres of forests enrolled in their programs in our state.

House Bill 628, Protect/Promote NC Lumber, has been introduced in the North Carolina General Assembly. It mandates that state government construction projects adopt a building code that treats ATFS, SFI and FSC timber equally. This long overdue measure provides a fair opportunity for North Carolina's private, non-industrial forest landowners and the forest products industry in our state to participate in our state's growth and restoration efforts.

The goal of LEED remains desirable – increasing the amount of sustainable materials in our offices, schools and homes – but the best method to accomplish this is through a fair and competitive process that does not pick winners and losers based on one forest certification program.

When the process is open and equal to all forest certification systems, all North Carolinians will benefit.

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