



ALC Washington Report – March 30, 2015

Fly-In Recap

Over 60 individuals and supporters, including ALC Board members, sponsors and logging association executives attended this year's Spring fly-in to Washington, DC on March 18-21. Over 100 visits were made on ALC's priority issues which included the Youth Careers in Logging Act, the Right to Haul Act, the Flame Act Amendment to eliminate "fire-borrowing" and the comprehensive reform needed to manage our federal timberlands. While Congress is now on a two week recess for Easter and went back on the districts, the ALC will continue to press for more support on these issues.

Youth Careers in Logging

Congressman Raul Labrador (R-ID) and Senator Jim Risch (R-ID) reintroduced the Youth Careers in Logging Act (H.R. 1215 and S. 694) in early March, just prior to the ALC Fly-In. The bill would amend the Fair Labor Standards Act by allowing the 16 and 17 year-old children of logging business owners the ability to work on the job under direct parental supervision. There are exclusions in the bill that would not allow the youth to operate chainsaws or set chokers in a cable skidding operation. Members of the ALC requested support for the bill during the fly-in and the number of cosponsors is increasing in the House and Senate.

Right to Haul Act

Members of the American Loggers Council approached several of their representatives on March 18-19, 2015 in both the House and Senate requesting that the Right to Haul Act be reintroduced in the 114th Congress. The Act allows State legal weight tolerances for agricultural and forest commodities the ability to legally haul those weights on the Federal Interstate Highway System within that State. There were three Congressmen and one Senator that appeared to be willing to reintroduce the bill.

Wildfire Funding

Members of the American Loggers Council met with Senator John McCain (R-AZ) during their March fly-in to discuss his recently introduced Flame Act Amendment, S.508. The ALC is supporting S. 508 as a preferred method of eliminating the practice of "fire-borrowing." Recent language in the Senate Budget Resolution which came out on March 25th included language in Section 319 entitled "Spending-Neutral Reserve Fund To Improve Forest Health" which contained the framework of the FLAME Act Amendment which is a non-binding and does not become law, but do signal symbolically where Senators are on these kinds of concepts.

Comprehensive Public Forest Management Reform

Members of the American Loggers Council continued to press members of Congress to consider comprehensive legislative changes to the way in which current policies are impacting not only the timber harvesting industry, but the communities that the timber industry supports. Thoughts that were presented to lawmakers included stopping redirecting funds intended for forest management to fire suppression, increasing the pace and scale of the timber sale program, and overhauling NEPA guidelines for both green and fire salvage timber programs. The ALC, working with the Washington-based Federal Forest Resource Coalition will continue to push for reform.