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Committee on Natural Resources  
Doc Hastings, Chair  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

August 15, 2013

Re: Support for the *"Healthy Forests for Healthy Communities Act"* H.R. 1526

Dear Chairman Hastings,

The American Loggers Council, representing professional timber harvesters in 30 states across the U.S., is writing to you in support of the Healthy Forests for Healthy Communities Act, H.R. 1526. Our members provide the services that sustainably harvest the forests and supply the forest products manufacturers with the fiber that keeps the mills open.

Nationwide, our National Forests continue to be plagued by catastrophic wildfire, and insect and disease infestations while our timber dependent communities continue to cut services that were once provided through funding through the 25% Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program. The PILT program has been replaced by Secure Rural Schools (SRS) payments; a payment which is perceived by many as a "band-aid" that covers the wound, but does not heal the cut. SRS needs to be replaced by an effective treatment, and H.R. 1526 can be the beginning of that treatment.

H.R. 1526 lays some of the groundwork needed to get our federal timber sale program back on track and provide a reliable timber supply and income to those rural communities that are dependent on a federal timber sale program.

H.R. 1526 promotes job creation in areas of rural America where unemployment still ranges in the double digits.

H.R. 1526 cuts through a lot of the red tape that has stymied sustainable timber production and healthy forests that are important for both economic and environmental benefits to the public.

We applaud the work that the Committee has done toward improving the health of our nation's forests, and look forward to seeing the Healthy Forests for Healthy Communities Act, H.R. 1526 passed on the floor of the House.

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Dructor  
Executive Vice President