

Hale County Commission

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August 29, 2013

Hon. Doc Hastings
Chairman
Natural Resources Committee
United States House, Washington, D.C.

Hon. Peter DeFazio
Ranking Member
Natural Resources Committee
United States House, Washington, D.C.

Re: Support for HR 1526, the Restoring Healthy Forests for Healthy Communities Act

Dear Chairman Hastings and Ranking Member DeFazio:

You may be surprised to know that there are people in Alabama who are eagerly watching the progress of H.R. 1526, the Restoring Healthy Forests for Healthy Communities Act. Alabama has more than 670,000 acres of National Forest lands spread across 17 counties throughout our state, including the Talladega National Forest in my county.

For leaders in my community, our interest in seeing a sustainable harvest level resume on these federal lands is twofold:

1. Active harvesting puts citizens in the forestry industry to work, from the logging crews to the timber mills;
2. Active harvesting provides financial support to county government and public schools that cannot levy property taxes on federal lands.

In the short term, HR 1526 would extend the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act, which provides critical funding to support our county transportation system and our local public schools. These dollars would be an important bridge until meaningful harvesting could begin again.

H.R. 1526 provides a common sense approach for returning to sustainable forest management where the planned harvest can occur in a reasonable amount of time. I ask you to support this legislation on the House floor, and I pledge to contact our House member to ask for their support as well.

Respectfully,

Arthur L. Crawford, Sr. Chairman,
Hale County Commission, Alabama
CC: Congresswoman Terri Sewell, 7th Congressional District of Alabama