



April 19, 2021

Senator Liz Krueger
New York State Senate
172 State Street, Capitol Building
Room 416 CAP
Albany, NY, 12247
Via e-mail – lkrueger@nysenate.gov

Re: S05921 – “New York Deforestation-Free Procurement Act”

Dear Senators Krueger, Cooney, Kaplan, May, Reichlin-Melnick, Brisport, Hoylman and Kaminsky:

I hope that this letter finds you in good health in these times that challenge us all. I write to raise the Government of Canada’s concerns with S5921/A6872, “New York Deforestation-Free Procurement Act”.

The Government of Canada commends the bill’s intention of addressing deforestation. But as currently drafted, the “New York Deforestation-Free Procurement Act” does not recognize that **Canada is a world leader in sustainable forest management**. Canada’s 347 million hectares of forest lands represent about 9% of the world’s forest cover, but account for only 0.3% of global deforestation. This is especially true with boreal forests: each year Canada converts just 0.013% of its total boreal forest area to other uses. Since the vast majority of Canada’s forests are publicly owned, our strong system of laws, monitoring and enforcement ensures that sustainable forest management practices are followed across the country, including in the boreal forest. What’s more, all publicly-owned forests harvested in Canada must be regenerated by law; this policy of regeneration means our forests will be sustained for generations to come.

Canada’s robust forest management legislative framework is complemented by the **widespread use of third-party forest management certification in Canada**, which provides added assurance that a forest company is operating legally, sustainably and in compliance with world-recognized standards for sustainable forest management. As of December 2020, Canada continued to lead the world in third-party forest management certification, with 164 million hectares of forests certified to recognized standards. This is consistent with New York’s 2020 Forest Action Plan which noted that promoting “third party certification to recognize sustainable forest management” was also an opportunity for the state’s forests.¹

In addition to Canada’s robust forest management practices, **Canada and New York have long-standing forest sector supply chains that support jobs and economic security on both sides of the border**. In 2020, Canada accounted for nearly US \$1.5 billion in forest product imports to New York (which, according to forest industry experts, totaled nearly 45% of such imports) – far more than New York’s other top source countries, including China, Brazil or Russia. Like so much of our bilateral trade, this highly-integrated industry supports jobs on both sides of the border, providing New Yorkers with economic security at an uncertain time. With its inclusion of forest products from Canada’s boreal forests, this bill targets New York’s most responsible, secure and reliable supplier of forest products and puts at risk jobs on both sides of the border associated with the robust Canada-New York forest products trade.

At a time of already record high lumber costs, this bill would only further raise procurement costs for the state of New York and compliance costs for its suppliers. In restricting trade, the bill also raises questions about whether such requirements could be applied in a manner that is consistent with obligations under the WTO Agreement on Government Procurement.

The word "Canada" in a bold, black, serif font, with a small red and white Canadian flag icon above the letter 'a'.

¹ New York State Forest Action Plan 2020, pg. 117

Like New York, Canada is a climate change leader and our forests are part of the global climate solution. We can and should work together to ensure that forests at home and around the world are healthy, productive and thriving. Let us find a way to move forward with the intent of this bill in a manner that recognizes the economic and security benefits our integrated forest sector supply chains and Canada's world-leading sustainable forest management record.

I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Khawar Nasim', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Khawar Nasim
Acting Consul General

Cc: Senators Borello, Comrie, Jordan, Sanders, Jr.