



May 4, 2022

Senator Liz Krueger
Chair, Finance Committee
The New York State Senate
lkrueger@nyenate.gov

Assemblyman Kenneth Zebrowski
Chair, Committee on Governmental Operations
The New York State Assembly
zebrowskik@nyassembly.gov
Submitted via email: lkrueger@nyenate.gov

RE: Ontario Alliance Objects to Discriminatory Wording in Senate Bill S5921A and Assembly Bill A6872A, *New York Deforestation-Free Procurement Act*

Senator Krueger,

On behalf of the signatories below, we are writing you to express our serious objection to Senate bill S5921A and Assembly bill A6872A, *New York Deforestation-Free Procurement Act*.

Collectively, our organizations represent over 350 Ontario communities, 540,000 unionized employees from across the country, over 40 First Nation communities, and 45 forest product and management companies.

We are writing to assure you that Ontario does not have a deforestation or forest degradation problem. The rate of deforestation in Ontario is consistent with the national rate, at approximately 0.0016%¹. We believe that this legislation ignores Ontario's robust legislative and regulatory frameworks, falsely suggests that we have a deforestation problem, violates trade agreements, and wrongly compares Canada's sustainable management framework to unsustainable practices in Malaysia and Indonesia.

The Ontario forest sector has demonstrated the highest sustainable forest management and forest renewal standards. For example, approximately \$60 million is invested annually into Ontario forest renewal activities such as tree planting and seeding, planting, on average, 70 million trees, and applying 300 million seeds. Three hundred twenty thousand acres of Ontario forest are assessed, on average, for forest renewal success every year². The total gross area of Ontario forest certified to a third-party certification system (e.g., FSC, SFI, CSA), including double certifications, is over 88 million acres³. We fear New York is not aware of or willfully ignoring this impressive commitment to forest health and sustainability.

¹ Government of Ontario, *Deforestation*, available here: <https://bit.ly/3uTOOaY>

² Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, *Report on Forest Management: Annual Summary of Ontario's Forest Management Activities*, available here: <https://bit.ly/3wYG8C3>

³ Forest Products Association of Canada, *Forest Management Certification in Canada, 2020 Year-End Status Report for Ontario*, available here: <https://bit.ly/3slNiNg>

As practiced in Ontario, forest management effectively maintains ecological processes, conserves biological diversity, and minimizes adverse effects. Careful planning and operations ensure environmental, social, and economic values are maintained across large, healthy, diverse, and productive public forests. Ontario has fostered an inclusive environment to involve all stakeholders and rights holders in the planning and management of our public forests. We remain committed to continuous and adaptive learning to ensure improvements to our land-use decisions. Additionally, our robust legal framework – regulated under the Crown Forest Sustainability Act - has provided landscape, stand, and site-level direction for conserving and protecting all wildlife, including species at risk.

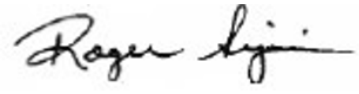
We request that you immediately change course on this legislation for these reasons. We would appreciate an opportunity to discuss how we can work together to ensure that these bills recognize how forest management in Ontario improves forest sustainability and strengthens our communities.



Regional Deputy Grand Council Chief
Melvin Hardy
Anishinabek Nation



Mayor Wendy Landry
Mayor of Shuniah
President of NOMA



Mayor Roger Sigouin
Town of Hearst



Danny Whalen
President of FONOM
Councillor, City of Temiskaming Shores



Mayor Robin Jones
Village of Westport
ROMA Chair



Ian Dunn, R.P.F.
President & CEO
Ontario Forest Industries Association



Charla Robinson
President
Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce



Chief Marcus Hardy
Red Rock Indian Band



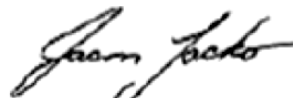
Gary Bragnolo
Northern Area Director
Unifor



Rob Knox
President
Timmins Chamber of Commerce



Chief Paul Gladu
Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek



Jason Lacko
Union Representative
United Steelworkers

CC: New York State Senate
Premier Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
Minister Greg Rickford, Minister of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources, and Forestry
Minister David Piccini, Minister of Environment, Conservation, and Parks
Minister Vic Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade
Minister Mary Ng, Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade
Kirsten Hillman, Canada's Ambassador to the United States
Khawar Nasim, Acting Consul General of Canada in New York, United States