



Susan Summers, Chair
Suite 1101
301 West Preston Street
Baltimore Maryland 21201

May 21, 2019

Donald VanHassant
Director
Maryland Forest Service
580 Taylor Avenue
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Proposed Economic Adjustment Strategy for Redeveloping Maryland's Forest Products Industry

Dear Mr. VanHassant:

Established by the Maryland General Assembly in 2010, the Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission carries out actions and makes recommendations in support of the State Economic Growth, Resource Protection, and Planning Policy. The Commission's Rural Economies Workgroup focuses on creating and sustaining a strong and vibrant economy in Maryland's many rural jurisdictions. Without a strong forestry sector, Maryland's rural populations will lose jobs and rural property owners potentially could see reductions in property values, as well as impacts to the state's forested landscape which is critical to the Bay's health.

The Commission strongly supports the Department of Natural Resources' efforts to develop an economic strategy for furthering the production and use of forest products in Maryland. Developing a comprehensive strategy is even more critical in light of the prospective closure of the Verso pulp and paper mill in Luke, Maryland and closures of several sawmills on the Eastern Shore due to market-related challenges. The members of the Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission stand ready to assist in any way we can.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Susan D. Summers".

Susan Summers
Chairman



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