



Empire State Forest Products Association

The people behind New York's healthy forests and quality wood products
www.esfpa.org

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ESFPA Albany Update – COVID-19 & NYS Budget March 31, 2020

NYS 2021 Budget

As we send this update this morning, 2021 Budget bills have started to move in the New York State Legislature. Over the next 24-36 hours we expect to see a slimmer and fiscally reduced budget pass. As details emerge, we will keep membership apprised of the priority parts of the Budget that we have been tracking. One bill, the Revenue Bill (A9509B/S7508B) retains language ESFPA advocated for which remains technology neutral regarding renewable energy projects eligible for jobs and investment tax credits. As we understand it, the Green Economy Tax Credits, keep language that does not preclude biomass projects from being considered for credits. Obviously, we will need to monitor this as the Public Service Commission, NYERDA and Empire State Development Corporation draft regulations to implement the tax credit program.

Federal Coronavirus Paid Leave – Required Posters

The U.S. Department of Labor has issued guidance explaining paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. A copy of the guidance can be found [here](#). In addition, USDOL has also issued the official workplace posters that employers are required to post to inform employees of these benefits. A copy of the poster can be found [here](#). Posters must be displayed in a conspicuous place. If the workplace is closed, employers must still get them to staff and may email them to staff.

Corona Virus Emergency Loans and Payroll Protection Program

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce has developed a useful flyer on the \$350 billion to help small businesses keep workers employed amid the pandemic and economic downturn ([here](#)). Known as the Paycheck Protection Program, the initiative provides 100% federally guaranteed loans to small businesses. Importantly, these loans may be forgiven if borrowers maintain their payrolls during the crisis or restore their payrolls afterward.

Information about the Payroll Protection Program, as well as other small business loans, from the U.S. Small Business Administration can be found [here](#).

The Business Council has also designed a one-page breakdown of the Paycheck Protection Program as outlined in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) bill. You can find the summary [here](#).

ESFPA Signs Multi-Industry Critical Infrastructure Letter

On March 25th ESFPA joined with more than 110 other critical industry associations in sending a letter ([here](#)) to President Trump, all 50 Governors and a host of major city Mayors, urging federal, state and local governments to ensure that critical manufacturing industries remain in operation to provide important supplies and services during the Covid-19 crisis. The letter asks them to follow the guidance from the Department of Homeland Security, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency. The forest products industry and related supply chains are included in the guidance as a critical industry sector. While this does not change the designation of forest products businesses as Essential Businesses in New York it does affirm New York's designation and encourages other states and municipalities to designate forest product businesses as essential.