

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

June 9, 2014

Hugh D. Crawford
Committee Chair, 38th District
House Regulatory Reform Committee
Michigan House of Representations

Re: Dropping "Forester" occupation in SB 481

Dear Representative Crawford.

I am opposed to dropping "Forester" from the occupational code as proposed under SB 481. By way of background, I have been a Forestry Professor at Michigan State University for 30 years. I am a former Chair of the Michigan Society of American Foresters and a current member of the Governor's Timber Advisory Council.

One effort underway by the Governor's Timber Advisory Council is to expand the number of jobs associated with the forest products industries. Currently, there are over 31,000 direct jobs associated with those industries, including foresters. Foresters provide the professional advice needed for sustainably managing our forests. Close to million acres of Michigan's forests are certified as "sustainably managed." Foresters are a key element in that certification.

Overall, the forest products industries contribute more than \$16 billion to Michigan's economy. We need to maintain quality forest management in the state, and the Registered Forester program is one means of doing so. I will add, that the requirements for Registered Forester need to be strengthened, and many of us are willing to work with the House Regulatory Reform Committee to improve those standards.

If I can be of further assistance or can provide more information, please contact me (Leefers@msu.edu).

Sincerely,



Larry Leefers
Associate Professor



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and Natural
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