Debra Huff
SAF Certified Forester
7200 Doyle Road
Laingsburg, MI 48848

June 9, 2014

To: Michigan House Regulatory Reform Committee Members

I am writing in regard to current legislation that is intended to deregulate the profession of forestry (SB 481; 484, HB 4379; 4380). I urge you to vote NO on this legislation. These bills will have a definite negative effect on our private forestlands, harm citizens who own those lands, and ultimately harm forest industry in Michigan.

Michigan forest owners are often not professional foresters, and need a source of information that helps them select a professional forester to assist them in assessing their land and making informed decisions regarding management. With Registration, if a forester presents themselves to a citizen as a professional and registered forester, it means that the citizen can expect that this forester possesses a minimum of a bachelor's degree in forestry, on-the-ground experience as a professional, and has references. Our citizens deserve that service from the State.

I spent 7 years as the Forest Stewardship Coordinator for the Michigan DNR before taking an early retirement in 2011. While employed at the DNR, many private citizens called for help in finding a reliable forester to help them make decisions about their forest land. Many asked about the Registered Forester designation.

I know of two examples of landowners who were devastated by signing a contract with people who purported themselves to be foresters and took advantage of them. These pseudo-foresters would knock on their door and offer them money to cut their forestland. In these cases, the landowner agreed and signed a contract the 'buyer' offered, only to find out later that their woods were clearcut, even though this is not what they wanted, and they were paid far less than market value for their timber. Because they signed a contract, there was no legal recourse. For some owners, the woods they used as a source of enjoyment and investment were now ruined, as they would not have merchantable trees for 30 to 50 years hence. They considered selling the land.

The passing of these bills sends a bad message at a time when Michigan's Legislature is encouraging active forest management on private forestlands. The message these bills send to the public is that it is not necessary to utilize qualified professional foresters to manage their valuable resource.

The Michigan Registered Forester Regulation includes functions that a "Registered Forester" can and does perform. Without its inclusion in the Occupational Code, Michigan Citizens will be at the mercy of anyone who chooses to call themselves a forester. This longstanding program has legal Standing in Michigan, and is being successfully housed and administered through the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA).

To: House Regulatory Reform Committee members:

RE Registered Foresters Act.

My name is Dennis P Renken, longtime forester that has lived in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan since 1970. The Reasons I recommend keeping the act is that I represent my clients in court on timber trespass cases and other land management issues. The registered forester status means a great deal to the court system. This is very similar to a registered land surveyor that appears in court. Or a professional engineer status on signing plans and drawings. Elimination of this status of a Registered Forester will open items that the registered land surveyors do not want to happen. Presently the Registered Foresters have an agreement based on the professional activities we as registered foresters will do and not enter into activities that are performed by registered land surveyors.

The reason why professions are licensed is to protect the public and hold the professional to a higher goal of serving the public. The public would suffer more with untrained individuals and unethical practices calling them foresters that should not be assisting the private landowner on the management of their timber lands. Improper management can have a long term financial effect of not doing what is best for the woodland resource and achieving the goals of the landowners. I am also a licensed associate real estate broker and there are reasons for having a licensed person in taking care of the real estate transactions.

There will be no financial savings by eliminating the registered forester act. There are 226 licensed registered foresters in the State of Michigan and the RF is more than self-supporting.

Therefore why eliminate a very important registration of foresters as this will only cause many problems down the road. I understand some representatives want to move RF status into a Quality Foresters position. The Quality Forester only gives a forester the okay to write a QF plan for the QF program.

All these designations like Technical Service Provider for the USDA NRCS office and the Quality Forester Classification means that I can provide a land management plan for the NRCS and MDARD respectfully. But will not have any bearing on my status when I am in court.

Therefore I urge this committee to act responsibly and not eliminate the Registered Foresters Status in Michigan for the reasons stated above and I thank you for reading this document.

Sincerely,

Dennis P Renken

Dennis P Renken
Registered Forester #312
Association of Consulting Foresters, member
Certified Forester #14, SAF
Elected Fellow of the Society of American Foresters, 1995
TSP, QF plan writer
Forest Stewardship plan writer
BS Forest Management Iowa State University 1961
MBA Oregon State University 1970
US Army Veteran HD

Angie Lake

From: Carlson, Gerry <Gerry.Carlson@aecom.com>
Sent: Monday, June 9, 2014 8:14 AM
To: Angie Lake
Subject: NOT in favor of forester Deregulation

Dear Ms Lake

Subj: Forester Deregulation, SB 481; 484, HB 4379; 4380
Below is a brief summary/comparison between the Registered Forester (RF) designation and other forestry programs and/or credentials:
1. Legislation intended to eliminate the Michigan Registered Forester Regulation was originally drafted under the erroneous assumption that it was a large public subsidy.
a. However, analysis by the Senate Fiscal Agency concluded:

"The bills would cost the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs approximately $3,700 annually, and have no fiscal impact on local units of government. The bills would eliminate the licensure of foresters, who currently pay a registration fee of $80 every two years. The Department has indicated that the fees paid by foresters are sufficient to cover the costs of doing the work associated with regulating the profession, and that the revenue generated by licensing the profession exceeds costs by $3,700 annually." Date Completed: 10-14-13 Fiscal Analyst: Josh Sefton
Conclusion: The Michigan Registered Forester Regulation is self-sufficient and generates positive cash flow for the State.
2. It has been argued that the Michigan State Forester Regulation is redundant and not necessary.

a. Many programs keep lists of individuals who can participate in their programs (these include the USDA NRCS-TSP program, the USDA Forest Stewardship Program in Michigan, and the MDA Qualified Forester Program). None of these speak to any function other than participation in their specific program. They are "silos" that are only for their program.
b. The Society of American Foresters maintains a national credential program, to certify individual credentials. However it is not part of the occupational code and does not have standing in Michigan. *"The Society of American Foresters supports state credentialing requirements for foresters implemented through state licensing and registration mandates."*
c. The Michigan State Forester Regulation includes functions that a "Registered Forester" can and does perform. Without its inclusion in the Occupational Code other professions will define what a forester can and cannot do. This will result in more regulation and higher management expenses as well as an additional competitive disadvantage for the Michigan forest products industry.
d. There is apparently a long list of local ordinances and in some cases State laws that require a Michigan Registered Forester.

Conclusion: The Michigan Registered Forester Regulation is NOT redundant and generates positive cash flow for the State.
3. It has been argued that State Government needs to reform.

a. The Governor-appointed Timber Advisory Committee, the Michigan Forest Products Council, the Michigan Forest Association, the Michigan Chapter of the Association of Consulting Foresters, Michigan Timberman's Association, Michigan State University, Michigan Technological University, and the Michigan Society of Professional Surveyors support the Michigan forester regulation within the Occupational Code.
b. As presented by the Michigan Forest Association in past testimony:

It seems to us to be contradictory for the state government to be targeting the forest products industry for growth while simultaneously erasing its professional ranks from the occupational code. We hope you will elect to retain *registered forester* in the occupational code and help our forest landowners get the quality assistance they are accustomed to and that they need to maintain the health and value of the resource that is under their control.

Conclusion: The Michigan Registered Forester Regulation is NOT redundant and generates positive cash flow for the State. It adds value to our $14 billion forest products industry, provides important consumer protection at a very reasonable cost (positive) and provides for long term sustainability of our forest resources.

Gerald W. Carlson, P.S.
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Angie Lake

From: Scott Erickson <michitreeinc@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 9, 2014 8:05 AM
To: Angie Lake
Cc: Paul Drysdale
Subject: SB 481 and SB 482

Hello
I am a practicing consulting forester in the western part of the lower peninsula of Michigan and would like to go on record that I'm **opposed** to the deregulation of forestry. My company has been in business since 1983 and my clients make up some of the largest landowner's in approximately a 13 county area. These landowners own some of the most productive well managed timber holdings around. It is NOT in the best interest of my clients (or any other landowners) for the State of Michigan to deregulate the forestry profession. Anyone who owns high quality timberland already knows the pressures that are put on them to sell their trees to industrial timber companies, brokers, etc. We do not need to further muddy the water in regards to who is a professional forester and who is not. The idea of deregulating the forestry profession is a bad one and most certainly would result in the mis-management of the private forest resource. Unfortunately, I cannot attend the Tuesday meeting, but would like to pass this on to the appropriate parties. Feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,
Scott R. Erickson, ACF
MI Registered Forester #671
MichiTree, Inc
2650 W. Fisher Rd
Ludington, MI 49431
o: 231.845.0142
c: 231.499.9371

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Angie Lake

From: DAVE wellman <dewmawir@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 8, 2014 11:41 PM
To: Angie Lake
Subject: Regulatory Reform Committee

Dear Ms Lake:

Reference to SB 481 and SB 482: Deregulate Forester Position.

I am a graduate forester, Michigan Technological University-1972. Having spent 21 years as a state forester (retired 1995) and 19 years as a consultant forester, I am adamantly opposed to the deregulation of the forester position.

To many times I have been called to either clean up a mess, determine damage, or assist landowners get the money owed them by individuals representing themselves as a "forester".

Of course, not all foresters are without some short comings and conversely all log buyers are not without scruples. However, to lump us all into the same pot really devalues the forestry profession.

It is not necessary to tell you what a Bachelor Degree cost today. But I would like to believe there is and should be some extra credibility with having earned the degree.

Sincerely,

Dave Wellman
Michigan DNR, Retired Forester ('95)
MTU 1972

Angie Lake

From: norman caldwell <nccsurveyor@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, June 6, 2014 7:10 PM
To: Angie Lake
Cc: Mollee Neff; Michael Moore
Subject: Professional Licensure of Foresters

Ms. Lake:

As a Michigan Professional Surveyor for over 55 years, it has been my pleasure to work alongside, and in conjunction with, many Foresters.

This writer has recently compiled and published, in the Michigan Surveyor magazine, a multi-segmented tribute to Marcus Schaaf, the First State Forester of Michigan, who served our citizens admirably from 1910 to 1949.

Mr. Schaaf is widely credited with instituting a recovery of the Michigan forest industry while also overseeing the establishment of numerous State Forests, State Parks and Recreation Areas. His management actions, leadership principles and re-forestation philosophy remain as guides for the Registered Foresters of the present day.

There is no doubt regarding the need for continued Professional Licensure of the Forester occupation which effectively defines their appropriate professional activities.

Your consideration is appreciated,

Norman C. Caldwell, P.S.

Angie Lake

From: Jack Thomas - U.P. <timberjack3@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 9, 2014 11:04 PM
To: Angie Lake
Subject: Urgent: Registered Forester - Do not eliminate it !!!! From Registered Forester # 542

I am out of State this week or I would attend in person !!!

Please let MI Registered Foresters update the current licensed code description to put it in a better format that meets tough requirements. This is important to Michigan natural resources to have credible, licensed Foresters managing our 20 million acres of forest.

Please DO NOT abolish the registered Forester. We have support of MI consulting foresters, MI society of american foresters, and MI assn of timbermen too maintain this important Michigan license.

I am a MI registered forester for 35 years. # 542. I just paid my renewal for 2 years, last month.

Respectfully.

Jack Thomas. 7687 Lake Bluff 19.4 Rd. Gladstone, MI. Phone 906 399 2524

KEEP the foresters within the occupational code and KEEP the registered forester program so we have the professional backing. This is in reference to SB481.

Legislation intended to eliminate the Michigan Registered Forester Regulation was originally drafted under the erroneous assumption that it was a large public subsidy.

Analysis by the Senate Fiscal Agency concluded:
"The bills would cost the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs approximately $3,700 annually, and have no fiscal impact on local units of government. The bills would eliminate the licensure of foresters, who currently pay a registration fee of $80 every two years. The Department has indicated that the fees paid by foresters are sufficient to cover the costs of doing the work associated with regulating the profession, and that the revenue generated by licensing the profession exceeds costs by $3,700 annually." Date Completed: 10-14-13 Fiscal Analyst: Josh Sefton

The Michigan Registered Forester Regulation is self-sufficient and generates positive cash flow for the State.

The Society of American Foresters maintains a national credential program, to certify individual credentials. However it is not part of the occupational code and does not have standing in Michigan.

The Michigan Forester Regulation includes functions that a "Registered Forester" can and does perform. Without its inclusion in the Occupational Code other professions will define what a forester can and cannot do.

The Governor-appointed Timber Advisory Committee, the Michigan Forest Products Council, the Michigan Forest Association, the Michigan Chapter of the Association of Consulting Foresters, Michigan Association of

Timbermen, Michigan State University, Michigan Technological University, and the Michigan Society of Professional Surveyors support the Michigan forester regulation within the Occupational Code.

The Michigan Registered Forester Regulation is NOT redundant and generates positive cash flow for the State.

Let the Michigan Foresters UPDATE the CODE, not eliminate it !!!!!!

Angie Lake

From: Kobe, Richard <kobe@anr.msu.edu>
Sent: Monday, June 9, 2014 9:07 PM
To: Angie Lake
Cc: Paul Drysdale (paul@drysdaleforestry.com)
Subject: deregulation of Forester profession

Dear Ms. Lake and Members of the Regulatory Reform Committee,

I am writing with regard to the proposed removal of the Registered Forester designation. A few points:

First, the motivation for this change is not clear as it appears that the DNR would be required to write rules regarding qualifications of a forester related to other existing law. So this does not seem to be reducing government regulation, simply shifting responsibility to another agency and causing everyone more work for a change that most foresters don't think is necessary.

Second, I have concern that unscrupulous and unqualified individuals could call themselves foresters and defraud landowners of good forest management and fair value for their timber. It is important to have qualified foresters who have the education to make forest management decisions that are economically and ecologically sound.

Finally, the registered forester system now may not be perfect, but there is strong support among foresters to keep the registered forester system and to work towards improving it.

Thanks for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Rich Kobe

Richard K. Kobe
Chairperson and Professor

Department of Forestry
Michigan State University
Natural Resources Bldg.
480 Wilson Road, Room 126
East Lansing, MI 48824-1222

Angie Lake

From: James Schmierer <jmschmie@mtu.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, June 10, 2014 8:59 AM
To: Angie Lake
Subject: SB 481 and SB 482

Members of Congress:

I am a lifelong forester and arborist who has been working in trees and in the forest for 30 or so years. For the last fourteen years, I have been very involved with professional foresters, loggers, surveyors, K-12 teachers and students, university students and researchers, private non-industrial landowners, conservation groups, recreational user groups, forest industry, and state and federal employees. For formal and informal education and training, participants in these groups have seen timber harvests, new/improved roads and trails, thinned forests, clearcut forests, seed tree and shelterwood forest, and various structures like culverts, bridges, boardwalks, benches, etc. In their concerns about how forests and greenspaces are managed, one thing that has increased public confidence in managing forests, cutting timber, and creating/managing forest and outdoor recreation is the existence of credentialed foresters, surveyors, and ecologists, and properly trained loggers, truckers and equipment operators and the knowledge that they are the ones who will steward the resource. "Registered forester" means something to the public just like "registered surveyor" or "certified master logger". At at time when the governor is calling for increased productivity from the forest sector, we need to further legitimize foresters, loggers, and associated professionals and treat them as such. Better credentials and better regulation are needed; more legitimacy, not less to increase and maintain public confidence.

When the public understands that registered and certified foresters are the ones who will work with qualified logging professionals, certified master loggers, registered surveyors, and forest certification programs like American Tree Farm System, Sustainable Forestry Initiative, Forest Stewardship Council, as well as DNR, NRCS, DEQ, MDARD, USFS and forest industry to ensure standards and needs are met, they see it is to conserve forests over the long term while deriving significant benefits from them as we grow. Michigan has millions of acres of state land, millions of acres of federal lands, and millions of acres of private lands that could be managed to a much greater potential in terms of habitat, forest products, societal benefits, and economic benefits. This includes the State Forests, which are dual certified under FSC/SFI. It is in our own best interests to have trained, qualified, licensed, and/or certified professionals managing this valuable resource for the greatest benefit of the landowners. It is exactly what the certification standards recommend.

I display my license proudly and carry my card in my wallet. I feel that as a university forester is it important to promote professionalism, life long education, and forest certification standards when managing the forest resource and actively engaging with the public. To me the $80 is a bargain and would mean even more if the occupational code was better defined to include all that foresters really do on the ground and in the woods. Speaking personally, I also feel it is important to support and contribute to one's profession which is why I also belong to professional associations including Society of American Foresters, Forest Guild, and currently serve on the DNR WUPCAC and the Michigan Master Logger Certification Board.

I strongly urge you to vote "NO" on any proposed legislation to remove, weaken, phase out, or abolish "Registered Forester" designation.

--
James M. Schmierer, Jr., M.S.
Forester/Instructor, MI Registered Forester #977

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