

Reps. McDowell, Lahti, Casperson, Lindberg, Espinoza, Brown, Gillard, Sheltroun and Elsenheimer offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 303.

A resolution to call upon the Mackinac Bridge Authority to implement the Michigan Forest Products Council's proposed discount rate for high-volume commercial users.

Whereas, The forest products industry has long played a vital role in the economy of Michigan, especially in northern Michigan and in the Upper Peninsula. The total economic benefit of the forest products industry is greater than \$12 billion and represents over 150,000 jobs in Michigan. Over half of Michigan's land is forested - 19.3 million acres – and is the seventh largest forested land area in the United States. Michigan's bio-economy is a strong component of the overall economy; and

Whereas, The Mackinac Bridge is a vital artery through which flows wood fiber and finished products – the lifeblood of Michigan's bio-economy. The Mackinac Bridge Authority recently increased the toll for trucks from \$3 per axle to \$3.50 per axle starting March 1, \$4.50 per axle in 2010, \$5 per axle in 2012 and \$6 per axle in 2014. This additional fee will cost companies thousands of additional dollars that cannot be passed onto customers; and

Whereas, The Michigan Forest Products Council has proposed a discount rate for high-volume commercial commuters, such as logging trucks, which support Michigan's rural economies. This proposal would provide for a \$3.10 per axle rate in 2008, and an increase of 10 cents in each following year until 2014. This proposal will preserve jobs and revenue for the Mackinac Bridge, and keep Michigan's forests and local communities strong and healthy; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we call upon the Mackinac Bridge Authority to implement the Michigan Forest Products Council's proposed discount rate for high-volume commercial users of the Mackinac Bridge and ensure that the forest products industry continues to play a fundamental role in the Upper Peninsula's economy for the foreseeable future; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Mackinac Bridge Authority.