



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

November 19, 2021

Mr. Danny Dructor
Executive Vice President
American Loggers Council
3961 Barker Road South
Gilbert, Minnesota 55741

Dear Mr. Dructor:

Thank you for your letter of March 23, 2021, cosigned by Ms. Deb Hawkinson, Executive Vice President of American Loggers Council, on behalf of your colleagues, urging the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to move swiftly to disburse the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act funds for timber harvesting and hauling businesses. I apologize for the delayed response.

I appreciate the authorities and funding provided by Congress in this Act, and particularly the assistance made available to timber operators. We are working hard to implement this provision in addition to the many other provisions provided by Congress in both the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

On March 24, 2021, I announced plans to fill the gaps in previous rounds of pandemic assistance and indicated that assistance for timber harvesters and haulers would be part of that assistance. On July 20, 2021, I announced Pandemic Assistance for Timber Harvesters and Haulers (PATHH) to provide aid to loggers and truckers as part of the USDA Pandemic Assistance for Producers initiative. PATHH will assist loggers and haulers not only in your State, but in other parts of the country as well, who have suffered a 10 percent or more gross revenue loss due to the pandemic during the period of January 1 through December 1, 2020, when compared to the period of January 1 through December 1, 2019.

USDA's Farm Service Agency and Forest Service worked together to ensure the program's policies are equitable and will help as many as possible in the timber harvesting and hauling industry who have been affected by COVID-19. Initial payments of up to \$2,000 per applicant have been made as applications have been made. Sign-up for the program closed last month and the remaining portion of the \$200 million will be distributed among the eligible applicants in the coming weeks.

We will continue to provide the latest information about the Pandemic Assistance for Producers initiative on www.farmers.gov. The site will have timely updates and announcements for producers.

Please share this response with your colleagues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom J. Vilsack".

Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary