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Advocacy Bulletin 9: Call to Action RE: Aluminum Tariffs & Lumber

While it may have been some time since the last bulletin, the WRLA team and government relations committee volunteers have continued to work diligently behind the scenes. And there is no time like the present to reiterate that we are here to support you! Our focus is on the betterment of the LBM industry and working on programs and services that you can take advantage of to grow your business, industry connections and knowledge. Association business has changed over the years. In the past, associations often resembled a private club, but that is no longer sufficient in today's marketplace. Whether it be government advocacy, development of public campaigns, connecting you to information and expanded education opportunities, or to help grow your network – all of which WRLA has done over the past few months alone! – we work to support your business operations.

I'd like to thank those members that continue to engage with us to share issues, provide information or celebrate some good news stories during this difficult time. It helps us to better learn the marketplace and truly understand some of the opportunities where we, as a member-based association, can fill some gaps as we continually evolve. We are here for you and look forward to continued member engagement.

Advocacy Update

Since our last bulletin we have:

- Commissioned an economic impact report to collect data that highlights the importance of the LBM industry to government. This report has been made available on our website, if you have not had a chance to review this valuable information, please click [here](#). This economic impact report was sent to all elected provincial and federal officials as well as key senior government officials. Responses and acknowledgements of the importance of the LBM industry have been received and we will continue to respond and engage with government on behalf our members.
- Developed a "Support Local" campaign for members to engage with. Part of our role as an association is to create public awareness of the importance of supporting the independent dealer network. We want to drive as much traffic to our members as possible, but also bring our membership together to show our strength as an industry regardless of banners. To access the digital files for your use and promotion at no cost, contact marketing@wrla.org.
- Held a webinar to present the findings of the report and launch our Support Local campaign.

- Continued to work with other like-minded associations to ensure we collaborate on mutual policy issues and asks. Examples include various home builder's associations, construction associations, chambers of commerce, etc.
- Worked with BMCC colleagues to commission a report that builds a case for the government to implement a home renovation tax credit program. This report highlights the success of the 2009 HRTC implemented by the Conservative government and it would be beneficial to consider this once again as we look to the fall and beyond. WRLA shared this report with the Canadian Home Builder's Association to support their advocacy efforts (as we are aligned on several topics) and was also addressed to the Prime Minister and shared with several ministers in addition to the Leader of the Opposition.
- Continue to represent WRLA members on the Canadian Chamber of Commerce's policy and international trade committees.
- Conducted an interview with CBC Radio to discuss the lumber shortages. (CBC reached out to us; it's encouraging to see the media recognizing our association as a resource and conduit of information.)

We will continue to engage with government, and our government relations committee will be meeting to assess the current state of affairs and discuss other issues on the horizon, including lumber and aluminium tariffs.

Aluminum Tariffs

As most of you are aware, tariffs have been imposed on Canadian aluminum by the United States. Canada has since released their draft list of retaliatory tariffs available [here](#). We have been asked to collect feedback to support the submission. **Please provide your feedback no later than August 18.**

In case you are seeking information about the basis for the US government's claim about a surge in Canadian aluminum exports, the stats that the US Aluminum Association published are available [here](#).

I look forward to hearing from you. I can be reached via mobile at 204.770.2416 or email at lkovach@wrla.org.

Lumber

Lumber has been a hot topic as of late – some even say finding treated decking materials are rarer than gold! Prices have skyrocketed and many are left looking for explanations, particularly when producer yards appear to have a healthy supply. There is a perfect storm of issues – several culprits are changes in stumpage fees, COVID-19's impact on mill operations, construction projects and the unexpected demand from the DIY market, in addition to the quantity of lumber that is shipped outside Canadian borders.

Frustrations continue to grow among dealers regarding the lack of protectionism in the area of lumber exports. International trade and relations are important to our economies but as we work towards recovery, questions and conversations surrounding prioritizing the Canadian supply chain and Canadian businesses are increasing.

Customer relations have also been impacted negatively. Pricing can't be guaranteed and leaves them questioning how a quote from one week to the next for the same decking material can increase by

\$1,200. Businesses want to be run with integrity and build trust, but it's difficult to achieve that when consumers perceive price increases as gouging and not as a result of current circumstances.

We would like to help support this issue and educate the public, so please continue to engage with us and share your perspectives. We have been asked by members to consider discussing this with media to help create understanding. Our government relations committee will be meeting to determine how to best approach this. In the meantime however, feel free to share the attached [CBC interview](#) on your social media pages, which hopefully can help support your communications with consumers. (Follow WRLA on social media to stay current on our media interviews.)

I look forward to hearing from you soon!

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