

Facts of the Week

Week of 05 May

- ❖ Rick and Jim Maeder along with Judy Augenstein and me had a meeting with Senator McManus's staff to inform them on a project the Maeders are looking at doing. This project would look at creating a commercial grade pellet by combining waste paper with wood. The BTU potential with the proper mixture would rival coal between 9,000 to 10,000 BTU per pound of pellets. We were looking to see if there was any interest of support from Senator McManus's office.
- ❖ Rick, Jim, Judy and I also had a meeting with Jeff Cobb, staff to Senator Van Woerkom and Matt Kurta, staff to Senator Prusi regarding our Slasher bill. Also in attendance was Matt Bolger of Michigan State Police and Inspector Dietrich of Motor Carrier. I expressed our frustration regarding our current situation with the Slasher Combination and expressed our desire to seek an enforcement moratorium. That request was shot down. The federal code requires any commercial vehicle trailer over 3000 lbs to have brakes and lights. The only way to change this requirement is to change the federal code. The lighting doesn't seem to be a big issue; however the brakes are a major issue. Also all combinations are required to have safety chains as per the code. I informed them that no other violation has been cited other than the illegal combination. So we are still going to run our bill to make this combination legal within the Michigan Motor Vehicle Code; this would include chains. We will also start to work on getting this changed on the federal level.

I have been in contact with Danny Dructor with the American Loggers Council (ALC) and he is polling other states to see if they have this combination and if so how are they running these rigs legally. I have also asked for ALC's help in getting this changed.

Unfortunately, I don't have any better news regarding this situation. The road before us is either start to put brakes on these rigs or change the federal code, neither which will be an easy task. This bill will be in committee on May 20th before the Senate Transportation Committee and through Judy's work we have support from all 5 committee members. We will try and get this expedited through the legislative wheels as quickly as possible.

- ❖ The crib trailer bill passed the Senate and was read before the House and has been sent to the Governor's office for her seal of approval!
- ❖ Spent the rest of the week in Nebraska attending my Step-son's High School Graduation.

Week of 12 May

- ❖ Returned from Nebraska on Tuesday.
- ❖ Have been working on Michigan Business Tax information that you have been sending us at MAT President Warren Suchovsky's request. I will be providing comments at the

public meeting on Monday May 19th in Gaylord as to the impact it will have on our members and industry. Thank you to all those who have sent us your information. It has ranged from no change to an increase of 800%. I would strongly advise all of you to either do the online estimator yourself or have your accountant run your numbers to see what impact it will have on your company.

- ❖ Also have been preparing talking points and testimony for the Slasher Bill, Senate Bill 1241.

Upcoming Events

Michigan Business Tax Meeting	19 May	Gaylord MI
Senate Bill 1241 Testimony	20 May	Lansing MI
Legislative Meetings	20 & 22 May	Lansing MI
Memorial Day Office Closed	26 May	Newberry/Grayling Mi
Will Be In Newberry Office	29 May	Newberry MI
NRC Meeting	05 June	Lansing MI
Coop/LLC Meeting	06 June	Sunfield MI
FMAC Meeting	18 June	Lansing MI
Crisis or Opportunity? Sustaining and Strengthening Forest-Based Industries in the Great Lakes Region conference	23-26 June	Madison WI