

## Facts of the Week

### Week of 19 May

- ❖ Attended a Michigan Business Tax Meeting in Gaylord to testify about the potential impacts this new law will have on our members. After hearing much testimony and responses from the Tax Committee it became clear that some of our members were not completing the forms properly, meaning we were not utilizing the Alternative Tax Credit which reduces our tax liability. I did point out that I thought the on-line estimator was over estimating the tax and that Treasury has done a poor job of supplying CPA's and others instruction on how to complete the new MBT. This led to several communications to our membership seeking company information so we could supply the committee with more accurate data to state our case.
- ❖ Met with Representative Ebli regarding Senate Bill 1241, which is our Slasher Bill. Rep Ebli is willing to introduce this bill on the House side once it is reported out of the Senate Transportation committee and has gone through its third reading in the Senate. I expressed some of our concerns regarding weight and length and the Representative is willing to help us make the necessary changes to improve this bill.
- ❖ I testified before the Senate Transportation Committee regarding the need to pass Senate Bill 1241 to legalize our slasher combination. This bill received full support of the Committee and report out for immediate effect. The bill now goes to the full senate for approval then Representative Ebli will introduce this bill in the House.
- ❖ After making several phone call and emails to different departments, it has come to my attention that we have several issues regarding the Slasher Bill of which the only aspect we can change with Michigan Law is to simply legalize the combination. The weight and length issues are regulated by the Federal Code. Our combination cannot be any longer than 58 feet and the slasher table can weigh no more the 3,000 lbs. If you exceed these parameters you will need to get the proper permits. The only option that we have is to try and change Federal Code. We will start that process; however this will be a long uphill battle.
- ❖ I had another meeting with the Department of Treasury regarding our Sales/Use Tax Bill. We made some changes to the language and will be looking to get a committee hearing on this soon so we can resolve this issue.

## Week of 26 May

- ❖ **GREAT NEWS! OUR CRIB BILL WAS SIGNED INTO LAW BY GOVERNOR GRANHOLM.** This now allows you to haul your logs or pulpwood lengthwise in a cribbed truck and cribbed trailer without chains or straps. This has been a long time coming and we finally have gotten the bill passed. You are still bound by the 70 foot length. The Crib truck and trailer are defined in 49 CFR 393.5 and the rules for securement are found in 49 CFR 393.116(b) and 393.116(c). If you are hauling crosswise you are still required to use chains and straps. The bill eliminated the Michigan Securement requirements and now the Motor Carrier Division will only be enforcing the Federal Code.
- ❖ Spent much of the week working on the MBT information that you sent and compiled all the information and passed it on to the MBT Tax Committee for inclusion in their report.

## Week of 02 June

- ❖ Attended the Non-Industrial Private Landowner Coalition meeting at Higgins Lake. This group is working on improving the management and education of our private forest landowners. MUCC has acquired a grant to help facilitate our meeting. This group of people are representative of all the major forestry organizations found in Michigan.
- ❖ The Co-op and LLC board met this week to get an update on the status of our Business Plan and to conduct our necessary business. Tom Kalchik provided an update on our plan and asked for the assistance of the board in supplying information. The sense of the group was to focus more on the industrial pellet market and look at marketing in our region of the country. The Co-op reviewed two proposals dealing with diesel fuel and lubricants. I have been given permission to work on a contract with Rowley's to set up a program with them that will help lower your cost on their line of products. The one time membership fee for the Co-op is \$750 for Class A Stock with grants you voting privileges and also wood delivery once our plants are up and running. The other Stock is \$375, you do not have a vote; however you are eligible for all goods that will be offered through the Co-op. Again these are both just one time membership fees.

## Week of 09 June

- ❖ The Senate Finance Committee has reported SB 880/881. Four Republicans and three democrats, all seven members voted "yes" on the bills. Committee membership includes Chair, Cassis, McManus, Jansen, Gilbert, Prusi, Jacobs and Whitmer. Sponsor of the bills, Senator McManus made the motion for committee

support and Senator Prusi seconded. Senators Michelle McManus, R-Lake Leelanau, Senator Nancy Casis, R- Novi and Senator Mike Prusi, D-Ishpeming and their staffs were instrumental in crafting the bills and getting them moved through the committee process. Rep. Joel Sheltroun, D-West Branch has agreed to serve as "lead" House Tax Committee member on the issue. Rep. Jeff Mayes, D-Bay City, Tax Policy Committee member, has also agreed to assist with the bills. Jerry and Marcia McCormick, McCormick Sawmill, MAT members, delivered compelling testimony in support of the bills. Legislators always like to hear from constituents about their first hand experience and concerns with issues. The Michigan Farm Bureau submitted a position of support. The Department of Treasury was neutral.

Rep. Kate Ebli, D-Monroe, has sponsored HB 6239, the House version of SB 1241, sponsored by Senator Jerry VanWoerkom. The bills allow the hauling of a slasher/saw unit down the road. The Senate bill has passed the Senate and awaits action in the House Transportation Committee. Both bills have bi-partisan sponsorship and it is our intention to move the bills in tandem through the House Transportation Committee as part of our bi-partisan effort.

### Upcoming Events

FMAC Meeting Crisis or Opportunity? Sustaining and Strengthening Forest-Based Industries in the Great Lakes Region conference	18 June 23-26 June	Lansing MI Madison WI
Industry/Hiawatha Meeting	26 June	Gwinn MI
Forest Stewardship Meeting	1 July	Gaylord MI
Independence Day Office Closed	4 July	USA
NRC Meeting	10 July	Munising MI
MAT Summer Board Meeting	18 July	Newberry MI
ALC Summer Board Meeting	23-26 July	Portland OR