

# D.C. Cheat Sheet



## **Senate Energy Panel Reviews Forest Management Bills**

On September 29, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee conducted a hearing to review several forest bills intended to expedite effective management practices. Committee Chairman Joe Manchin (D-WV) noted that “past mismanagement ... has ushered in an era of fuels and wildfires” and that “reduced harvesting has led to historic buildups of vegetation [and] fuel loads.” For example, lawmakers reviewed the “Small Timber and Underutilized Materials Act,” among others, that would cut red-tape for commercial projects on public lands. To view a list of the bills examined by the panel, which may come together in the form of a “lands package” by year-end, please click [here](#).

## **Railway Unions Reject Labor Proposal, Renew Strike Fears**

On October 10, most unionized railway workers voted down a tentative bargain reached in mid-September that avoided a strike while allowing parties to continue to negotiate a labor package. The September [framework](#) extended a timeline to finalize details and delivered one of the union’s key demands, a 24% pay raise for workers over a five-year period. In practical terms, the vote means that all parties will return to the negotiating table, with one labor group signaling that it would delay a strike until at least November 19, or five days after Congress reconvenes for

the lame duck session. Stay tuned for details related to developments on this major supply chain challenge for the hardwood industry and broader economy.

### **Stauber Pushes Back on New USFWS Restrictions**

On October 6, Rep. Pete Stauber (R-MN) sent a [letter](#) which included six GOP colleagues as signatories, to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), urging the agency to drop additional restrictions made to the Lakes States Habitat Conservation Plans (HCP) for bat species. The letter states that the “bat species being targeted by these restrictions are not harmed by sustainable forest management” and that healthy forest management actually mitigates the harm intended to be addressed by the new rules. The lawmakers go on to urge regulators to avoid taking steps that would damage local economies, which they point out as an “unintended consequence” of the agency’s action.