

Brian Beitzel
574 Beitzel Valley Drive
Accident, MD 21520

March 9, 2020

Dear Delegates,

Hello, my name is Brian Beitzel. I am a third-generation logger from Garrett County. I co-own and operate my family logging business along side my three brothers and father. Collectively, we have over 100 years of logging experience between all of us. We are all Master Loggers and continue to attend trainings regularly to keep our certification active. We also attend classes and training on the most up-to-date safety and logging practices, which include how to properly fell and remove trees.

All of the logging companies in our area are family owned and operated. Our company, along with the other companies from this region, depended on the VERSO Papermill as a valuable asset and a place to take our product in order to create a revenue for our business. Since the abrupt closure of the Mill, multiple companies have been deeply impacted and many have been forced to close. Bill HB1311 would allow current loggers to be compensated for safely cutting and removing trees on private property that are deemed hazard trees. This would allow current loggers to expand our businesses from depending on local mill-owned timber, to private and residential forestry opportunities.

While this Bill is not a permanent resolution for the closure of the VERSO mill, it will create a timely opportunity for a second chance for loggers who were impacted to make a living doing what we love and live to do. Loggers are very proud and independent people, and it is not easy for us to ask for help. Allowing HB1311 to pass would save so many local businesses, like my own, and create multiple job opportunities for the community, along with providing a valuable service for residents in our area.

Thank you for your time,

Brian Beitzel