



ONTARIO FOREST INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION
Home of CLA Grading and Inspection



Growing a stronger, greener Ontario

November 2, 2012

Councillor Gord Perks
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West, Suite A14
Toronto, Ontario
M5H 2N2

RE: Ontario's Forest Sector is Sustainable and Renewable

Dear Councillor Perks,

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Ontario Forest Industries Association (OFIA) in response to the inflammatory comments made by Mr. Kevin Gaudet, spokesperson for a coalition of plastics industry interests, in the National Post earlier this week.

In the National Post article, Mr. Gaudet is quoted as stating *"To imagine a Toronto without plastic bags would be to imagine a Toronto without trees"* and that *"the equivalent of Toronto's entire tree canopy harvested, gone, in just a decade."*

Firstly, we would like to point out that industrial forest operations do not take place in Toronto or any other urban centre. Mr. Gaudet's efforts to link the issue of a plastic bag ban to the loss of tree canopy in Toronto amounts to nothing more than protectionist hyperbole and fear-mongering.

More importantly, paper (or any other forest product) sourced from sustainable forest jurisdictions like Ontario, does not jeopardize tree canopy. In fact, Ontario's rate of deforestation has been zero over the past two decades.

Forest operations in Ontario are governed by one of the most stringent regulatory frameworks in the world – a framework that includes mandatory requirements for renewal. Due to this strong regulatory framework, Ontario's forest sector is one of only 11 sectors or activities in the province of Ontario to receive a class approval under Ontario's rigorous Environmental Assessment Act.

As noted on the Ontario Wood website (<http://ontariowood.ca>) “Ontario is a world leader in sustainable forest management. Less than ½ of 1% of Ontario’s forests are harvested each year and by law plans to renew the forest must be in place prior to harvest and that planned renewal must occur. More than that, wood is renewable, reusable and recyclable.”

From an economic standpoint, forestry has historically been the second largest contributor to the province’s balance of trade (second only to the automotive sector). According to Statistics Canada, Ontario’s forest products sector had 58,700 direct jobs in 2009. In total, the forestry sector supports almost 200,000 direct and indirect jobs across over 260 Ontario communities. Please note that this includes the various forest product manufacturers in and around the Greater Toronto Area.

Please note that the OFIA is not taking a position on the issue of banning plastic bags, however, we wanted to ensure that the inflammatory comment made on behalf of the plastics coalition did not go unchecked and that you, and other members of Toronto’s City Council, were provided with facts about our sector.

If you have any questions or would like to learn more about our sustainable industry please do not hesitate to contact us.

Warmest Regards,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jamie Lim". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent loop at the beginning and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jamie Lim
President & CEO
Ontario Forest Industries Association
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cc His Worship Mayor Rob Ford, Mayor of Toronto
Atlas Paper Bag Co., Scarborough, Ontario
OFIA Board of Directors