

March 22, 2022

To ALL West Virginia parties with an interest in the Hardwood Industry,

For several years the US Hardwood Industry has been expressing the need for an industry wide, comprehensive promotion campaign aimed at ultimately increasing demand for products made with US Hardwoods. It is my belief that such a campaign has been born. The Real American Hardwood Coalition (RAHC) is a voluntary, industry-wide domestic promotion initiative for American hardwoods led by national, regional, and state hardwood association executives. The goal is to increase sales and improve industry stability by raising awareness about the benefits of Real American Hardwood™ products. Real American Hardwood™ is defined as “solid and veneered hardwood products from resources that are grown in the United States. Real American Hardwood™ maintains the integrity of the natural wood and is not a replication or non-wood product; its natural appearance (grain) has not been altered prior to finishing.”

Real American Hardwood™ as a brand, and as a promotion campaign will be aimed towards consumers including homeowners, renovators, builders, designers, and architects. Today’s consumers rely on and are motivated by social media as never before. Many of these information sources are marketing what we refer to as substitute products to real wood, and while we may know all the positive attributes of using Real American Hardwood™ our ultimate customer the consumer, is often lost in a sea of misinformation. This then becomes our responsibility to get the message of sustainability, carbon sequestration, the long-term value, and inherent beauty of Real American Hardwood™ to consumers. Forestland owners, foresters, loggers, sawmills, drying operations, secondary manufacturers, and in fact, everyone who benefits from the harvest of hardwood timber, all share the responsibility of influencing consumers to use more Real American Hardwood™. Our profits and thus our futures can be greatly enhanced by a consuming public making the choice to use Real American Hardwood™ instead of a non-wood alternative.

What is needed now is our financial support. Our company has long been a supporter of industry promotion and as a primary hardwood manufacturer Allegheny Wood Products Inc. will pledge matching funds up to a total of \$50,000 in 2022 for any financial contribution made to the Real American Hardwood Coalition by any individual or company in West Virginia. If a contribution of \$100 is made, we will match. If a contribution of \$5,000 is made we will match and continue to match until total industry contributions reach \$50,000.

The forest products industry in West Virginia provides over 30,000 jobs and generates \$3.4 billion in economic activity each year with the overwhelming majority being from the harvest of hardwood timber. Our working together and giving financial support to this campaign that shares the many benefits of Real American Hardwood is our chance to enhance and grow all the markets for our diverse hardwood products.

Find out more at <https://realamericanhardwood.org> and <https://realamericanhardwood.com>.

Sincerely,



John Crites II – President

Allegheny Wood Products Inc.