

D.C. Cheat Sheet



Quick Updates from Your HF Team

What's Up with Build Back Better (BBB)?

The "Build Back Better Act," President Biden's signature tax and spending bill, is still logjammed in the Senate. But it looks like Senate Democrats are on the same page when it comes to favoring tax hikes on small and medium sized businesses...and this could lead to a slimmed down version of the BBB, focused on addressing climate change. Because this is an election year, conventional wisdom is that Congress has until late spring to move a scaled-down BBB. After that, the window for action closes. Democrats continue to negotiate amongst themselves. The Hardwood Federation continues to lobby against increased taxes and for support of hardwood products as environmentally friendly building materials.

Is Congress addressing workforce shortages?

In early February, the House passed the America COMPETES Act, a bill which includes a program to help fix the worker shortage by expanding access to Pell grants for students interested in short-term job training programs...as little as 150 clock hours in eight weeks. The goal is to train workers for long-term, high-quality careers based on immediate local employer needs. The House and the Senate, which already passed its own version, must now come to agreement on two very similar bills. The Hardwood Federation favors including this program in a final bill for the President's signature.

What's being done to get more truck drivers on the road?

The bipartisan infrastructure bill that passed in the fall includes funding for a Hardwood Federation supported apprenticeship program to train 18- to 21-year-old apprentices to drive rigs on interstate roadways after extensive classroom training and on-road experience riding with a seasoned driver. Without the instruction provided by the program, younger drivers are restricted to driving only within a single state's borders, which discourages choosing trucking as a career. In January, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration announced that this program is up and running.