

Wisconsin Paper Council: Wisconsin Paper Council-led coalition hosts economic roundtable with U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce

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WI Rapids...A regional coalition of Tribal leaders, industry experts, labor groups, educational institutions, local and state officials and forest products supply chain partners hosted a roundtable discussion today with a key official from the United States Department of Commerce. U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development Alejandra Y. Castillo visited Mid-State Technical College campus in Wisconsin Rapids and listened to local leaders about their plan for the future of Wisconsin's forest products industries.

“Our diverse coalition was honored to host Assistant Secretary Castillo for this important roundtable discussion about the future of Wisconsin’s forest products sectors,” said Stacey Johnson, spokesperson for the WPC-led coalition. “Working together, we showed how important maintaining the vitality of the forest products industry is to our state and our nation.”

The WPC-led coalition consists of Mid-State Technical College, Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association, Sustainable Resources Institute, UW-Stevens Point’s Institute for Sustainable Technology, Menominee Tribal Enterprises, and the Wisconsin DNR’s Division of Forestry.

“The strong diversity of ideas and partnerships that have come together to help sustain and enhance the forest products industry while maintaining our proud heritage was on full display for the Assistant Secretary today,” said Nicole Fish, Business Development and

Improvement Manager for Menominee Tribal Enterprises.

The Build Back Better program from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) aims to boost recovery and investment in regional economic development for communities around the country. It also provides investment to strengthen regional industry clusters. The WPC-led coalition's application centers on Wisconsin's forest products cluster and is a regional collaboration encompassing 35 counties.

Wisconsin State Treasurer Sarah Godlewski stated, "This roundtable discussion with the U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce is a shining example of how local, state and federal leaders can come together in a collaborative, bipartisan fashion to talk about the future of this important industry. I applaud the WPC-led coalition for all of their tremendous efforts to create these diverse partnerships and develop a pathway to progress for the papermaking and forestry industries."