

## Comments on HB 5001 & 5002

By Warren Suchovsky, Dec. 2017

Suchovsky Logging LLC, Stephenson, MI

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Natural Resources Committee I am sorry that I can not appear before you in person today.

I am the owner of over 500 acres of private non industrial forestland. I am a logger. I'm a member of the Boards of Directors of the Michigan Association of Timbermen and the Michigan Forest Biomaterials Institute and also a member of the Society of American Foresters, the MI Farm Bureau's Forestry Advisory Committee, DNR's Forest Stewardship Advisory Committee, and MDARD's MAEAP Advisory Board.

**I, personally, very strongly support the adoption of House Bills 5001 and 5002.**

My forest is a certified Tree Farm and also meets the FSC standards through a group certification program. It is also verified to the MAEAP Forest, Wetlands and Habitat standards. Some of this land is enrolled in the Qualified Forest Program. These recognitions are only possible because for over 40 years I have used good professional foresters to develop management plans for me.

It is very important that private non industrial forestland owners can be assured that the forester they engage to prepare plans for them has continued to grow professionally by regularly attending continuing education opportunities. It is important that foresters not only keep up on technical forestry topics, but that they also keep abreast of changes to law and regulations.

This legislation also greatly expands the definition of what practices a professional forester can and is expected to be able to perform.

The creation of the Forestry Board provides a mechanism to review credentials and evaluate performance when complaints are brought forward concerning perceptions of less than satisfactory workmanship by a registered forester.

It is important to recognize that professional foresters providing services to private non industrial landowners recommend those practices that enhance the ecological sustainability of these privately owned forests. Their guidance also can have a significant impact on financial considerations for these landowners.

I support this legislation as I believe that it will lead to an improved level of professionalism and knowledge of practicing foresters who will be better prepared to service private landowners.