



4/20/2007

Dr. Robert Sawyer, Chair  
California Air Resources Board  
1001 I Street  
P.O. Box 2815  
Sacramento, CA 95812-2815

Orig: L Andreoni  
Copy: R Sawyer  
C Witherspoon

Dear Dr. Sawyer,

I am the CEO and Secretary of the Woodwork Institute. We are an organization that sets the standards for millwork in the western region of the United States. WI has been serving our members for over 50 years; providing assurance for fabricators, millworkers and architects who can all work from a common platform of standards to create exceptional work. I'm writing today in opposition to the California Air Resource Board's draft Composite Wood Air Toxic Control Measure designed to significantly reduce formaldehyde from particle board, medium density fiberboard and hardwood plywood, this measure must not pass due to the severe damage it will cause to California.

This proposed regulation would greatly harm the California Woodwork Industry, including the 400+ business members of the Woodwork Institute. A good portion of our membership is made up of small businesses that would be severely impacted by the regulation. Some of our members would probably have to lay-off employees to compensate for the financial impact; this will increase the unemployment rate in California. Some businesses may even have to close simply because this regulation will render them bankrupt. The increases in manufacturing costs and market prices that are sited in this proposal are grossly underestimated.

The disrespect shown to our California-based woodworking businesses is downright shameful. How can anyone think it is acceptable to allow California woodworkers only 30 days to comply with this measure, while foreign business get 18 months to comply? Adding insult to injury, there is no "grandfather clause" to protect the businesses that have millions of dollars in current product inventory. This means that millions of dollars worth of inventory will be illegal to use once the phases are complete. How is a construction company supposed to get ready for a job that is near the final phase date? Since there is no "grandfather clause" to protect the materials needed for the project, they are expected to wait weeks/months to purchase the newly compliant products and lose their inventory? Is the goal of this measure to dismantle the California woodwork industry and replace it with imported products? That is where this measure will lead our state.

Also, I can't help but notice that under the proposed changes, composite wood products would potentially not comply with the current requirements for seismic fabrication. California is an active earthquake region and changing the composition of our building materials could potentially spell disaster. Composite wood products have composition requirements that are enforced by California law to promote low mortality rate to persons during an earthquake; no one can ignore the fact that this proposal would potentially create composite wood products that would not meet those seismic requirements.

I have sat in CARB public meetings and watched scientists and toxicologists tell the CARB board that their needs assessment is potentially flawed and thus their conclusions are potentially based on fallacies. The CARB

panel simply dismisses these statements and forges ahead despite the warnings they hear every meeting from qualified individuals who can clearly see problems on the horizon. It appears to me and many others that CARB is working to justify the past five years of work and money spent on this endeavor, not working to create better California.

I was surprised to hear Ms. Catherine E. Witherspoon agree with me (on February 5, 2007) that the proposed ATCM standard may be outside of CARB's legal authority to enforce; however, CARB felt that the regulation was important enough in the overall scheme to proceed with its development and argue out the legality of it after the fact. What? I can not imagine a business in the non-government sector acting in the same manor, that of spending the amount of money that has had to go into the development of this regulation without even knowing if it was legal for them to do so. How can CARB compromise an entire industry based on a whim?

Our members are committed to the quality of their work. Architects specify the standards set by our organization so they can ensure their designs result in a high quality finished product. We understand the importance of regulations, however this proposal will potentially put shops out of business – not have a positive impact on the environment. If you value our state's Woodwork Industry, we urge you to do the right thing and reject this regulation.

Sincerely,  
WOODWORK INSTITUTE

Stanley R. Gustafson, CAE, CSI  
CEO / Secretary

cc: Members, California Air Resources Board  
Catherine Witherspoon, Executive Director  
Dan Dunmoyer, Governor's Office