



## As We See It: We're in this together



*By Danny Dructor*

The American Loggers Council is described as “loggers working for loggers.” The forest products industry is very broad and diverse in our country, ranging from forest land owners to manufacturers to forest land owners. The ALC works to promote and strengthen the whole industry. However at the end of the day, we are the only organization that focuses on supporting the needs and interests of professional timber harvesters. As loggers, we must stand up, speak out and support each other, because nobody else will.

“Loggers working for loggers” is a constant theme of our “As We See It” columns not only because it defines who we are, but how we as loggers can be most effective. The strength of our organizations is our members- our 30 state and regional logging association members and our individual members. The ALC is at its best when everyone works as a well-oiled machine to achieve a shared goal, whether it’s passing legislation, promoting professional logging standards, or improving safety for log truck operators. When one part isn’t working, the machine tends to break down. And when loggers are active at the grassroots level, there’s nothing that we can’t accomplish.

I was reminded of this in June, when individual loggers and log truck drivers organized themselves as “Timber Unity” at the end of the Oregon legislative session. Concerned about proposed “cap and trade” legislation, these individuals got together on Facebook and put together demonstrations at the State Capitol unlike anyone in Salem had ever seen. Its third demonstration, consisting of hundreds of log trucks, attracted thousands of people in the timber industry to make their voices heard. Timber Unity was successful in helping to defeat this harmful legislation, which as a top priority of the state’s governor and legislative leaders.

These loggers and log truck drivers didn’t show up because they were called upon by the Associated Oregon Loggers (AOL), our member association representing over a thousand logging companies. They showed up because they got informed-- thanks to AOL’s efforts to educate them--about how this legislation would affect them, and were passionate enough to put their work and businesses aside to go to the Capitol and make a difference. It is an example of how our industry is stronger when an association, with its professional staff and lobby team, is supplemented by an organic and truly-authentic grassroots effort of people supporting each other.

The ALC was launched 25 years ago when a group of loggers decided we needed a strong, consistent presence in order to impact issues on a national level. As a trade association, we are stronger than ever. But an association itself cannot solve all the problems facing an industry. It requires commitment by individuals to get educated and to take the time to contact their legislators, attend the meetings and ultimately influence the decisions.

ALC and its association members will continue to travel to Washington DC to work on our shared priorities. Yet success for our industry always starts at home, at the grassroots level, of individuals taking responsibility for themselves to get involved and make things happen. That's the true definition of "loggers working for loggers."

*The American Loggers Council is an 501(c)(6) not for profit trade association representing professional timber harvesters throughout the United States. For more information please contact the American Loggers Council at 409-625-0206, or [americanlogger@aol.com](mailto:americanlogger@aol.com), or visit our website at [www.amloggers.com](http://www.amloggers.com).*