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LARRY CRAIG

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NEWS RELEASE

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CRAIG SAYS CANADIANS VIOLATE LUMBER AGREEMENT

Airs concerns to US Trade Rep Susan Schwab

COEUR D'ALENE, ID – Before heading home to Idaho for the weekend, Idaho Senator Larry Craig aired concerns to U.S. Trade Representative Susan Schwab today that several Canadian provinces are violating the recently-signed softwood lumber agreement between the United States and Canada.

Sources indicate that several provinces in western Canada have implemented new subsidy programs and are exporting more timber products to the United States than is allowed under the agreement. Officials in the provinces have indicated that they do not intend to change their practices to come back into compliance with the agreement.

Craig said, **“U.S. and Idaho lumber producers have long been at a disadvantage in the softwood lumber market because of unfair Canadian trade practices. When the 2006 Softwood Lumber Agreement was implemented, it brought new hope to this decades-long dispute. It appears some of our neighbors didn’t get the memo.**

“I was extremely pleased with the discussion I had with Ambassador Schwab regarding steps that are going to be taken in order to pursue fair lumber trade between our two countries. I am very concerned that this agreement is about to come apart at the seams and I will continue to work with Idaho lumber producers and the Bush Administration to ensure that U.S. lumber is given a fair chance to compete with the Canadian lumber industry.”

High volumes of Canadian lumber, produced with high government subsidies, have had a strong negative impact on the U.S. timber industry. As a result, many jobs in Idaho have been lost, as timber companies struggle to stay afloat, or shut down altogether.

This weekend, Senator Craig will address this topic in Coeur d’Alene as a keynote speaker at the University of Idaho College of Law’s 5th Annual International Law Symposium. Craig was invited to speak because of his expertise, extensive involvement in the softwood lumber issue, and his strong advocacy for a vibrant timber economy in Idaho.