

Governor Northam Announces Hardwood Flooring Manufacturer to Create 58 New Jobs in Patrick County

~ First Governor's economic development announcement in the locality in 15 years ~

RICHMOND—Governor Ralph Northam today announced that Canadian-based Prolam, LLC, a manufacturer of high-quality hardwood floors for commercial trucks and dry van trailers, will invest \$12.8 million in Patrick County to establish its first U.S. manufacturing operation in the former Ten Oaks satellite facility on Dobyons Road. The project will create 58 high-paying jobs and add 50 percent to the company's total manufacturing capacity. Prolam is also committing to source at least 65 percent of its timber from the Commonwealth's robust hardwood resource, supporting regional loggers and forestland owners through the purchase of more than \$20.5 million in Virginia-grown hardwoods over the next three years.

"This project is a great win for Virginia's hardwood loggers and forestland owners," **said Governor Northam**. "Forestry continues to be an important pillar of communities across the Commonwealth because industry leaders recognize the benefits of our abundant natural resources, extensive transportation network, and unparalleled workforce. We thank Prolam for locating its first U.S. manufacturing facility in Southern Virginia and look forward to a long partnership with the company."

Headquartered in Quebec, Canada, Prolam is a leading producer of commercial trailer flooring. The company supplies the top U.S. trailer manufacturers who are experiencing record growth from the surge in online commerce and the associated increase in shipping. Prolam's new facility in Patrick County will directly benefit Virginia's hardwood loggers and forestland owners by providing a market for lower grade red and white oak lumber not suited for residential flooring or cooperages. The company employs a number of proprietary technologies that offer superior moisture resistance, strength, and durability while not sacrificing commercial trailer weight.

"As Virginia's third-largest private industry, forestry is a critical part of the Commonwealth's economy, contributing more than \$21 billion annually in economic impact," **said Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry Bettina Ring**. "New demand for Virginia hardwoods created by facilities like Prolam's create the conditions essential for sustainable forest management. I am thrilled the Commonwealth could partner with Patrick County through the AFID Program to help win this important project for Virginia."

"Prolam will be a valued contributor to the supply chain for Virginia forest products," **said Secretary of Commerce and Trade Brian Ball**. "We are pleased to welcome the

company to our Commonwealth and are grateful for the valuable job opportunities this project will create for the residents of Patrick County.”

“We are convinced that this project will be beneficial to all parties involved, including customers, suppliers, employees, and the community of Patrick County,” **said Prolam President Pierre Thabet**. “We look forward to the many opportunities and will continue to uphold the proud local tradition of turning the majestic Appalachian hardwoods into the top quality hardwood floors for commercial trucks and dry van trailers.”

The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) and the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) worked with Patrick County and the Patrick County Economic Development Authority to secure this project for the Commonwealth. Governor Northam approved a \$100,000 grant from the Governor’s Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development (AFID) Fund, which Patrick County will match with local funds. Funding and services to support the company’s job creation will be provided through VEDP’s Virginia Jobs Investment Program.

“On behalf of Patrick County, I want to thank Prolam for choosing our community for its expansion into the United States,” **said Patrick County Board of Supervisors Chair Crystal Harris**. “Our region is rich in the forestry products that will be used by the company and we look forward to the additional jobs and opportunities that this announcement brings.”

“By Ten Oaks moving to a different facility, it has opened the door for new economic development in Patrick County,” **said Senator William (Bill) Stanley**. “I am thrilled that Prolam, LLC will be investing in Patrick County and Southside Virginia. More importantly, I am just as thrilled that 58 new jobs will be created for Patrick County’s hard-working citizens, and I am sure that Prolam will soon discover that our people are the best workers to employ in the Commonwealth of Virginia.”

“I am pleased to see that the AFID grant program continues to succeed, in this case by converting Virginia forestry hardwood resources into locally produced wood floor products for the Virginia and U.S. markets for truck and van trailers,” **said Delegate Charles Poindexter**.