

April 20, 2010

The Honorable John Kerry  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Joseph Lieberman  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lindsey Graham  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators:

As the Senate considers energy and climate change legislation, we urge you to fully support the use of biomass for energy as a means to help our nation meet its renewable energy and climate change goals. We strongly urge you to include a broad renewable biomass definition that is consistent across all relevant federal programs, similar to that of the 2008 Farm Bill (plus mill residues and byproducts and excluding commonly recycled paper), and to include the appropriate recognition of the carbon benefits of biomass energy in any legislation developed for Senate deliberations.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, a broad definition for renewable biomass, such as contained in the 2008 Farm Bill (which is substantially similar to the Waxman-Markey bill language), is a common sense and practical approach that enables biomass participation in emerging markets and provides economic options to help preserve working farms and forests on the landscape and the many public benefits they provide. We strongly support this view and urge that the expert opinion of USDA be reflected in national policy. We also urge that biomass definitions not impose restrictions that would foreclose market opportunities or introduce new federal regulation of public and private lands.

We also strongly urge that the full carbon benefits of renewable energy from biomass be appropriately acknowledged in national policy. Unlike fossil fuels, which emit carbon into the atmosphere from geologic sources that are not renewable, carbon associated with the combustion of biomass is part of a natural cycle that maintains a carbon balance by removing carbon emissions from the atmosphere through natural processes, like photosynthesis, and stores the carbon in plants, trees and soil. This balance is reflected in contemporary and widely-accepted science acknowledging that combustion of biomass for energy in countries like the United States does not increase atmospheric carbon as overall carbon growing stocks remain stable or increasing. It is also embedded in the policies and analysis of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Energy Information Agency and other authoritative and credible government and non-government organizations.

We look forward to engaging on the important task of helping our nation increase its capability to produce domestic, renewable sources of low carbon biomass energy. We are confident that, by working together, we can achieve this goal in a manner that supports the contributions of working farms and forests, appropriately recognizes the full carbon benefits they provide, and maintains them as a viable source of our renewable energy portfolio in the long term.

Sincerely,

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ADAGE

Alabama Agribusiness Council  
Alabama Forestry Association  
American Forest and Paper Association  
American Forest Foundation  
American Forest Resource Council  
American Loggers Council  
Arkansas Forestry Association  
Associated California Loggers  
Associated Oregon Loggers, Inc.  
Association of Consulting Foresters of  
America  
Association of Equipment Manufacturers  
Avista Corporation  
Biomass Coordinating Council,  
American Council on Renewable  
Energy  
Biomass Power Association  
Biomass Thermal Energy Council  
BlueFire Ethanol Fuels, Inc.  
Boone & Crockett Club  
California Forestry Association  
Catch-A-Dream Foundation  
Ceres, Inc.  
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation  
Coskata  
Duke Energy  
Energy Corporation  
Environmental Federation of Oklahoma  
Family Forest Foundation  
FirstEnergy Corporation  
Florida Farm Bureau Federation  
Florida Forestry Association  
Forest Landowners Association  
Forest Landowners Tax Council

Forest Products Industry National Labor  
Management Committee  
Forest Resources Association Inc.  
Frontier Renewable Resources  
Georgia Forestry Association  
GMO Renewable Resources  
Hancock Timber Resource Group  
Hardwood Federation  
Idaho Forest Group  
John Deere  
KL Energy Corporation  
Longview Timber  
Louisiana Forestry Association  
Michigan Association of Timbermen  
Michigan Forest Products Council  
Minnesota Forest Industries  
Mississippi Biomass and Renewable  
Energy Council  
Mississippi Forestry Association  
Montana Logging Association  
N.C. Association of Professional  
Loggers, Inc.  
National Alliance of Forest Owners  
National Association of Conservation  
Districts  
National Association of Counties  
National Association of Forest Service  
Retirees  
National Association of State Foresters  
National Association of University Forest  
Resources Programs  
National Association of Wheat Growers  
National Farmers Union  
National Forest Counties and Schools  
Coalition  
National Woodland Owners Association

New York Biomass Energy Alliance  
North American Bear Foundation  
North Carolina Forestry Association  
Northern Arizona Loggers Association  
Oregon Forest Industries Council  
Oregon Small Woodlands Association  
Pingree Associates  
Plum Creek  
Port Blakely Tree Farms, LP  
Professional Logging Contractors of Maine  
Quality Deer Management Association  
Range Fuels  
Rayonier, Inc.  
Reiver Forest Products  
Resource Management Service, LLC  
RMK Timberland Group  
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation  
Shull Timber Corporation  
Society of American Foresters  
South Carolina Forestry Association  
Southeastern Lumber Manufacturers Association  
Tennessee Forestry Association  
Texas Forestry Association  
The Lyme Timber Company  
The Molpus Woodlands Group  
The Westervelt Company  
Virginia Forest Products Association  
Virginia Loggers Association  
Washington Contract Loggers Association, Inc.  
Washington Farm Forestry Association  
Washington Forest Protection Association  
Wells Timberland  
Weyerhaeuser Company  
Wildlife Mississippi  
Woodlands Carbon Company  
Xcel Energy