

August 17, 2018

The Honorable Pat Roberts
Chair, Senate Agriculture Committee
109 Hart Bldg
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Deborah Stabenow
Ranking Member, Senate Agriculture
Committee
133 Hart Bldg
Washington DC 20510

Dear Chairman Roberts and Ranking Member Stabenow:

The Biomass Thermal Energy Council (BTEC) and its undersigned members respectfully ask the Senate to incorporate the House of Representatives' Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018 language for expansion of SEC. 8106 Community Wood Energy and Wood Innovations Program (CWEIP) in the final Farm Bill. As conceived by the House, the CWEIP would be strengthened into a more robust competitive nationwide grant program administered by the USDA Forest Service, with a \$25 million annual authorization, for community-scale wood energy and value-added forest products projects.

The use of wood for thermal energy from sustainably managed forest lands has numerous economic and environmental benefits, including local job creation and enhanced energy security in rural communities, reduction of GHG emissions from fossil fuels, and improved forest management, which reduces the risk of wildfires on public and private lands. Private forests support over 2.4 million rural jobs and provide over half of our nation's wood supply. Unfortunately, these forests are facing increasing threats from insects, disease, wildfire, development pressures, and rapidly shifting markets. Private and public forests need new markets, especially for low grade or low quality wood. Community scale heating, combined heat and power and district heating projects can help build strong local markets in support of responsible stewardship of these lands. In the absence of new market innovation, these forest health issues put forests and the many benefits that Americans rely on from them at risk. CWEIP was conceived to address this urgent need directly, while accomplishing many other benefits through the provision of renewable heat for public and private buildings, and support for innovative new uses of low grade wood.

Members of the Conference Committee are dedicated to building a well-rounded bill that marries the best features of each bill into a final Farm Bill. Historically, the Farm Bill has been a hallmark of bipartisan cooperation. CWEIP enjoys strong bipartisan support, and was enthusiastically embraced by the 80+ organizations that comprise the Forests in the Farm Bill Coalition. BTEC is committed to working with the Committee to pass a final bill with bipartisan

solutions that will enable final passage. We feel strongly that inclusion of the House version of CWEIP will help to build this broad support.

Thank you for your consideration and dedication to the 2018 Farm Bill. We appreciate the challenges you faced as the Senate developed its Farm Bill, but urge the you to include the House language that improves and expands the Community Wood Energy and Wood Innovations Program in the final Farm Bill.

Sincerely,

25x'25 Alliance, Brent Bailey, State Activities Coordinator

Alliance for Green Heat, John Ackerly, Executive Director

Alodyne, LLC, Christine Rogers, General Manager

American Forest Foundation

American Forests

Biomass Energy Resource Center at Vermont Energy Investment Corporation, Adam Sherman, Senior Consultant

Biomass Engineering & Equipment, Dane Floyd, President

Biomass Systems Supply, Dave Schmucker, President

Biomass Thermal Energy Council, Jeff Serfass, Executive Director

Caluwe, Inc., Marc Caluwe, CEO

Central Boiler, Dennis Brazier, President & CEO

Curran Renewable Energy, LLC, Kelli Ramsey, Marketing Manager

David Gardiner & Associates, David Gardiner, President

Ehrhart Energy, Bill Overbaugh, General Manager

Forest Energy Corporation, Rob Davis, President

Froling Energy, Mark Froling, President

Innovative Natural Resource Solutions LLC, Charles Levesque, President

Maine Pellet Fuels Association, William Bell, Executive Director

Messersmith Manufacturing, Inc., Jeremy Mortl, President

Mike Porter, Neodesha, KS

New Hampshire Sustainable Energy Association, Brianna Brand, Senior Program Director

New Hampshire Wood Energy Council, Brianna Brand, Senior Program Director

Northern Forest Center, Rob Riley, President

Pellet Fuels Institute, Don Wagner, Chairman; Tim Portz, Executive Director

R&R Beth LP, Petru Sangeorzan, Vice President

SUNY ESF., Tim Volk

Sustainable Northwest, Greg Block, President

The Center for Natural Capital, Mike Collins, Executive Director

The Watershed Center, Nick Goulette, Executive Director

TNT Ventures, Tony Morice, Managing Member

Uzelac Industries, Inc., Michael Uzelac, President & CEO

Viessmann Manufacturing Company (U.S.), Inc., Bede W. Wellford, Renewable and Sustainable Business Development Manager

Wilson Engineering Services, Dan Wilson, Vice President