

## Farm Bill Energy Program Support Letter

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October 16, 2013

Honorable Debbie Stabenow  
U.S. Senate  
328A Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Thad Cochran  
U.S. Senate  
113 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Frank Lucas  
1301 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Collin Peterson  
2109 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairmen Stabenow and Lucas and Ranking Members Cochran and Peterson:

As the Senate and House move to conference on a 5 year Farm Bill, the undersigned organizations strongly support a robust Energy Title with mandatory funding to promote renewable energy production in America. We believe that rural America in particular is uniquely positioned to provide home grown energy solutions and that providing targeted assistance to businesses and entrepreneurs will benefit both the economy and the environment. Farm Bill energy programs have a proven track record of promoting innovation and helping our nation meet its renewable energy objectives. Equally important is that these programs have helped companies create and retain jobs in primarily rural, economically distressed areas.

The undersigned organizations represent the range of energy pathways that utilize biomass to heat and cool buildings, make electrical power or produce liquid transportation fuels. The benefits of biomass-based energy are considerable. Unlike some other renewable technologies, biomass based energy is base load and proven. In addition to providing a virtually infinite supply of homegrown energy, the carbon uptake during the continuous growth cycle for biomass minimizes the overall carbon impact of our fuels. Moreover, increased reliance on biomass as an energy solution will create additional markets for rural landowners and those dependent on National forests for supply. These markets will in turn provide needed incentives for landowners to maintain their working forests and agricultural landscapes and resist the pressure to convert these lands to other non-growing uses such as development. Growing markets for biomass will also facilitate restoration of public forests which will drive economic development in public-land communities.

This Farm Bill is the perfect opportunity for Congress to show strong leadership in the area of renewable energy and job creation. The undersigned organizations believe it is paramount that Congress produce a bill that has meaningful mandatory funding for key programs including

the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP), Bioenergy Program for Advanced Biofuels and the Community Wood Energy Program.

We thank you for your leadership and hard work and look forward to working with you in the coming weeks to finalize this critical legislation.

### **Supporting Organizations**

AFS Energy Systems  
Alliance for Green Heat  
American Forest Foundation  
American Wood Fibers  
Bear Mountain Forest Products  
Biomass Thermal Energy Council  
Biomass Thermal Energy, Ltd.  
ClearStak, LLC  
Empire State Forest Products Association  
Energex Pellet Fuel, Inc.  
Forest Energy Corporation  
GARN | Dectra Corporation  
Hamer Pellet Fuel Company  
Hardwood Federation  
Heating the Midwest  
Maine Pellet Fuels Association  
National Association of Forest Owners  
National Network of Forest Practitioners  
New England Wood Pellet  
New Hampshire Timberland Owners  
Association  
New York Biomass Energy Association  
Northern Forest Center  
Pellet Fuels Institute  
Pennsylvania Bioenergy Association  
Society of American Foresters  
Sustainable Northwest  
Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund  
Viessmann Manufacturing Company, Inc.  
Watershed Research and Training Center  
West Oregon Wood Products