

Congress and President Support Woody Biomass in Year-End Spending and Tax Deals

Deals include appropriations for CWEIP, extension of the Wood and Pellet Stove Credit, and continued recognition of biomass as carbon neutral.

December 20, 2019 – WASHINGTON – In the final week of the 2019 legislative session, Congress passed a \$5 million allotment for the Community Wood Energy and Innovations Program (CWEIP) in the massive \$1.4 trillion spending deal, extended the Section 25C Wood and Pellet Stove Credit, and reauthorized the carbon neutrality of biomass policy. BTEC applauds the Congress and President for recognizing the role of woody biomass throughout the country to create economic opportunities, provide an affordable renewable heating fuel, and support a sustainable environment.

“Since the passage of the Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018 exactly one year ago today, BTEC and its coalition have worked tirelessly to gain appropriations for the Community Wood Energy and Innovations Program,” said Jeff Serfass, BTEC Executive Director. “We thank the Congress for working with us to achieve a partial \$5 million appropriation, extending the wood and pellet stove credit through the end of 2020, and continuing the federal government’s recognition of biomass as carbon beneficial.”

Congress passed the 2018 Farm Bill with an improved CWEIP, which could receive up to \$25 million in funding, but opted for a partial appropriation to establish the program and evaluate its success. The program will provide grants of up to \$1 million for wood energy systems and innovative wood products.

The House and Senate negotiated a broad tax package that would have included the investment tax credit provisions in the Biomass Thermal Utilization (BTU) Act (HR 1479, S 628). Due to objections over some of the new tax provisions, the broader deal fell apart and the Congress elected to extend the existing tax provisions through 2020, setting the stage for a broader deal on tax provisions in 2020.

“We are building momentum going into 2020 and BTEC intends to capitalize by continuing our push for tax parity through the BTU Act,” said Serfass.

BTEC extends its gratitude to its bipartisan congressional champions: Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME), Sen. Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Sen. Angus King (I-ME), Sen. Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Rep. Annie Kuster (D-NH), Rep. Richard Neal (D-MA), Rep. Chellie Pingree (D-ME), Rep. Peter Welch (D-VT) and their staff. BTEC also thanks its numerous coalition partners, especially Orion Advocates and Innovative Natural Resource Solutions.



The Biomass Thermal Energy Council (BTEC) is an association of biomass fuel producers, appliance manufacturers and distributors, supply chain companies, and non-profit organizations that view biomass thermal energy and combined heat and power as renewable, responsible, clean, and energy-efficient pathways to meeting America's energy needs and strengthening local economies. BTEC engages in research, education, and public advocacy for the fast-growing biomass thermal energy industry.