



National Alliance of Forest Owners

Forest Owners Applaud Senate Leaders for Supporting Carbon Neutrality of Biomass in Energy Bill

Wednesday, February 3, 2016

NAFO News Releases

WASHINGTON, DC, February 3, 2016 – The National Alliance of Forest Owners (NAFO) today applauded Senators Susan Collins (R-ME), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) and Angus King (I-ME) for their leadership on unanimous passage of an amendment to the Senate energy bill affirming the carbon benefits of forest biomass as an important part of the U.S. energy solution.

“Forest owners deeply appreciate the leadership of Senators Collins, Klobuchar and King to emphasize the carbon benefits of biomass energy as part of our nation’s renewable energy solution,” said Dave Tenny, NAFO President and CEO. “This amendment reflects the bipartisan support of 46 Senators who signed a June 2015 letter to the Administration affirming the carbon neutrality of forest biomass. It will help drive a consistent federal policy across all departments and agencies based on well-established science and agency expertise.”

Last night, the Senate adopted by voice vote the forest biomass carbon neutrality amendment to the energy bill which was accepted by Energy Committee Chairman Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) and Ranking Member Maria Cantwell (D-WA). The amendment directs the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Agriculture and Department of Energy to jointly establish clear and simple policies for the utilization of forest biomass, including:

- Reflecting the carbon neutrality of forest bioenergy;
- Recognizing biomass as a renewable energy source;
- Encouraging private investment throughout the biomass supply chain, including working forests, harvesting operations, forest improvement operations, bioenergy, wood products and paper manufacturing;
- Encouraging forest management to improve forest health; and
- Recognizing state initiatives to use biomass.

The amendment was co-sponsored by a bipartisan group of Senators including Kelly Ayotte (R-NH), Al Franken (D-MN), Steve Daines (R-MT), Jim Risch (R-ID) and Mike Crapo (R-ID).

“A clear and simple policy on biomass carbon benefits will encourage private investment, promote forest health and empower states to utilize biomass to reach their renewable energy goals,” Tenny said. “By passing this amendment, the Senate has demonstrated it supports this approach. It also shows strong alignment between Congress and forest owners.”

Climate science consistently and clearly documents the carbon benefits of forest biomass energy. U.S. government data shows that the volume of growing trees in the U.S has increased by 50% since 1953. Net growth in U.S. forests absorbs 13% of annual CO2 emissions.

The Senate is expected to vote on final passage of the energy bill later this week. The Senate and House will then seek to reconcile their respective bills.

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NAFO is an organization of private forest owners committed to advancing national policies that promote the economic and environmental benefits of privately-owned forests. NAFO membership encompasses more than 80 million acres of private forestland in 47 states. Working forests in the U.S. support 2.4 million jobs.

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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 30, 2015

The Honorable Gina McCarthy
Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20460

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

The Honorable Dr. Ernest Moniz
Secretary
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Administrator McCarthy, Secretary Moniz, and Secretary Vilsack:

We write to support biomass energy as a sustainable, responsible, renewable, and economically significant energy source. Federal policies across all departments and agencies must remove any uncertainties and contradictions through a clear, unambiguous message that forest bioenergy is part of the nation's energy future.

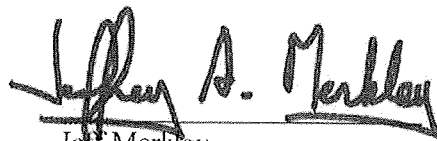
Many states are relying on renewable biomass to meet their energy goals, and we support renewable biomass to create jobs and economic growth while meeting our nation's energy needs. A comprehensive science, technical, and legal administrative record supports a clear and simple policy establishing the benefits of energy from forest biomass. Federal policies that add unnecessary costs and complexity will discourage rather than encourage investment in working forests, harvesting operations, bioenergy, wood products, and paper manufacturing. Unclear or contradictory signals from federal agencies could discourage biomass utilization as an energy solution.

The carbon neutrality of forest biomass has been recognized repeatedly by numerous studies, agencies, institutions, legislation, and rules around the world, and there has been no dispute about the carbon neutrality of biomass derived from residuals of forest products manufacturing and agriculture. Our constituents employed in the biomass supply chain deserve a federal policy that recognizes the clear benefits of forest bioenergy. We urge you to ensure that federal policies are consistent and reflect the carbon neutrality of forest bioenergy.

Sincerely,



Susan M. Collins
United States Senator



Jeff Merkley
United States Senator

Kelly A. Ayotte

Kelly Ayotte
United States Senator

Roy Blunt

Roy Blunt
United States Senator

John Boozman

John Boozman
United States Senator

Richard Burr

Richard Burr
United States Senator

Shelley Moore Capito

Shelley Moore Capito
United States Senator

Bill Cassidy, M.D.

Bill Cassidy
United States Senator

Thad Cochran

Thad Cochran
United States Senator

John Cornyn

John Cornyn
United States Senator

Timmy Baldwin

Timmy Baldwin
United States Senator

Sherrod Brown

Sherrod Brown
United States Senator

Bob Casey, Jr.

Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator

Joe Donnelly

Joe Donnelly
United States Senator

Dianne Feinstein

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

Al Franken

Al Franken
United States Senator

Tim Kaine

Tim Kaine
United States Senator

Angus King

Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



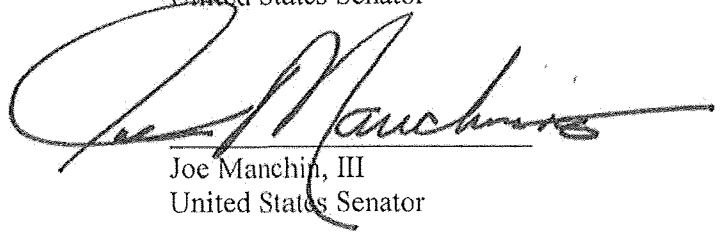
Tom Cotton
United States Senator



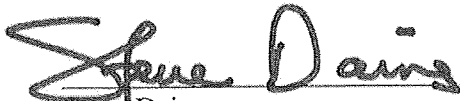
Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Mike Crapo
United States Senator



Joe Manchin, III
United States Senator



Steve Daines
United States Senator



Barbara A. Mikulski
United States Senator



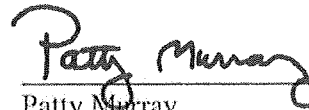
Cory Gardner
United States Senator



Claire A. McCaskill
United States Senator



Lindsey Graham
United States Senator



Patty Murray
United States Senator



Johnny Isakson
United States Senator



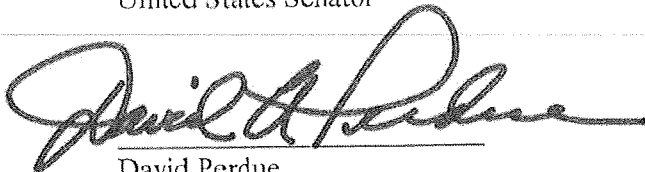
Bill Nelson
United States Senator



Ron Johnson
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



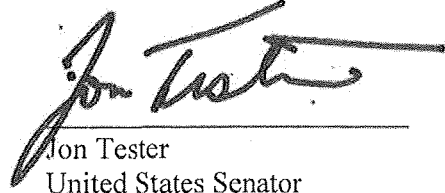
David Perdue
United States Senator



Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



Rob Portman
United States Senator



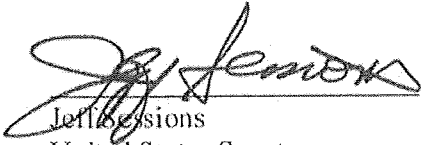
Jon Tester
United States Senator



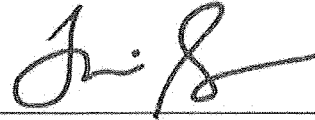
James L. Risch
United States Senator



Mark R. Warner
United States Senator



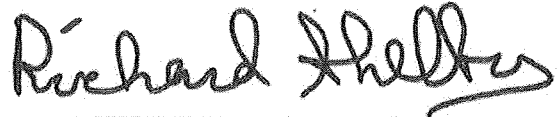
Jeff Sessions
United States Senator



Tim Scott
United States Senator




John Thune
United States Senator



Richard C. Shelby
United States Senator



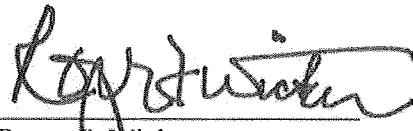
Thom Tillis
United States Senator



Patrick J. Toomey
United States Senator



David Vitter
United States Senator



Roger F. Wicker
United States Senator