



National Alliance of Forest Owners

Investing in the Future of America's Forests

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Forest Owners Ask Senate for Clear Signals Supporting Biomass Energy

Urge EPA to modify GHG Tailoring Rule; support broad definitions for qualifying forest biomass

WASHINGTON, D.C. – David P. Tenny, President and CEO of the National Alliance of Forest Owners, urged the Senate to help send clear and positive policy signals to the biomass energy community in testimony today before the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry at its hearing today entitled, *Empowering Rural Communities, the Status and Future of the Farm Bill's Energy and Rural Development*.

On behalf of America's private forest owners, Tenny reminded the Committee of the benefits of renewable forest biomass and urged them to support a broad definition of qualifying forest biomass and to urge EPA to modify its GHG Tailoring Rule so that biomass energy is not treated the same as fossil fuel energy, such as oil and coal, in Clean Air Act regulations. Tenny testified:

NAFO's members are the nation's forestry leaders. They recognize the fundamental role sustainably managed forests can play in renewable energy policy. They are well positioned to provide a plentiful domestic source of sustainable and carbon beneficial renewable energy.

Our nation has reached a critical point in the debate on renewable energy. We are deciding whether we will embrace our full renewable energy potential or not. If we are truly committed to renewable energy, then our policy will reflect that commitment. We will optimize the potential of each renewable energy source as well as the potential of each region of the country to produce renewable energy. Working forests are well positioned to help achieve that potential.

In order to make these significant contributions, working forests need clear policy signals from Congress and the Administration.

The Farm Bill has helped establish a level playing field among renewable energy sources by providing an inclusive definition of qualifying biomass. This sends the clear message to forest owners that their contributions are both welcome and encouraged.

Yet, notwithstanding the positive signals provided by the Farm Bill, other federal policies are sending a chilling signal to forest owners undoing the forward momentum this committee has tried to establish.

The biomass definition in the Energy Investment and Security Act of 2007 (EISA) constrains biomass utilization on up to 90% of private forests in the U.S. This has softened investments in biofuels from forest biomass at a time when they are needed to commercialize breakthrough technologies.

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Similarly, the EPA's sudden shift in the treatment of carbon emissions from biomass energy in the PSD Tailoring Rule creates significant confusion in the marketplace by treating carbon emissions from biomass energy like fossil fuel emissions. EPA's ambivalence about how to account for carbon emissions from biomass energy conflicts with well established international conventions, greenhouse gas inventory data, and EPA's own statements recognizing that biomass energy in countries, like the U.S., where forests are a net carbon sink, does not increase carbon in the atmosphere.

NAFO applauds the Chairman, Ranking Member and other members of this Committee for their recent letter to Administrator Jackson opposing EPA's position in the Tailoring Rule.

NAFO also appreciates the commitment made by the Secretary of Agriculture concerning the role USDA will play in the review of the Tailoring Rule. NAFO looks forward to full USDA engagement to establish a strong record supporting the treatment of forest biomass energy as carbon neutral under the Clean Air Act so long as national forest carbon stocks are stable or increasing.

NAFO urges this committee to retake the initiative on forest biomass energy and help correct the policies that have put forest biomass on the back burner.

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NAFO is an organization of private forest owners committed to advancing federal policies that promote the economic and environmental values of privately-owned forests at the national level. NAFO membership encompasses more than 75 million acres of private forestland in 47 states. To see the economic impact of America's working forests, visit www.nafoalliance.org/economic-impact-report.