

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 Ayotte
United States Senator



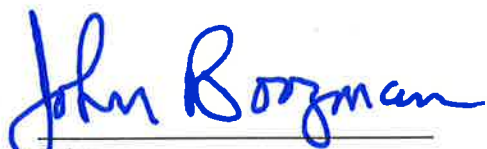
Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



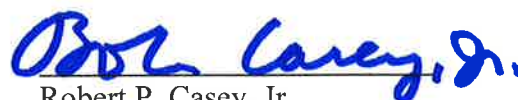
Roy Blunt
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



John Boozman
United States Senator



Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator



Richard Burr
United States Senator



Joe Donnelly
United States Senator



Shelley Moore Capito
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Bill Cassidy
United States Senator



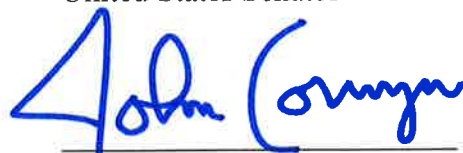
Al Franken
United States Senator



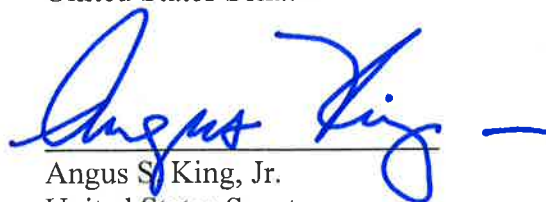
Thad Cochran
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator



John Cornyn
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



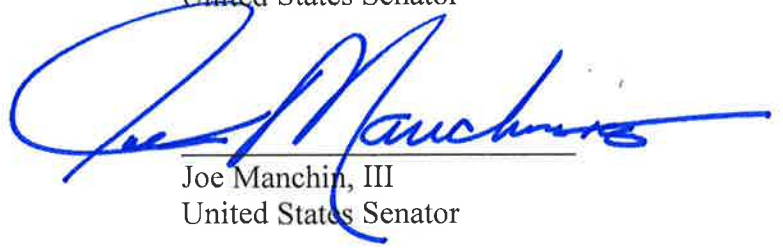
Tom Cotton
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Mike Crapo
United States Senator



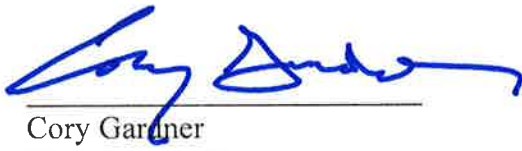
Joe Manchin, III
United States Senator



Steve Daines
United States Senator



Barbara A. Mikulski
United States Senator



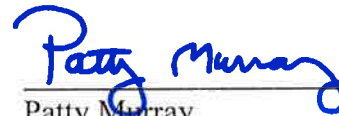
Cory Gardner
United States Senator



Claire A. McCaskill
United States Senator



Lindsey Graham
United States Senator



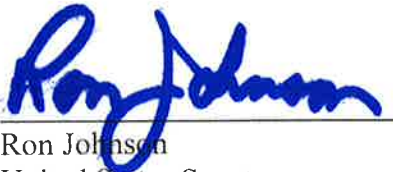
Patty Murray
United States Senator



Johnny Isakson
United States Senator



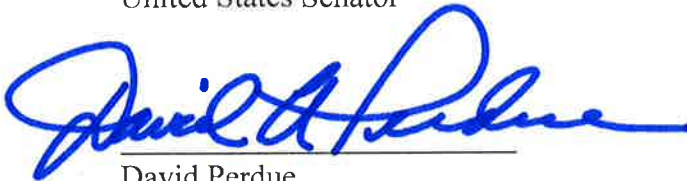
Bill Nelson
United States Senator



Ron Johnson
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



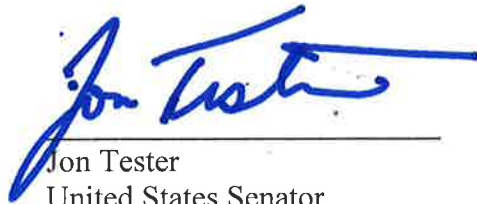
David Perdue
United States Senator



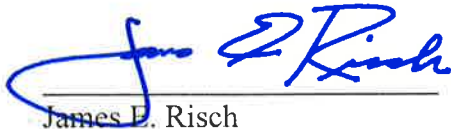
Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



Rob Portman
United States Senator



Jon Tester
United States Senator



James E. Risch
United States Senator



Mark R. Warner
United States Senator



Jeff Sessions
United States Senator



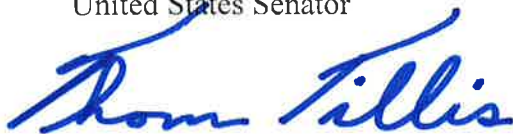
Tim Scott
United States Senator



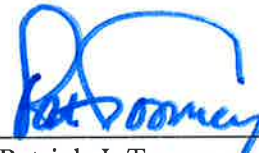
John Thune
United States Senator



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