

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

11 March, 2016

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman
Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Alexander and Ranking Member Feinstein:

As you consider the 2017 appropriation bill, we respectfully request that the Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development fund Bioenergy Technologies at \$302 million, which is an increase of \$33 million above the proposed DOE budget, in order to promote woody biomass technology and development and wildfire risk reduction. In addition, we suggest that you add report language to ensure that these additional funds are directed to woody bioenergy research and development for heat and power applications.

There is great energy potential for the woody biomass industry, especially in heat and power applications. Managed in an environmentally responsible way, woody biomass presents a renewable, low-carbon alternative to fossil fuels for heating and powering homes, schools and businesses. Much of the woody biomass in the U.S. that could be used for energy production is either waste from the forest products industry, or small trees that contribute to the overcrowding of forests and wildfires.

Despite the potential that this industry presents for renewable energy and wildfire risk reduction from forest health improvement, woody biomass consumption for energy only increased 4% between 2002 and 2013 and remains limited by technical and market barriers. The additional funding would provide \$15 million in grant money for developing innovative preprocessing

techniques for woody biomass to be used in heat and power applications, \$5 million for research on clean residential wood heaters, \$5 million for woody biomass fueled combined heat and power technical assistance partnerships, \$5 million for developing market opportunities for small woody biomass gasifier systems, and \$3 million towards strategic analysis and research on the sustainability of woody bioenergy. This funding will advance the DOE Bioenergy Technologies Office mission to accelerate commercialization of bioenergy and will reduce the risks and costs for woody bioenergy technology development. We also suggest the inclusion of the following report language to encourage DOE to support woody biomass energy technology and development:

The Committee encourages the Bioenergy Technologies Office to use its existing authorities to fund \$15 million in grants for the development of woody biomass preprocessing techniques to be used in heat and power applications, \$5 million for research on low-emission residential wood heaters, \$5 million to create woody biomass fueled combined heat and power technical assistance partnerships, \$5 million to develop market opportunities for woody biomass small gasifiers, and \$3 million to advance strategic analysis and research on sustainable woody bioenergy and biopower.

Additional appropriations for these programs would fill gaps in woody biomass energy projects and development funded by the Bioenergy Technologies budget. Thank you for your consideration of these requests.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Al Franken
United States Senator



Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator



Jon Tester
United States Senator