

Farm Bill Energy Title Support Letter

April 5, 2012

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
U.S. Senate
328A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Frank Lucas
U.S. House of Representatives
1301 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Pat Roberts
U.S. Senate
109 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Collin C. Peterson
U.S. House of Representatives
1305 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators Stabenow and Roberts and Representatives Lucas and Peterson:

The U.S. is experiencing strong growth in the development and commercialization of biofuels, bioproducts, biopower, biogas, energy crops, renewable energy and energy efficiency. These important and growing industries all benefit agriculture and forestry and are poised to make huge contributions to our economic, environmental and national security in the coming years, provided that we maintain stable policies that support clean energy manufacturing and innovation.

The Energy Title programs contained in the 2002 and 2008 Farm Bills are vital components in the continued growth of these industries. Programs like the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP), Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP), Biorefinery Assistance Program (BAP) and Biobased Markets Program (Biopreferred) strongly support American agriculture and ensure broad public benefits to the entire country. Since some of these programs are just getting started, the next five years will be crucial for achieving success.

These programs are quite unique. They do not belong anywhere else than in the Farm Bill. Moreover, no other Federal or state agency is properly suited to supplant the role of the U.S. Department of Agriculture in advancing these targeted opportunities for the agricultural and forestry sectors.

Many tens of thousands of direct and indirect jobs are being created in rural areas by our nation's expanding clean energy economy. This growth is occurring due in large part to Farm Bill energy programs, which have used a modest amount of federal money to leverage billions of dollars in private investment. These new agriculture, manufacturing, and high tech jobs are at risk without continued Federal investment.

The outstanding benefits of Energy Title programs also flow from a very modest investment. They accounted for only 0.7 percent of overall spending in the 2008 Farm Bill. As longstanding agricultural

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safety net programs come under increasing budgetary pressure, these energy investments create new opportunities for producers and rural communities to further diversify their income.

We recognize the fiscal challenges facing your committees as a new Farm Bill is drafted this year. However, for all of the reasons noted above, we urge you to ensure the vital Energy Title programs are re-authorized and afforded significant mandatory funding over the life of the legislation. Helping to grow the economy in these relatively inexpensive, but transformative ways will help ease the fiscal challenge in the years ahead while also addressing other critical national challenges.

We commend you for your leadership on all of these important issues and pledge to work with you to craft farm and energy policies that work for all of agriculture, clean energy industries and rural America.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

National Organizations

Airlines for America
American Council for an Energy-Efficient
Economy
25x'25 Alliance
Advanced Ethanol Council
Advanced Biofuels Association
Advanced Biofuels USA
Ag Energy Coalition
Algal Biomass Organization
American Biogas Council
American Coalition for Ethanol
American Corn Growers Institute for Public
Policy
American Council On Renewable Energy
American Institute for Medical and Biological
Engineering
Association of State Energy Research and
Technology Transfer Institutions

Biomass Coordinating Council of ACORE
Biomass Power Association
Biotechnology Industry Organization
Clean Fuels Development Coalition
Distributed Wind Energy Association
Environmental and Energy Study Institute
Growth Energy
National Association of Conservation Districts
National Association of State Energy Officials
National Association of Wheat Growers
National Center for Appropriate Technology
National Farmers Union
National Sorghum Producers
National Wildlife Federation
North American Equipment Dealers Association
Renewable Fuels Association

Regional and State Organizations

Adams Electric Cooperative
Alabama Department of Agriculture &
Industries
Alabama Environmental Council
Alabama Farmers Federation

Alternative Energy Resources Organization of
Montana
Arkansas Advanced Energy Association
Arkansas Association of RC&D Councils, Inc.
Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives

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BIOCOM

Biofuels Center of North Carolina
Biomass Energy Resource Center
Blackbelt Cooperative of Alabama
Clean Energy Group
CleanTECH San Diego
Climate Solutions
Colorado Cleantech Industry Association
Colorado Harvesting Energy Network
Dakota Rural Action
Eastern Kentucky University, Center for
Renewable & Alternative Fuel Technologies
Environmental Law & Policy Center
Florida Bioenergy Association
Florida Forestry Association
Florida Renewable Energy Producers
Association
Fresh Energy
Georgia Agribusiness Council
Green State Solutions
Gunnison County Electric Association
Harvesting Clean Energy
Hoosier Environmental Council
Illinois Biotechnology Industry Organization
Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative
Indiana Farmers Union
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
Iowa Environmental Council
Iowa Renewable Fuels Association
Iowa Small Solar/Wind Energy Trade Assoc
LifeScience Alley/BioBusiness Alliance of
Minnesota
Massachusetts Biotechnology Council
Memphis Bioworks Foundation, Regional
AgBioworks Initiative
Michael Fields Agricultural Institute
MichBio
Michigan Agri-Business Association
Michigan Biomass
Michigan Environmental Council
Michigan Floriculture Growers Council
Michigan Land Use Institute

Mississippi Biomass and Renewable Energy
Council
Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation
Mississippi Poultry Association
Missouri Dairy Association
Missouri Farmers Union
Missouri Forest Products Association
North Carolina Association of Professional
Loggers
North Carolina Wildlife Federation
Nebraska Ethanol Board
North Dakota Alliance for Renewable Energy
Northwest Food Processors Association
Northwest SEED
Ohio Environmental Council
Oregon Association of Nurseries
Pennsylvania Forestry Association
Powder River Basin Resource Council
RENEW Wisconsin
Rocky Mountain Farmers Union
Rural Advantage
Rural Electric Conv. Cooperative
South Carolina Clean Energy Business Alliance
South Dakota Biotech Association
Show Me Energy Coop
South Carolina Biomass Council
Southeast Agriculture & Forestry Energy
Resources Alliance (SAFER)
Southeast Energy Efficiency Alliance
Southern Alliance for Clean Energy (SACE)
Southwest Ark RC&D Council
Sustainable Biodiesel Alliance
Tennessee Renewable Energy & Economic
Development Council
Texas Renewable Energy Industries Association
Texas Rural Alliance for Renewable Energy
Western Organization of Resource Councils
Windependence
Windustry