



## Biomass

### ***Issue Description***

With growing interest in climate change, the environment, and energy security, greater attention is being focused on wood biomass as a renewable energy source. The Congress and the new Administration agree that our country must shift from reliance on fossil fuels toward more renewable energy, including energy from non-food biomass. New and existing renewable energy incentives and mandates are likely to be expanded during the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress as part of efforts to promote green jobs and green energy.

The forest products industry is the largest producer of renewable biomass energy in the country, accounting for 82 percent of the total biomass energy generated by all industries collectively. This is accomplished while adhering to disciplined market-based standards of accountability that ensure the wood fiber we use is grown in a sustainable manner.

Policies to encourage renewable energy generation and production often reward new market entrants, while failing to recognize that the forest products industry already has invested heavily in renewable energy. Moreover, policies focused on promoting a particular use of biomass typically fail to address the overall need for reliable and affordable regional fiber supplies. Policies to increase the amount of renewable energy produced must be carefully calibrated to ensure that existing wood-using industries are treated equitably, promote sustainable forest management, provide incentives for reliable and affordable regional fiber supplies, and maintain access to markets.

### ***Policy***

AF&PA member companies are leading the effort to increase our nation's energy supply by combining advanced technology and innovative manufacturing practices with responsible stewardship of our natural resources. Our historic commitment to renewable energy and sustainable forest management demonstrates that a balance between the two is both possible and necessary.

AF&PA believes market forces, not government mandates and incentives, should determine the use of wood and wood residuals for renewable energy. Where state or federal governments institute incentives or mandates for renewable energy, those policies must treat existing industry energy generation from biomass equally with newly created renewable energy generation, promote sustainable forest management, and provide incentives for reliable and affordable regional fiber supplies rather than a particular use, while maintaining open market access.

The industry supports federal research, development, and demonstration efforts for breakthrough technologies in biomass production, manufacturing and conversion processes, and production of value-added products, including biomass energy and biofuels.

AF&PA also supports government actions to promote energy production from forest biomass that is removed from public lands to reduce the threat of wildfire and insect infestation. Furthermore, with regard to biomass debris resulting from natural disasters, we encourage government support for its timely clean up, removal, and use as a biomass energy source.

Where the government has allowed tax credits for renewable energy, we support the development of transparent systems and mechanisms to ensure the credits are accurately employed.