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Secretary of Agriculture, Mike Johanns
Farm Bill
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Perhaps through the Farm Bill an opportunity for improving our private forestland while providing renewable energy can be addressed.

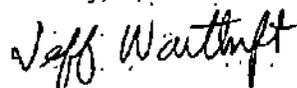
Particularly in the Appalachian region we grow much more wood each year than we harvest. Most of this wood is low quality. There is a large volume for which there are no markets (pulp mills, particleboard plants, etc.). We should have policies that encourage the use of this sustainable resource for energy. In the form of chips, wood fuel is heating/cooling schools, hospitals, manufacturing facilities and entire communities in several countries besides our own. There are electricity generating plants based on wood chips too. The list of advantages is long...

- Renewable and sustainable wood supplies are available
- Proven, clean burning technology is available and is being used
- Creates employment
- Reduces the demand for imported fuels
- Proven economics (one school saved \$60,000 in fuel in a recent year)
- Provide a much needed market for low-grade wood
- Provide incentives for landowners to improve their woodlots
- Increase the value and health of residual forest stands (remove crooked and diseased stems)
- Reduce the load in landfills (can utilize tree trimmings and waste wood)
- Improve environment by reducing carbon dioxide emissions
- Fuel dollars stay in local area
- Provide market for wood manufacturing residues
- Cleaner burning than fossil fuels
- Less toxic and flammable in handling
- Helps governments (society) meet renewable energy goals
- Existing users highly satisfied
- Increased safety from terrorism (many plants vs. one plant)

In spite of all the rhetoric about using renewable energy, we have too long ignored the real potential contribution of our forests. Society deserves our action!

Let me know if you have questions, need more details, or would like to visit facilities that have "seen the light" and have embraced this technology.

Sincerely,



Jeff Wartluft