



March 16, 2006

The Honorable David L. Hobson  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2362 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On behalf of our regional Governors' associations, we are writing today to request your assistance in restoring funding to The National Biomass Partnership (previously the Regional Biomass Energy Program) in the FY2007 appropriations for Energy and Water Development. This program is uniquely designed to offer timely and effective support for expanded biomass development by building public and private sector networks; leveraging federal, state, and private resources; and providing technical assistance, outreach and education. We urge Congress to provide \$7.5 million in FY2007 funding for continuation of this highly effective program.

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 (EPAAct 2005) underscores our nation's need for cooperative initiatives among the federal agencies, states and industry to foster all forms of domestic energy production. Biomass offers many opportunities to provide domestic energy now, while simultaneously improving the environment and creating opportunities for rural America. The National Biomass Partnership already has in place a unique structure allowing us to bring together biomass technology and policy issues, forming a powerful tool to sustain the provisions of EPAAct 2005. A modest federal investment in the National Biomass Partnership can leverage significant financial and technical resources to uphold energy, economic development, and environmental objectives of the nation and the states.

The National Biomass Partnership is a vital complement to the research and technology work of the United States Department of Energy and its national laboratories, as well as the resource development and financial assistance programs of the United States Department of Agriculture. The Partnership is a collaboration of the United States Department of Energy and four regional Governors' organizations (the Coalition of Northeastern Governors Policy Research Center, the Council of Great Lakes Governors, the Southern States Energy Board, and the Western Governors' Association), which

together represent 50 states, two territories and the District of Columbia. Its technical assistance and market building activities are tailored to the specific resources and opportunities in each region, thus providing an important link in the chain of research, resource production and technology commercialization. Education and outreach to state government and consumers is essential in building the necessary knowledge, policies and market acceptance for biomass fuels and technology.

In closing, we again ask that you support restoration of funding for The National Biomass Partnership in the amount of \$7.5 million in the FY2007 Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations. We are eager to work with you to secure this support. Should you or your staff have any questions, our staff contacts are Anne Stubbs, Executive Director of the Coalition of Northeastern Governors at (202) 624-8450; David Naftzger, Executive Director of the Council of Great Lakes Governors at (312) 407-0177; Ken Nemeth, Executive Director of the Southern States Energy Board at (770) 242-7712; and, Pam Inmann, Executive Director of the Western Governors' Association at (303) 623-9378.

Sincerely,

/o.s./

The Honorable Don Carcieri  
Chair, Coalition of Northeastern Governors  
Governor of Rhode Island

/o.s./

The Honorable Jim Doyle  
Chair, Council of Great Lakes Governors  
Governor of Wisconsin

/o.s./

The Honorable Ernie Fletcher  
Chair, Southern States Energy Board  
Governor of Kentucky

/o.s./

The Honorable Janet Napolitano  
Chair, Western Governors' Association  
Governor of Arizona

*An identical letter was also provided to Subcommittee Ranking Member Visclosky.*