

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 11, 2018

The Honorable Scott Pruitt
Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Pruitt:

We write to urge the agency to take action in the processing of biomass and waste-to-energy pathways submitted under the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) and to resolve any outstanding programmatic issues that stand in the way of allowing biomass and waste-to-energy to receive support under the RFS. We are aware that ReEnergy, a company that owns and operates biomass facilities in Maine, submitted a pathway application earlier this year that is currently pending before the agency.

Biomass is a critical component of our state's forest products industry by providing markets for low-value organic material that would otherwise be discarded or landfilled. Efficient use of biomass helps strengthen the health of our forests and related industries, supporting good jobs in our state. With the recent closure of multiple mills and a subsequent decline in forest industry jobs, removing obstacles that limit biomass and waste-to-energy support under the RFS will help enable a level playing field, preserve valuable infrastructure, and ensure the long-term vitality of our forest economy.

Under the RFS, when renewable biomass is used as transportation fuel it qualifies for a Renewable Identification Number (RIN), a credit used for compliance with the RFS. In general, to qualify for RINs under the current RFS program, one of a limited number of EPA approved "pathways" must be followed. Producers of renewable power from biomass (e.g. biomass power, which utilizes residual and waste biomass, and waste-to energy, which utilize municipal solid waste), however, still lack an approved pathway that would allow for RIN eligibility.

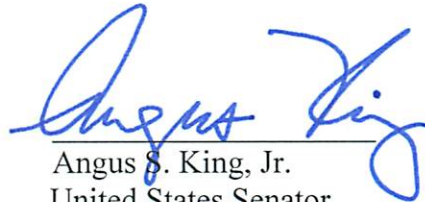
Approving and registering biomass-derived electricity is important to our state and consistent with your recent message in Manchester, New Hampshire, where you voiced your support for biomass and pledged to make the agency more responsive and accountable. While it is appropriate to carefully review the overall RFS program, we are concerned that EPA's failure to date to process the registrations of biomass-derived electricity has created "winners and losers" among agricultural fuels and their feedstocks.

Allowing biomass power and waste-to-energy to qualify to produce RIN credits under the RFS would have the immediate impact of keeping Maine biomass facilities running, preserving jobs in rural areas where they are most needed. We urge you to act as soon as possible on the petitions and registrations before the agency, subject to all applicable laws and regulations. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us or have your staff contact Kayla McMurry (Collins) at 202-224-2523, Adam Lachman (King) at 202-224-5344, Dennis Cakert (Poliquin) 202-225-6306, or Kimber Colton (Pingree) 202-225-6116.


Sincerely,



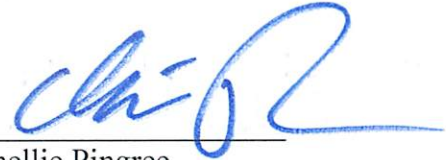
Susan M. Collins
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



Bruce Poliquin
United States Representative



Chellie Pingree
United States Representative