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To: doer.rps@mass.gov

CATEGORY A: Phase 2 biomass proposals

We breath what they [*biomass plants*] burn!

My name is T. Stephen Jones. I live in Northampton. I am a retired board-certified public health physician who worked at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for 26 years.

I ask that the Department of Energy Resources not change the Massachusetts Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard (RPS) and Alternative Energy Portfolio Standard (APS) by eliminating the minimum efficiency requirement to allow inefficient biomass plants to receive clean energy funding coming from electricity rate payers in Massachusetts.

In addition, DOER should retain the prohibition of RPS funding if the biomass plant is within or within five miles of an environmental justice community.

Biomass plants burn trees and other woody products to produce electricity. Burning trees produces carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas, that contributes to increases in global temperatures and “fuels” the climate crisis. In addition, burning trees and other woody products contributes to environmental air pollution. Air pollution worsens asthma and other respiratory illnesses and has been shown to increase death rates.^{a b}

In an unprecedented statement, 200 journals, including the New England Journal of Medicine, urged world leaders to cut heat-trapping emissions to avoid “catastrophic harm to health that will be impossible to reverse.”^c

Thank you for considering this request.

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^a Guarnieri M, Balmes JR. Outdoor air pollution and asthma. *Lancet*. 2014;383(9928):1581-92.

^b Environmental Protection Agency. Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) Pollution. <https://www.epa.gov/no2-pollution/basic-information-about-no2> Accessed April 8, 2019.

^c Atwoli L, Baqui AH, Benfield T, et al. Call for Emergency Action to Limit Global Temperature Increases, Restore Biodiversity, and Protect Health. *N Engl J Med*. 2021 Sep 5. DOI: 10.1056/NEJMe2113200. Online ahead of print. <https://www.nejm.org/doi/10.1056/NEJMe2113200>