

Public Hearing on Renewable Portfolio Standard Rule Changes
Springfield, MA 5 June 2019

I rise in steadfast opposition to the proposed rule changes to the Renewable Portfolio Standard. These changes would constitute a double assault on our well being and come with a cruel and costly twist.

The first assault on the people of Massachusetts is a devastating attack on our forests, including those on state lands. One has only to look at the wide-spread devastation in the southeastern states to appreciate the wholesale destruction of forest lands needed to feed the enormous demands of using wood for fuel on an industrial scale. Moreover, the science is clear: forests provide the most effective means we have to actually remove carbon from the atmosphere. This is a critical necessity because even greatly reducing our use of fossil fuels will not be sufficient to avoid catastrophic climate change. Proponents of the rule changes ask us to believe the impossible: Removing thousands of tons of carbon from our forests will increase the carbon stored in them. Don't buy this junk science! Don't burn our future!

The second assault on the people of Massachusetts is that biomass is dirty energy producing more pollution, especially dangerous particulates, than burning fossil fuels, even coal. This is because wood has a very low energy density so that vastly more must be burned to release the same amount of energy. In fact, the proposed rule changes actually allow even dirtier technology than before. This is a direct threat to the health of ourselves, our children, and our children's children. Go clean, not dirty! Save our health!

Finally, adding insult to injury, the proposed changes come with a cruel and costly twist: they divert hard-won ratepayer clean energy funds from much-needed efforts to address climate change in order to subsidize biomass burning even though it increases CO2 emissions and harms our health. What is more, in an act of brazen cruelty and a direct assault on social justice, the proposed biomass plant is to be located in the middle of one of our most vulnerable populations. This is a con job of the first order, worthy of the demented gangster in the White House, not the great Commonwealth of Massachusetts whose Governor claims to be a different kind of Republican. Don't buy this scam! Don't steal our future!

I call the DOER and my fellow citizens to action: Fight this assault on reason, which exacerbates global warming, attacks our health with dirtier air, forces itself on our poorest citizens, and charges us for the privilege. Please understand that we are not talking about some imaginary never, never land in a galaxy far, far away. This is here. This is now. And this is urgent. I beg you: Stop this insanity! Don't burn our future!

Thank you,

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