

Written testimony for the June 5, 2019 Department of Energy Resources Hearing in Springfield, MA

Our names are Henry Euler and Aline Euler. Our house is located at 28 Fuller Road, Montgomery, MA 01085. We emphatically oppose any roll backs of Department of Energy Resources' rules that would allow polluting biomass plants to obtain renewable energy subsidies in Massachusetts. We don't want our tax money used to support polluters! It is appalling to us that the Department of Energy Resources would even be considering any changes that would benefit the biomass burning industry.

We firmly believe that biomass burning is not renewable energy and should not be included in renewable categories that include solar, wind and geothermal generated energy sources. The Manomet Study shows that biomass burning is dirtier than coal burning energy sources. Biomass burning releases significant greenhouse gas emissions that would have a negative impact on our climate, and on the health of people, especially those suffering from lung problems including asthma.

Often times, we see plans for biomass burning incinerators being planned in economically distressed communities, like in Palmer, MA, near Springfield. Many residents in these types of areas are people of color, who would have to suffer the consequences of breathing in polluted air. This type of development is racist and discriminatory to poor people. We should be planning things like solar farms and other types of clean energy producing alternatives to be developed in these and other areas across Massachusetts. That is why we support the many Environmental Justice organizations across the Commonwealth.

Also, what fuel is used in biomass burning incinerators? Wood. What types of wood? There is a variety of wood that could be burned including construction and demolition debris that can contain lead, arsenic, chromium and other contaminants. Very dangerous to human health! Even when whole trees and remnants of trees are burned, the effect can be very polluting. Tree burning also encourages deforestation. Losing trees that absorb pollutants only makes things worse for our health and our planet's health.

In closing, we want to say that we support H. 853 which would take biomass out of the Alternative Portfolio Standard and we would like to see this bill amended to take biomass burning out of the Renewable Portfolio Standard too.

Massachusetts must not move backward and allow biomass burning to threaten the environment of the Commonwealth again. Greenhouse gas emissions would increase and continue to threaten the generations to come and foster more problems due to climate change.

Aline Euler

Henry Euler

CC: Governor Charlie Baker

State Senator Donald Humason

State Representative Lindsay Sabadosa

Congressman Richard Neal

Senator Elizabeth Warren

Senator Ed Markey

