

DOER RPS (ENE)

From: Woodcock, Patrick (ENE)
Sent: Wednesday, April 28, 2021 9:05 AM
To: DOER RPS (ENE)
Subject: FW: Don't Prop Up Polluters With Our Clean Energy \$\$!

Patrick C. Woodcock
Department of Energy Resources

From: Jennifer Dieter <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Monday, April 26, 2021 7:48 PM
To: Woodcock, Patrick (ENE) <Patrick.C.Woodcock@mass.gov>
Subject: Don't Prop Up Polluters With Our Clean Energy \$\$!

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Patrick Woodcock,

Dear Governor Baker,

I urge you to withdraw proposed changes to the Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard that would allow dirty and inefficient wood-burning power plants to qualify for renewable energy subsidies in Massachusetts.

Weakening Massachusetts' best-in-the-nation standards will increase climate-damaging emissions at a time when scientists are telling us we need to slash emissions urgently. Furthermore, this proposal will harm communities where air pollution is already a significant health hazard.

Low-income communities of color in and around Springfield will be impacted first and worst by the Department of Energy Resources' proposed rule changes. Weakening Massachusetts' stringent biomass standards will allow a large-scale commercial biomass power plant proposed in East Springfield to qualify for more than \$13 million a year in renewable energy subsidies. Springfield already has some of the most polluted air in the nation, and has been named "the Asthma Capital of the Nation." Building a power plant in this community would

exacerbate the problem, adding damaging fine particulates and hazardous air pollutants where they can least be afforded. These pollutants are linked to a wide range of serious health problems, including increased risk of death from Covid-19.

Your administration aims to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 equitably and affordably, but this proposal does the opposite. Burning wood to produce electricity results in far more carbon emissions per kilowatt than fossil fuels. This proposal would force Massachusetts ratepayers to pay a higher premium on this polluting energy. And it will directly benefit a power plant that will worsen air quality in an environmental justice community that is already suffering disproportionately from environmental degradation and adverse health impacts.

Massachusetts is in a unique position to continue to be a leader in environmental and climate justice in the nation. Please withdraw your proposed changes to the Renewable Portfolio Standard.

Thank you.

Jen Dieter

Jennifer Dieter

jengee72@gmail.com

Newburyport, Massachusetts 01950