

Wassam, John (ENE)

From: Susan F. Tornheim <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Monday, May 10, 2021 5:31 PM
To: DOER RPS (ENE)
Subject: RPS Public Comment

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John Wassam,

Dear Commissioner Woodcock,

I want to comment on the proposed amendments to Massachusetts' Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) program relating to burning woody biomass.

I am pleased that the RPS program has been amended to prevent biomass power plants from being located in or near environmental justice communities. Please retain this important amendment without change: ““A Generation Unit using Eligible Biomass Woody Fuel or Manufactured Biomass Fuel that is either: (i) sited in an environmental justice population or (ii) sited within 5 miles of an environmental justice population, shall not qualify as an RPS Class I Renewable Generation Unit.”

I am concerned about your plan that new biomass power plants must meet only a 60% efficiency requirement. This would allow many polluting and inefficient biomass plants in the Northeast to qualify for ratepayer subsidies. It's unjust for ratepayers to have to pay for pollution-spewing biomass plants that muck up our air and emit greenhouse gases that worsen climate change. You should be demanding much greater efficiency from biomass plants and even ban them as dangerous and harmful.

This proposal is inconsistent with the state's recent acknowledgement of the health impacts from biomass power plant emissions and is a major step backward for a state that has been a national leader on climate issues.

I urge you to leave the existing biomass eligibility criteria in the RPS intact, while adding the proposed provision to protect environmental justice communities.

Thank you.

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