AMERICAN WOOD FIBERS

Four Generations of Experience

Testimony Concerning HB 829 – Renewable Energy for All Act
Submitted to the House Economic Matters Committee
March 16, 2011

Position: Support

To: Chairman Dereck E. Davis & Vice Chair David D. Rudolph

American Wood Fibers (AWF) operates a wood waste utilization business which converts nearly 1 Billion pounds of waste wood annually into value added products. Over the last 44 years we have expanded our business coverage from Maryland to California for a total of 9 plants & 300 employees. In Maryland we directly employ 44 in our corporate office and production facility in Jessup. Our business turns wastes by-products from the forestry industry into usable products like wood fuel pellets or boiler fuel. These products make great renewable fuels for both residential and commercial thermal energy applications.

AWF supports HB 829, which would establish the Residential Biomass Heating System Grant Program and greatly expand the potential for all income levels in Maryland to afford clean, green, and renewable heating systems. As you know there are Maryland grants & Federal Tax Credits for other renewable energy systems like solar, wind, & geothermal. I personally have been quoted geothermal systems for residential at $55,000-90,000 and a Solar PV 3kW systems for $23,500! A typical Residential Biomass Heating System can be purchased for less than $5000 with a payback of 5 years or less. With EPA Certified efficiency above 75% and extremely low 1.5 grams/hr emissions, you can be assured that Maryland will lead the nation and that these heating systems far exceed EPA New Source Performance Standards being proposed in 2011 ("4.5 grams/hr" – Gil Wood, EPA, Salt Lake City, March 2, 2011).

The Renewable Energy for All Act will encourage locally sourced and supplied woody biomass which can provide sustainable green jobs to Maryland, encourage local investment, and ensure future reductions in our dependency on foreign energy sources. This important legislation will help promote and expand these emerging market opportunities. When you support HB829 you are opening up opportunities for our local forestry industry which has been dealt several blows in the past few years.

AWF urges your favorable consideration of HB 829.

Regards,

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