

Governors' Ethanol Coalition

May 11, 2002

The Honorable Sonny Callahan, Chairman
House Energy and Water Development Appropriations
Subcommittee
2362 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-6020

The Honorable Harry Reid, Chairman
Senate Energy and Water Development Appropriations
Subcommittee
SD-131 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-6033

Dear Chairman Callahan and Chairman Reid:

On behalf of the 27 members of the Governors' Ethanol Coalition, we respectfully request that you support funding of the Regional Biomass Energy Program at a level of \$5 million in FY03.

In spite of widespread support for the Regional Biomass Energy Program by bioenergy businesses, educational institutions, and the nation's governors, the U.S. Department of Energy chose to significantly reduce funding for FY02 and now proposes eliminating the program's funding in FY03. Congress initiated the program in 1987, and approved \$4.7 million in funding in 1995.

The program has a long history of implementing effective programs and projects and obtaining high levels of matching funds. The program has representatives in every state and has done an effective job of integrating state goals into the program and communicating these goals to the Department of Energy. The program helps leverage funds for key projects and maintains a network of bioenergy professionals who work in each state to develop and carry out state-specific goals. In an era when energy security and fuel diversity are major concerns, it is important to maintain and expand this small but extremely important program.

We respectfully request your support for this appropriation request, and urge you to include language that directs the Department of Energy to fund the existing five Biomass Energy Regions to continue existing activities to promote and develop the utilization of biomass energy in cooperation with the 50 states and territories.

Sincerely,

Bob Holden
Governor of Missouri and
Chair, Governors' Ethanol Coalition

John Hoeven
Governor of North Dakota and
Vice Chair, Governors' Ethanol Coalition

c: The Honorable Peter J. Visclosky,
Ranking Member, House Energy and Water Subcommittee

The Honorable Pete V. Domenici,
Ranking Member, Senate Energy and Water Subcommittee

The Honorable Thad Cochran

The Honorable Roger Wicker

National Association of State Energy Officials

Southern States Energy Board

Coalition of Northeastern Governors

Western Governors' Association

Midwest Governors' Conference