Why Carbon Neutrality Matters:

- The concept of biomass carbon neutrality, recognized as scientifically valid around the world, is the bedrock of the forest products industry's sustainability claims.
- Regulatory uncertainty around how or whether carbon emissions from biomass combustion will be counted threatens the viability of the forestry, forest products and bioenergy sectors.
- Well managed forestlands provide clean air, forest products, and bioenergy. This cycle is repeated through renewal of forestlands that are more abundant in the U.S. than in 1952.
- Carbon storage in the U.S. has increased annually over the last 30 years.

Why FRA Supports Biomass Carbon Neutrality:

The concept of biomass carbon neutrality (net zero carbon emissions) is grounded in the fact that carbon emissions from biomass combustion are fully offset by working forest landscapes. These landscapes continually absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, release oxygen, and store carbon in the products manufactured from active forest management. A balance of young, intermediate, and mature forests is needed to address climate change effectively. Younger forests are more efficient at sequestering CO2, while older forests store more carbon. Through forest management operations, biomass is produced, which, when utilized, creates markets and provides economic activity for rural economies. Biomass is used for energy to heat homes and to generate electricity. Because of the ongoing efforts of the forest products sector, there are more trees in the U.S. today than there were in 1952 and more tons of carbon stored in forests. The forest industry's commitment to sustainability, growing and maintaining healthy forests will ensure that the cycle of tree growth, harvest, and replanting will maintain healthy, viable forests into the future.

The carbon-neutral nature of biomass harvested from sustainably managed forests has been recognized repeatedly by studies, government agencies, institutions, legislation, and rules around the world, including guidance from the United Nations (UN) Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the reporting protocols of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Request: Maintain existing statutory directive that federal agencies recognize the carbon neutrality of forest-based biomass in any final FY 2022 appropriations legislation.

FRA strongly supports a provision originally enacted as part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2017 that directs the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Energy, and the Department of Agriculture to implement a coordinated policy that fully reflects the carbon-neutral nature of forest-based biomass fuels and energy. Codifying the concept of biomass carbon neutrality was a significant victory for every link in the biomass value chain. However, since the biomass provision was included in an appropriations measure, the language is in jeopardy of expiring if it is not explicitly reauthorized. With this in mind, FRA respectfully requests support for legislative language reauthorizing the biomass provision for fiscal year 2022.

About FRA

The Forest Resources Association (FRA) represents the interests of nearly 320 organizations and businesses in the forest products industry. Our members include forest landowners, suppliers, consuming mills, associated businesses, and state forestry associations. FRA members are represented in 49 states and 377 Congressional Districts.

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Forest Carbon Report: United States

Carbon Definitions

Carbon pool: a component of the forest that can gain or lose carbon over time

Carbon storage: the amount of carbon retained in a forest and/or carbon pool

Carbon sequestration: the process by which trees and plants use carbon dioxide and photosynthesis to store carbon as biomass

Units: Forest carbon is typically expressed in US tons per acre or metric tons (1 metric ton = 1.10 US tons)

Quick Facts on Forest Carbon

- The lower 48 states in the US have 635.3 million acres of forests and are 34% forested.
- US forest carbon stocks have increased by 11% from 1990 to 2019.
- Average carbon density in aboveground trees across US forests is 22.6 US tons per acre.
- Across the US, forests, urban trees, and harvested wood products:
  - Remove 14% of all CO₂ emissions.
  - Store the equivalent of 33 years of all CO₂ emissions produced across the US.