April \_\_\_\_, 2022

The Honorable Cecilia Aguiar-Curry

Member, California State Assembly

1021 O Street, Room 6350

Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Assembly Bill 2878 – Support**

Dear Assembly Member Aguiar-Curry:

On behalf of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, we are pleased to support your Assembly Bill 2878, relating to forest biomass waste utilization.

Assembly Bill 2878 helps achieve the state’s forest health and wildfire risk reduction goals by increasing the productive use of forest waste through energy generation and wood products manufacturing. In doing so, AB 2878 will: 1) help reduce future emissions related to the open burning or natural decomposition of forest residuals; 2) increase energy reliability and resiliency in those communities at greatest risk of losing power; and, 3) create jobs and improve the economy in many of California’s rural communities.

 California is finally making progress on long-overdue forest health improvement and wildfire risk reduction projects, but there has never been a greater need to increase the pace and scale of those projects. In 2020, California’s wildfires burned over 4 million acres and released over 90 million metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions. Another 2.5 million acres burned last year. Emissions from wildfires undercut much of the state’s progress in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and result in widespread hazardous air quality for extended periods of time.

 Biomass energy generation plays a key role in the state’s forest health and wildfire risk reduction efforts, since traditional methods of disposal (open burning and natural decomposition) produce far greater emissions than would occur in a biomass facility. Residuals left in place for natural decomposition add to the fuel load and are increasingly likely to be consumed in a wildfire. A recent field study indicates that biomass energy generation results in 98-99 percent lower PM2.5, carbon monoxide, methane, and black carbon emissions compared to open pile burning (along with a significant reduction in NOx and carbon dioxide equivalent greenhouse gas emissions).[[1]](#footnote-1) Similarly, many recent state reports have called for an increase in innovative wood products manufacturing to sequester carbon and put unmarketable forest residual to productive use. AB 2878 recognizes these needs and seeks to promote bioenergy production and wood products manufacturing.

AB 2878 also helps improve local energy resiliency and overall grid reliability. These are very important goals, as electrical reliability has plummeted dramatically for many rural communities. AB 2878 seeks to address these problems by:

* Promoting use of forest biomass to support rural microgrids.
* Requiring development of a plan to upgrade infrastructure in forested regions to support integration of bioenergy.
* Extending the state’s BioMAT program until 2030, which requires utilities to procure electricity from small bioenergy projects, including biomass facilities that use fuels from high hazard zones.

 For these reasons, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is pleased to support your AB 2878. Please do not hesitate to contact me at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with any questions.

Sincerely,

cc: Members of the Assembly Natural Resources Committee

Members of the Assembly Utilities and Energy Committee

1. Springsteen B, Christofk T, York R, Mason T, Baker S, Lincoln E, Hartsough B, Yoshioka T. 2015. “Forest biomass diversion in the Sierra Nevada: Energy, economics and emissions.” *Calif Agr* 69(3):142-149. <https://doi.org/10.3733/ca.v069n03p142>. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)