



# MASSACHUSETTS FARM BUREAU FEDERATION, INC.

*"The Voice of Agriculture"*

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Dear members of the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture:

On behalf of the 6500 farmers and farm family members, the Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation would like to express its concern with HB 759 – An Act relative to biomass combustion facilities. Our concern focuses on the element of this bill which would require the state to hold hearings relative to new biomass combustion facilities.

The siting of such a facility already involves a vigorous public hearing process at the local level through the zoning board. In addition, the boards of selectman and health may also hold hearings on the siting of such a facility.

It is not clear in this bill what is expected to be gained from the additional process. The addition of another public hearing process would seem duplicative and unnecessary. Another set of hearings will add costs and delays to the process, with no benefits beyond those attained at municipal hearings. At a time when the United States is trying to reduce its reliance on foreign oil, it would seem ill-advised to put unnecessary hurdles in the way of facilities which generate power from alternative sources of energy.

The Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation urges the Committee to reconsider the need for the public hearing element of HB 759.

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