



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

JAN 26 2010

Mr. David P. Tenny
President and Chief Executive Officer
National Alliance of Forest Owners
2025 M Street, NW., Suite 800
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Mr. Tenny:

Thank you for your October 13, 2009, letter on behalf of a range of interest groups in which you express support for a broad definition of renewable biomass as it relates to energy development.

There is wide national agreement on the need for more renewable energy and biofuels, including cellulosic ethanol and other advanced biofuels. As you may know, I have supported the 2008 Farm Bill definition of renewable biomass as it is a common sense and practical approach that enables market participation while simultaneously considering the sustainability of our lands. I believe that this definition can and will provide landowners with economic options that will help keep forestlands forested.

I look forward to working with you in the future on this and other forest issues. If you would kindly share this response with your colleagues, I would be most appreciative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Vilsack", written over a horizontal line.

Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary