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Arizona Fire Chiefs Association

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Arizona Corporation Commission

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10 November 2003

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Marc Spitzer, Chairman
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 West Washington
Phoenix, AZ 85007

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RE: BIOMASS ENERGY AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL PORTFOLIO STANDARD

Dear Chairman Spitzer and Commissioners,

The Arizona Fire Chiefs Association is keenly interested in the promotion of public safety in Arizona, especially in the area of wildfire mitigation, prevention, response, and recovery. To that end, we believe that biomass energy is, not only a viable renewable energy source, but also a critical component to fostering public safety for the citizens of Arizona.

There are many heavily forested communities in Arizona that are routinely threatened by catastrophic wildfire. Science and practical application has shown that forest restoration and hazardous fuels reduction projects are critical to correcting this problem and promoting public health and safety. Our members who have been engaged in this endeavor recognize that finding and supporting value added markets for the biomass removed during fuels treatment activities is a crucial component to cost effective wildfire risk reduction. Biomass energy can provide a practical, environmentally favorable and mutually beneficial synergy toward the goals of renewable energy and community safety.

We urge the Commission to consider identifying biomass energy as a legitimate component of the Arizona Environmental Portfolio Standard and to influence the advancement of this technology in Arizona to meet both renewable energy goals and the improvement of forest health and public safety. We would welcome the opportunity to speak with the Commissioners about this most important subject and will be contacting your office to arrange a time that is mutually beneficial. We are coordinating our biomass efforts with the Greater Flagstaff Forests Partnership and would very much like to meet with you in conjunction with them.

Thank you for your attention to this request and thanks for your efforts in support of renewable energy and hopefully a safer Arizona.

Best Regards,

Jim Wheeler
Arizona Fire Chiefs Association

- Cc: Commissioners
- Jeff Piechura, AFCA President
- Mark Burdick, AFCA Legislative Committee Chair
- Tom Kolb, President, Greater Flagstaff Forests Partnership
- Kirk Rowdabaugh, Arizona State Land Department
- Governor Janet Napolitano