

February 20, 2009

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Chair  
House Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Agriculture,  
Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies  
2362-A Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

**RE: Rural Energy for America Program FY09 Appropriation**

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro:

We deeply appreciate your continuing strong support of clean energy development in the Farm Bill. Thanks to your leadership, the Subcommittee's FY2009 Agriculture appropriations mark includes a much-needed \$15.888 million discretionary funding appropriation for the successful Rural Energy for America Program (REAP), and it also preserves the existing mandatory funding for REAP. This is real leadership.

REAP is unique because it benefits a broad range of farmers and rural small businesses and applies to many technologies. REAP helps farmers and rural businesses build small projects (such as greenhouse energy efficiency upgrades and farm-scale wind turbines), larger on-farm projects such as anaerobic digesters, and projects with local and regional benefits such as community wind power.

Demand for REAP is high, with applications far exceeding available funding, as farmers look to REAP to cut their energy costs and improve their margins and productivity in these very challenging economic times.

The need for an adequately-funded REAP program next year is especially important because the 2008 Farm Bill expanded REAP in several important ways, such as:

- Non-“farm” producers such as commercial greenhouse growers are eligible for the program, including those in non-rural areas.
- New funding is available for feasibility studies, energy efficiency technical assistance and smaller projects.
- Loan guarantee limits are increased from \$10 million to \$25 million per guarantee.

Again, we applaud your leadership and your longstanding support of the successful REAP program. We look forward to continuing to work with you to maintain the Subcommittee's appropriation and the existing mandatory funding through the final FY09 appropriations approval process.

Sincerely,

Alliance to Save Energy

Alliance for Rural America

American Agriculture Movement

American Corn Growers Association

Federation of Southern Cooperatives

Kansas Farmers Union

National Association of Farmer Elected Committees

National Farmers Organization

Oklahoma Farmers Union

Pennsylvania Farmers Union

Rocky Mountain Farmers Union

Texas Farmers Union

The National Grange

Women Involved in Farm Economics

American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy

Association of State Energy Research & Technology Transfer Institutions

Clean Energy States Alliance

Climate Solutions

Dakota Resource Council

Environmental and Energy Study Institute

Environmental Law & Policy Center

Hoosier Environmental Council

Iowa Environmental Council

Michigan Floriculture Growers Council

National Association of State Energy Officials

National Center for Appropriate Technology

National Farmers Union

National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

RENEW Wisconsin

Southern Alliance for Clean Energy

United States Clean Heat & Power Association

Union of Concerned Scientists

Utah Clean Energy

Vermont Energy Investment Corporation

Windustry