

May 10, 2024

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
Chair
Senate Committee on Agriculture
731 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Boozman
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Agriculture
555 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Stabenow and Ranking Member Boozman:

On behalf of the Business Council for Sustainable Energy (BCSE) and the Clean Energy Business Network (CEBN), we are writing to urge Congress to include important energy efficiency and clean energy provisions in the Farm Bill during the 2023-2024 reauthorization process to support economic development, energy efficiency and clean energy jobs, and resilience in rural communities.

Rural clean energy programs in the Farm Bill have provided the means for agriculture-based entrepreneurs to benefit their communities through investments in many sectors – from wind, geothermal, hydro, and solar power; to biogas and advanced biofuels; to biopower, bio-based products, renewable chemicals, and energy efficiency.

BCSE and CEBN recommend Congress include Farm Bill provisions to build upon these successes, including:

- Establish new tax credits and bonds for rural communities to boost investment in infrastructure and other public projects by providing affordable access to the large taxable bond market. Please see the bipartisan [American Infrastructure Bonds Act](#).
- Include the [Biomass for Transportation Fuel Act](#), S.3899 and H.R.7609, which would implement the eligibility for electricity generated from renewable biomass, including biogas, under the renewable fuel standard (RFS) program provided by Congress in 2007.
- Reauthorize and revise the Renewable Energy for America Program (REAP) and the Rural Energy Savings Program (RESP) to bring the benefits of energy efficiency and clean energy to more farmers, ranchers, and small businesses in rural communities. Consistent with this recommendation, BCSE urges Congress to exclude potential bill language that would prevent U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) funds from being used to deploy solar on agricultural land.
- Enhance Farm Bill rural development programs to support practices that improve waste management, water quality, nutrient recycling, soil health, and clean energy in rural communities.
- Refine and grow programs from the 2018 Farm Bill to support rural green jobs and resilience.
- Support research and programs to improve sustainability on American farms.
- Foster U.S. agriculture's role in the production of sustainable aviation fuel.



The BCSE-BNEF [2024 Sustainable Energy in America Factbook](#)¹ provides valuable year-over-year data and insights on the energy transition happening across the United States, including in the country's rural communities. Information about key trends can be found [here](#).

For more information on the recommendations of BCSE and CEBN members, please [click here](#). As a diverse coalition, not all members endorse or take a position on the set of recommended provisions.

BCSE members and CEBN would welcome the opportunity to meet with your staff to further discuss provisions under consideration in the Farm Bill reauthorization. For further information or to schedule a time to meet with BCSE members, please contact Ruth McCormick at rmccormick@bcse.org.

Sincerely,

Lisa Jacobson
President
Business Council for Sustainable Energy

Lynn Abramson
President
Clean Energy Business Network

About BCSE and CEBN

The Business Council for Sustainable Energy (BCSE) is a coalition of companies and trade associations from the energy efficiency, energy storage, natural gas, renewable energy, sustainable transportation, and emerging decarbonization technology sectors. It includes independent electric power producers, investor-owned utilities, public utilities, equipment manufacturers, commercial end users, and service providers in energy and environmental markets. Founded in 1992, the coalition's diverse business membership is united around the revitalization of the U.S. economy and the creation of a clean, secure, and reliable energy future in America.

The Clean Energy Business Network (CEBN), comprising small-and medium-sized businesses, is an independent affiliate of BCSE. Together, BCSE and CEBN encompass a broad range of the clean energy economy, from Fortune 100 companies to small businesses working in all 50 states and more than 400 Congressional districts. On a national basis, these industries support more than 3 million U.S. jobs.

CC: Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture

¹ bcse.org/market-trends