

Dear Senators Baucus and Grassley:

I am writing to you regarding your June 11 draft that proposes to prohibit the Alternative Fuel Credit and Alternative Fuel Mixture Credit for Black Liquor.

I am the Environmental Manager for the Boise White Paper, LLC pulp and paper mill in Wallula, Washington.

My industry has a strong track record as a producer and user of renewable energy. For example our industry generates:

- 28.5 million megawatt hours of carbon-neutral renewable energy annually—enough to power 2.7 million homes;
- two-thirds of the energy needs by our industry carbon-neutral renewable energy is generated on-site from renewable sources;
- more renewable energy than all solar, wind and geothermal sources combined. (source, AF&PA)

I believe it's a good environmental decision to encourage alternative fuel usage throughout the US and urge you to continue to support it by upholding the Alternative Fuel Credit.

I have been witnessing and also experiencing how the current economic downturn has negatively impact so many jobs and families. In November 2008, Boise announced it was permanently halting pulp and freesheet paper operations at its St. Helens, Oregon mill and would eliminate 300 of the mill's 470 jobs (my former job and many others in St. Helens no longer exist). I was fortunate to be hired by and transfer to our Wallula, Washington mill. I am very thankful to still be employed; however, now I can't sell my home due to the depressed housing market and I only see my wife and son on weekends due to the 250 mile distance separating my new job from my home. I not sharing this to get sympathy, but to help illustrate that more than GM, Chrysler, a few banks, and insurance companies are struggling. Personally I am appalled at the bailouts my government has approved for the big businesses I just mentioned, but this is a subject for a different letter. The Alternative Fuel Credit is not a bailout, but a form of tax relief for a valuable American Industry providing thousands of jobs in the U.S.

Many pulp and paper industry facilities are located in small, rural communities where there aren't many employment opportunities; hence, why I have to uproot my family and move them across the state. Loss of the Alternative Fuel Credit would have a huge ripple effect that isn't visible in bigger cities. Jobs related to those facilities would be impacted too – suppliers and local retailers will also be impacted. This credit is helping my company survive this economic downturn. It has even helped some pulp and paper companies start back up creating hundreds of jobs.

Senators, I urge you to consider the important contribution of our industry to the nation's economy and that if this credit is not preserved, we may lose more jobs to off shore competitors.

Sincerely,

Eric Steffensen

Environmental Manager
Boise White Paper, LLC