

Find more talking points and information on getting involved here: <https://350pdx.org/ax-drax/>

Hello Senator,

[Type 2-3 personalized sentences at the start of your comment. This can help ensure that it is treated as an individual comment on the legislator's side of things.]

Please sign on to Senator Bookers' Bill

Industrial biomass is a false climate solution, is already harming many Americans (particularly low-income and BIPOC communities), and is threatening to come to the Pacific Northwest. And to be clear, we aren't talking about wood pellet stoves; we are talking about a massive increase in industrialized biomass energy production. We must prevent the Climate Villain of Industrial Biomass from expanding in the US.

Why Industrial Biomass is bad:

1. **Logging:** The proposed Drax plant would use one million tons of wood each year. While the industry claims to use only logging byproducts, in truth it relies on whole trees, even logging old growth trees to be pulverized into pellets. We need these trees standing now, so they can sequester and store carbon.
2. **Pellet Production:** Manufacturing wood pellets produces harmful pollutants like nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds, hazardous air pollutants, and microscopic dust particles that contribute to serious health risks in local communities. Round-the-clock noise from pellet production and truck traffic also impacts community health and wellbeing. In the southeastern United States, wood pellet facilities frequently violate air quality regulations, making them even more dangerous for nearby communities.
3. **International Shipping:** Not only does shipping use huge amounts of energy, it is very dangerous. Several shipping personnel have died from deadly concentrations of harmful gasses created by unventilated wood pellet storage confinements and stored bulk piles of wood pellets can self-heat which can lead to spontaneous combustion.
4. **Emissions/Burning:** Overall, for each kilowatt hour of heat or electricity produced, using wood is likely to add two to three times as much carbon to the air as using fossil fuels.
5. **Greenwashing:** Because of a mistake in carbon accounting, woody biomass energy is considered "carbon neutral," making it eligible for government subsidies to reduce greenhouse gasses - Drax receives over 750 million dollars a year in subsidies from the British government! Companies are shifting from burning fossil fuels to burning wood, which increases warming, instead of shifting to solar and wind, which would truly decrease warming.
6. **Industrial biomass is a danger to local economies:** Wood pellet production creates fewer jobs per unit of wood than other timber jobs. Incentives in the southeastern United States to bring pellet plants to depressed counties led to increase poverty levels and decreased property values. The communities where wood pellet plants exist lose their forests, and all they get from the deal is unhealthy air and deafening noise.
7. **Industrial biomass is not sustainable financially:** To add insult to injury, the biomass energy sector thrives because of government subsidies. In the UK where it is based, Drax receives

more than \$750 million a year in subsidies. This is because biomass is labeled as renewable energy in the UK bringing us back to the issue of greenwashing and biomass as a false climate solution.

Why you should sign on to support Senator Bookers' Bill:

From Senator Bookers' press release:

<https://www.insidernj.com/press-release/booker-markey-warren-van-hollen-introduce-legislation-to-assess-emissions-from-forest-biomass/>

“There are more than 20 wood pellet mills from Texas to Virginia, with over a dozen more planned. Many of these facilities have benefitted from grants and tax breaks in addition to increased international demand due to subsidies. At the same time, the consequences of this energy production have not been fully measured. Over a million acres of U.S. forest have been cut and combusted to supply the biomass industry, releasing millions of tons of carbon dioxide as well as harmful co-pollutants that impact air quality and health.”

The Forest Biomass Emissions Act of 2024 would:

- *Require the EPA to account for the full life cycle of greenhouse gas emissions associated with the production of electricity from forest biomass when enacting relevant rules and regulations.*
- *Task the EPA with conducting an evaluation of the impacts on communities living in the direct proximity of facilities involved in the production of electricity from forest biomass, including forest biomass harvesting areas, pellet mills, and power facilities.*
- *Mandate the EPA to collect data on air and noise pollution considering the race and socioeconomic status of impacted individuals, and to submit a report to Congress.”*

Successfully pushing this through the legislature would be a huge win in helping us prevent Climate Villain Industrial Biomass companies from expanding into our communities, and a huge win for environmental justice is low-income, BIPOC communities in the South have been suffering long before this became a threat for us.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
[Your name]