



1211 Connecticut Avenue NW, Suite 650  
Washington, DC 20036  
[www.biomassthermal.org](http://www.biomassthermal.org)  
202-596-3974

**Comments to the Biomass Research and Development Technical Advisory Committee**  
March 9, 2016

Thank you, members of the Committee, for the opportunity to provide a few comments today. My name is Ben Bell-Walker. On behalf of the Biomass Thermal Energy Council, I would like to congratulate the TAC on the leadership role it has played in advancing inter-agency cooperation to advance best practices in biomass utilization, as described in the recent Federal Activities Report on the Bioeconomy. Going forward, one area in which we think the TAC's role could grow even further is in a stronger focus on the development of an infrastructure around proven technologies that utilize solid biofuels for thermal-led combined heat and power and for heating and cooling needs.

As the Committee is no doubt aware, the total efficiency of a thermally led biomass combined heat and power system can top 80% ,while standalone electric power generation applications for biomass tend to hover around 25% conversion efficiency. Simply put, an "all of the above" energy strategy that largely excludes one of the most efficient uses for waste biomass feedstocks for the roughly 1/3 of national energy use dedicated to heating and cooling, can't be said to live up to its name.

BTEC has been a proud collaborator with bodies such as the Federal Energy Management program, for example, as it works to implement Executive Order (EO) 13693, "Planning for Federal Sustainability in the Next Decade," the successor to EO 13514, which stipulates biomass thermal energy as a path for government agencies to meet their agency greenhouse gas reduction goals, as the GSA's "Green Proving Grounds" program and the Department of Veteran's Affairs are already doing. In addition, we have actively engaged with the USDA Forest Service State Wide Wood Energy Teams, and USDA Rural Development to act as a force multiplier for such programs as BCAP and projects funded under the Woody Biomass Utilization Grants (for example the biomass project prefeasibility calculator housed at [www.woodenergyproject.com](http://www.woodenergyproject.com)).

Finally, as we have previously reported to this body, we are rapidly moving forward with a private sector-led effort to establish a method of test and an eventual efficiency standard for commercial bioheat systems. We—BTEC—have released for comment a draft of the protocol, and we are at the prime stage to accept stakeholder feedback on this important effort. There remains an opportunity for a member of the TAC to participate as an observing project partner.

Thank you again for the opportunity to address the Committee. Our remarks will be posted to the post-event notes, and I welcome any comments you may have at this time.