



News Release

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Senate Farm Bill Passed

On December 14, 2007, after a protracted struggle, the U.S. Senate finally passed the **Farm, Nutrition, and Bioenergy Act of 2007 (H.R.2419)** by a vote of 79 to 14. During debate, 12 amendments to the bill were considered. None passed. Among these failed attempts were amendments by Senator Lugar (R-IN) and Senator Dorgan (D-ND), both seeking to reform agricultural payments by replacing subsidies with crop insurance and fixing income caps on payment eligibility, respectively. As in the 2002 farm bill, the newly passed legislation includes a separate energy title, **Title IX - Energy**. Among the new programs established under this title, there is a payment program for producers of advanced biofuels, two programs to develop use of renewable woody biomass, and authority for a series of regional biomass crop experiments. A program with which EESI has been closely involved is the **Biomass Crop Transition Assistance** program. This program provides technical and cost-share assistance to farmers wishing to transition from a traditional crop to an energy crop (\$130M in FY08), as well as assistance for the storage, handling, and transport of renewable biomass and assistance for forest biomass planning (\$10M/yr for FY08-FY11). Also included among these new programs is authorization for a number of studies, including one on life-cycle emissions analysis for biofuels and an investigation into infrastructure needs. Title IX also reauthorizes a number of existing programs, such as the biomass research and development program, a program for federal procurement of biobased products, and an assistance program for biorefineries and repowering projects.

In **Title XII - Tax and Trade Provisions**, there are a number of provisions to promote the use of bioenergy, including a producer credit for cellulosic biofuels; a credit extension for small producers of ethanol; a two-year extension of the ethanol tariff; and a modified extension of the production credit for biodiesel and renewable diesel products. Unfortunately, this title also contains an alternative fuels credit for coal-to-liquids fuels, assuming that effective carbon capture and sequestration is successfully demonstrated.

The farm bill is now headed to a Senate-House conference to work out the differences between the two versions of H.R. 2419. After the bill is conferenced and (hopefully) signed into law, it will be essential to follow the appropriations process to ensure that funding is provided to implement these important new programs.

[Link to Senate Agriculture Committee Homepage](#)

If you have questions, please email or call Jetta Wong at jwong@eesi.org or (202) 662-1885.

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