TRUCKING LETTER #2

The Honorable Brian Dahle

California State Assembly

State Capitol Building

Sacramento CA 95814

Dear Assembly Member Dahle

I am writing to support your bill, AB 590 which provides biomass plants with a small portion of the greenhouse gas reduction funds. One of the plants that would benefit from this bill is located in my local community of [city/county/region].

People in many California counties still feel the pinch of economic hardship and good jobs with living wages are hard to find. One bright spot is the biomass energy industry, which operates production facilities in 20 mostly rural or Central Valley counties, providing good jobs to hardworking people who help the state achieve its renewable energy, environmental, health, and economic goals.

By approving Assembly Bill 590 (Dahle), state government leaders can give a big boost to this valuable industry. The legislation would allocate some of the revenue generated by the state carbon auctions conducted under the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Program to a Biomass Cost Share Account within the State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission. These funds would be used to maintain the current level of biomass power generation in the state and reopen production facilities now standing idle in several strategic areas.

This investment is worthwhile on many levels.

Unlike other renewable facilities, biomass plants create jobs. The plants directly employ more than 500 people to generate renewable baseline power 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Another 2,000 jobs directly support plant operations. These workers gather a wide range of waste wood, from urban discards and agricultural materials to timber slash and undergrowth that threatens the health and fire safety of our precious forest resources. They operate materials recovery facilities, cleaning and grinding wood for the plants. And they drive the trucks hauling materials to the plants. In many cases, the biomass plants are one of the largest employers in the region where they operate. Without the plants, the jobs evaporate.

The workers in this industry divert more than 7.5 million of tons of low-value wood materials from our state’s waste stream every year that otherwise would wind up in overburdened landfills or on huge open burn piles that spew tons of pollutants and greenhouse gas into the air our families breathe. Every time a biomass plant closes, open burn permit requests increase immediately.

Advancing AB 590 helps safeguard jobs by ensuring the revitalization of an important part of California’s energy and greenhouse gas reduction equations. Thank you for your support for the biomass industry and jobs in my community.

Sincerely,