



GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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July 7, 2009

Dr. Steven Chu, Secretary of Energy
U. S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20585

RE: Recovery Act - Demonstration of Integrated Bio-refinery Operations
Funding Opportunity Announcement Number: DE-FOA-0000096

Dear Dr. Chu:

The State of Montana is looking to the western part of the state as a potential location for private sector driven development of woody biomass energy generation plants.

Governor Brian Schweitzer, in cooperation with the Western Governors Association, recently gathered leaders and innovators on bioenergy in Missoula, MT, to help develop ideas and policy to promote this industry as part of the renewable energy mix. This workshop included presentations and breakout sessions for an important discussion on the future of bioenergy production.

Governor Schweitzer has said, "Biomass is one more leg under the table of our energy future. We will continue to find ways to use this valuable resource as we manage forests near our towns and reduce the fire threat presented by red trees. Better yet, we can help to ensure the viability of timber jobs in an industry that is very important to both western Montana communities and forest health alike." Biomass energy development is a triple play; good for forest management, good for renewable energy and good for the economy.

As Chief Business Officer in the Governor's Office of Economic Development, I am in support of the objectives of the proposed Phoenix Renewable Energies, LLC project, to be located in Helena, Montana, for the demonstration of smokeless biomass pyrolysis for production of biochar and biofuels. Innovative technologies such as this need federal support in order to develop the energy technologies needed to wean our nation from oil provided by petro dictators, address the urgent situation of climate change and stimulate jobs and investment in these dire economic times. Montana stands ready to support the project in every way and hopes the Department of Energy gives this proposal every consideration.

Best regards,

Evan Barrett
Chief Business Officer