

Dear Fellow PFI Members,

I would like to take the opportunity to introduce a newly founded industry organization to you, the Biomass Thermal Energy Council (BTEC). The fact that some of its constituents are also members of the PFI has created confusion with respect to the goals and directions this new organization will take, which I would like to clarify.

BTEC (www.biomassthermal.org) is a recently formed non-profit trade organization headquartered in Washington DC, dedicated to advancing the use of biomass for heat and other thermal energy applications.

BTEC's membership includes biomass fuel producers (pellets, chips, energy crops, agricultural residues etc), combustion appliance manufacturers and distributors, supply chain companies and non-governmental organizations that view biomass thermal energy to be a highly important renewable, responsible, clean and energy-efficient resource to meet America's urgent energy and climate challenges.

BTEC engages in research, education and public relations, and policy advocacy for the expanding biomass-thermal energy industry. Our membership includes companies that may not be aware of PFI and whose interests lie outside PFI's historical representation.

Some PFI members have asked if BTEC is redundant to PFI's mission or may compete with PFI. I do not see BTEC to be either competitive or redundant. Rather, BTEC is complementary and additive to PFI's continuing efforts. In our brief existence, we have already demonstrated our ability to bring change to several important federal policy issues.

As BTEC grows, I am certain there will be other objectives of common interest that we can tackle collectively, and bring more resources to the needs of our industry than either organization can individually.

I know I speak for the entire board when I say that it is of paramount importance to rally a constituency as large and as broad as possible behind the biomass-thermal efforts in order to secure equal treatment compared to the biomass-electric and biomass-transportation fuels industries (which both have financially far superior lobbies than we do). We all know that the biomass-thermal industries create more jobs and have a more energy efficient output than the other energy industries competing for the same limited biomass feedstocks. Unfortunately, many politicians do not understand this yet and we want to change their understanding as rapidly as possible. This will benefit the pellet fuels industry as well as all constituent interests in the emerging and rapidly growing biomass-thermal industry. I see countless opportunities to work toward common purposes going forward.

Many of our member companies already pay dues to both organizations because we find value in supporting both organizations, for different reasons and different outcomes. I hope going forward that PFI members will see the same values and embrace the opportunity to work together.

Charlie Niebling
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