

Senator Debbie Stabenow
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

November 4, 2009

Dear Senator Stabenow,

The undersigned organizations are writing to thank you and your colleagues for your leadership on developing legislative provisions to create incentives for forest carbon sequestration as part of new federal climate legislation. Our diverse industry, conservation, forestry, landowner, carbon finance, and academic organizations have been working together to find consensus approaches to encourage carbon sequestration in America's private forests and generate economic benefits for rural economies. Your proposal demonstrates the breadth of opportunities to encourage landowners at a variety of scales nationwide to engage in efforts to address climate change.

As you well know, U.S. forests and forest products can play a significant role in reducing carbon emissions. The USDA Forest Service estimates that we could increase carbon sequestration in U.S. forests from the current level of 10 percent of annual U.S. emissions to as much as 20 percent. In addition, the U.S. EPA has identified forests as playing a key cost-containment role for efforts to reduce emissions.

Your bill demonstrates that America can capture this opportunity by creating meaningful financial incentives for landowners to undertake activities that will increase carbon sequestration and protect existing carbon stores. Providing financial incentives for this important climate mitigation activity will help the economy while also helping the environment—creating a new revenue stream for landowners that would be particularly valued during these challenging economic times.

We applaud your leadership on these issues, and we look forward to working with you and your colleagues to encourage adoption of a robust role for America's forests in federal climate legislation.

Sincerely,

American Forest Foundation
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Binational Softwood Lumber Council
Conservation Forestry, LLC
First Environment, Inc.
Forest Guild
Hardwood Federation
Lyme Timber Company
Maine Forest Service
National Alliance of Forest Owners
National Association of State Foresters
National Association of University Forest Resource Programs
National Hardwood Lumber Association
Pacific Forest Trust
Society of American Foresters
The Nature Conservancy
The Trust for Public Land
Western Pennsylvania Conservancy
Weyerhaeuser