



June 18, 2025

The Honorable Michael Barrett, Senate Chair
The Honorable Mark Cusack, House Chair
Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Energy and Utilities
State House, Room 109-D
Boston, MA 02133

RE: H.3549/S.2288 “An Act to remove woody biomass from the greenhouse gas emissions standard for municipal lighting plants”

Dear Chairs Barrett and Cusack, and Members of the Committee:

We are writing to express our support for **H.3549/S.2288 “An Act to remove woody biomass from the greenhouse gas emissions standard for municipal lighting plants” (Rep. Ramos/Sen. Gomez)**. This bill takes a critical step in aligning Massachusetts' climate policy with the best available science by removing woody biomass from the definition of non-emitting energy under the emissions standard for municipal lighting plants (MLPs). While biomass may be classified as renewable under some policies, its net greenhouse gas emissions and local air quality impacts undermine the Commonwealth's climate goals.

The Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company (MMWEC) and its member MLPs have a demonstrated record of leadership in clean energy. These not-for-profit, community-owned utilities have made significant investments in non-emitting resources such as hydro, solar, and wind, often surpassing state decarbonization targets. Their procurement decisions reflect a commitment to reliable, affordable, and climate-responsible energy.

This legislation supports the direction in which MLPs are already moving—away from carbon sources and toward truly clean, zero-carbon power. Codifying that woody biomass does not meet the definition of “non-emitting” will strengthen Massachusetts' climate policy and uphold environmental and public health standards.

Background

MMWEC was created by an Act of the General Court in 1975 to serve as the Commonwealth's designated joint action agency for the state's cities and towns having MLPs. MMWEC is a not-for-profit, public corporation and political subdivision of the Commonwealth. MMWEC's enabling legislation allows it to issue tax exempt bonds to finance a wide range of energy and related facilities. Since 1976, MMWEC has issued more than \$7 Billion in mostly tax-exempt bonds to achieve the objectives of its members.

MMWEC provides a variety of power supply, financial, risk management and other services to its members. MMWEC has facilitated more than 200 megawatts of renewable energy projects, including wind, solar, energy storage and hydropower, and is a catalyst in bringing green technology to MLP communities. Two examples are the 19.6 megawatt (MW) Berkshire Wind Power Project, then the largest in-land wind farm in Massachusetts at the time of the establishment of its first phase in 2008, and the recently dedicated 7 MW Cotton Solar field. MMWEC has also entered into a unique partnership with Lightshift Energy to bring approximately 50 megawatts of energy storage to municipal light plant communities statewide.

Sincerely,

Ronald C. DeCurzio
Chief Executive Officer