



## **Climate Change and Urban and Community Forests**

State forestry agencies establish and grow effective, self-sustaining local urban and community forestry (UCF) programs to improve the livability of cities, suburbs and towns where over 80% of the nation's population now lives and where nearly 25% of the nation's tree canopy cover is found.

Urban trees and forests are "green infrastructure" and essential elements of public health and quality of life. State foresters support the inclusion of urban tree planting initiatives in federal climate legislation that recognizes the contribution of urban trees and forests to reducing fossil fuel consumption through energy conservation, sequestering carbon and offsetting CO<sub>2</sub> production.

### **Tree Planting Program in ACES (Sec. 205 of HR 2454)**

Section 205 of the American Clean Energy and Security Act (ACES) authorizes a grant program to assist retail power providers with the establishment and operation of tree planting programs in residential and small office settings. The purpose of the program is to help residents and small office buildings plant trees in strategic locations to help reduce their energy demand.

- Sec. 205 requires power providers that receive assistance to partner with available nonprofit tree-planting organizations. The nonprofit organizations will help plant trees in appropriate locations and monitor and report on survival and growth (among other things).
- Retail power providers shall rely on local technical advisory committees to approve species of trees to plant and adopt tree planting guidelines.
- Grants delivered through this program would be made through a public, competitive process and would be subject to a 50 percent matching requirement.

### **Improvements to Section 205**

State foresters support the purpose and intent of Section 205, but hold that important changes will help the program achieve maximum energy savings. NASF recommends Section 205 be amended to enhance cooperation among the Department of Energy (DOE) and State Foresters in the development and implementation of the program. Further, state foresters want to ensure access to the program in both urban centers and rural communities across the country. As trained forest resource professionals representing the public interest, state foresters foster local partnership in both urban and rural settings and can help ensure effective program outcomes.

NASF asks for your support for including a DOE tree planting grant program in Senate climate legislation. State Foresters' stand ready to bring their nearly two decades of experience in delivering other urban tree planting programs to help ensure the long-term success of this initiative.

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