

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 26, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden:

We write to reiterate our July request to meet with you, members of your Cabinet, and our Democratic colleagues to discuss the tremendous opportunity that biofuels like ethanol and biodiesel may contribute to your administration's energy, environmental, and transportation agenda. Now, as rising energy prices stoke consumer fears of more resolute, long-term inflation, our request takes on new urgency.

Like you, we want all Americans to have access to affordable and reliable sources of energy, including transportation and winter heating fuel. This requires an all-the-above energy strategy that equally leverages responsible resource development and innovation. American biofuels represent both, and as we outlined in our previous letter, they hold the proven ability to provide consumers broad choices for cleaner and more affordable energy. These contributions would expand with timely action by your administration.

We have seen reports that your administration has consulted with representatives of the oil and gas industry to address mounting energy concerns. We do not write to discourage the expansion of domestic oil and gas extraction, including on federal lands. Rather, we encourage the development of these national resources that drove America's recent energy dominance, propelled economic growth, and insulated consumers from the bullying of international oil cartels. However, we strongly caution against attacks that misconstrue the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) as the source of America's rising energy prices or seek to exploit global influences to undermine the American biofuels industry.

Higher blends of biofuels like E15 provide consumers with a lower-cost, greener option at the fuel pump. As we wrote, ethanol has 46 percent lower lifecycle emissions than conventional gasoline, with increasingly efficient agriculture and advancements in fuel technology striving to achieve a 70 percent reduction by 2030 and a net-zero fuel in the coming decades.¹ Additionally, higher blends of ethanol will expand consumer choice and lessen the volume of conventional fuel needed for each vehicle, easing the ongoing supply constraint while also generating more—and thus reduce the price of—RINs, the RFS compliance credits.

In our letter, we outlined numerous steps your administration can take to advance its low-carbon agenda with the assistance of renewable fuels. Most pressing is the need for the administration

¹ <http://ethanolproducer.com/articles/18436/rfa-ethanol-will-achieve-net-zero-emissions-by-2050-or-sooner>

to set robust renewable volume obligations, which will help restore the integrity of the RFS in accordance with Congressional intent, and to not undercut the blending targets with subsequent small refinery exemptions. Similarly, the administration must not backtrack on previous blending targets, which by statute are already responsive to fluctuations in fuel consumption. Additionally, the administration should take immediate action to promote biofuels in domestic and foreign markets, beginning with scoring and comparing all energy sources fairly with updated modeling, such as Argonne National Laboratory's Greenhouse gases, Regulated Emissions, and Energy use in Transportation (GREET) Model, and approving long-stalled registrations for advanced, cleaner fuels, like those derived from corn kernel fiber. Lastly, the administration should seek to reestablish the year-round sale of E15 and support infrastructure investments to help fuel retailers provide this cleaner, more affordable fuel option for American drivers. E15, which is commonly marketed as Unleaded 88, can save consumers an average of 5 to 10 cents per gallon. Taking swift action will not only help alleviate the present energy situation, but failure to do so will leave meaningful carbon emission reductions on the table.

The benefits of expanded biofuel use do not stop at the water's edge, and we are encouraged to see countries like India recognize the potential that higher blends of ethanol hold to meet energy needs and environmental goals. India has set a target of 10 percent ethanol blending by 2022 and increasing to a rate of 20 percent ethanol by 2025.² This not only suggests a promising export market for American farmers and biofuel producers, but underscores how biofuels can be leveraged immediately to reduce transportation emissions without overhauling the entire electric grid. We urge your administration to feature biofuels as part of its international outreach on energy, environment, and trade, including the upcoming Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow, Scotland.

Mr. President, biofuels are a readily available energy solution that deserve full consideration—not only for helping to stem the recent increase in fuel prices, which has subsequently accelerated inflation—but to serve as a foundational source of transportation emission reductions as part of your energy and environmental agenda. We call on your administration to utilize the full capacity of American agriculture to deliver on both fronts, and we reiterate our request to discuss these matters with you in greater detail.

Sincerely,



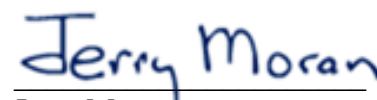
John Thune
United States Senator



Chuck Grassley
United States Senator



Roy Blunt
United States Senator

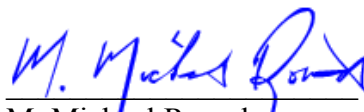


Jerry Moran
United States Senator

² <https://auto.hindustantimes.com/auto/news/india-aims-for-e20-fuel-by-2025-advantages-and-challenges-41629885598062.html>



Deb Fischer
United States Senator



M. Michael Rounds
United States Senator



Joni K. Ernst
United States Senator



Ben Sasse
United States Senator



Roger Marshall, M.D.
United States Senator

cc:

- The Honorable Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture
- The Honorable Pete Buttigieg, Secretary of Transportation
- The Honorable Jennifer Granholm, Secretary of Energy
- The Honorable Michael Regan, Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency
- The Honorable Katherine Tai, United States Trade Representative
- The Honorable John Kerry, Special Presidential Envoy for Climate