



March 24, 2022

President Joseph Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden:

On behalf of America's corn farmers, we encourage you to look toward using more homegrown renewable fuels like ethanol to help stabilize energy markets and lower the price of fuel for consumers during this time of international conflict and rising costs. Farmers' increased productivity and efficiency have resulted in higher yields, using fewer resources, to meet food and fuel needs to keep prices down.

Specifically, we urge your Administration to act to prevent consumers from losing access to a lower cost fuel option on June 1. As gas prices have increased following the rise in oil prices, higher ethanol blends have provided drivers with savings, with ethanol priced an average of 78 cents less per gallon than unblended gasoline at wholesale during March. Drivers with access to E15, a higher ethanol blend approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) since 2011, have been saving up to 20 cents or more per gallon. However, without near-term action, drivers will lose access to E15 during the summer driving season, when fuel demand is highest, due to a 2021 court decision resulting from oil industry efforts to reverse full market access for this lower-cost and lower-emission fuel.

Despite E15 being lower in carbon, tailpipe, and evaporative emissions than standard regular fuel (a 10 percent ethanol blend), outdated regulatory roadblocks have slowed the market expansion of cleaner, less expensive E15, especially during the summer ozone control season from June 1 through September 15. In 2019, drivers finally had full-year market access, but the 2021 court decision will force retailers to again take this cost-saving choice away from drivers in weeks ahead.

If we replaced just one-third of regular E10 fuel sales with E15, we would fully replace all gasoline from previously imported Russian oil. When it comes to cost, blending more ethanol, not less, is an immediate step to help lower fuel prices. Ethanol adds billions of gallons to our fuel supply every year, lowering demand for high-cost oil while increasing total fuel available to consumers. Using more homegrown ethanol reduces the impact of global energy disruptions.

Your Administration has existing authorities that would prevent consumers from losing access to E15:

- EPA could exercise its waiver authority pursuant to Section 211(c)(4)(C)(ii) of the Clean Air Act to waive the 9-psi RVP limit for ethanol-gasoline blends during the summer ozone control season. The statute authorizes this action, which would result in lower overall tailpipe emissions. Moreover, EPA's March 2020 waiver of the federal RVP requirements in response to fuel supply issues caused by the COVID-19 pandemic is a recent precedent for a nationwide waiver.

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- EPA could exercise its enforcement discretion to allow the sale of E15 with an RVP of up to 10-psi during the summer. Enforcement discretion under these circumstances would be appropriate given the energy security concerns caused by Russia's attack on Ukraine.
- Your Administration could use executive order authority to authorize the sale of E15 pursuant to its broad executive authority triggered by a national emergency.

In 2007, Congress called upon farmers, and we rose to the challenge of meeting our country's goals to reduce oil dependence, particularly our dependence on foreign oil; curb greenhouse gas emissions; and create jobs at home. American biofuel production now supports hundreds of thousands of jobs, displaces billions of gallons of gasoline annually, and according to Department of Energy lifecycle models, has reduced greenhouse gas emissions by almost 1 billion metric tons since enactment of the Renewable Fuel Standard.

Corn growers appreciated your press secretary's response during the March 15 White House briefing that E15 is in the Administration's "menu of options" when it comes to addressing high gas prices. We urge the White House to use existing emergency authority to ensure E15 remains available to drivers this summer and work with us on a permanent solution to keep low-cost and low-carbon higher ethanol blends on the menu for all drivers, year-round, in the years to come.

American farmers stand ready to help lower costs at the pump, decarbonize liquid fuels, support domestic manufacturing jobs, and revitalize the U.S. economy with clean energy, all while continuing to meet demands for food, feed, and exports, due to our increased productivity and sustainability.

Thank you for your consideration.

Chris Edgington, President
National Corn Growers Association

Jeremy Wilson, President
Alabama Soybean and Corn Growers Association

Marty Marr, President
Illinois Corn Growers Association

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CC:

The Honorable Michael Regan, Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The Honorable Thomas Vilsack, Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture

The Honorable Jennifer Granholm, Secretary, U.S. Department of Energy