



Midwestern Governors Association

July 8, 2009

The Honorable Lisa Jackson
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Jackson:

We are writing to urge the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to increase the alcohol-gasoline blend to 15 percent ethanol (E-15) by volume in unleaded gasoline from its current level of ten percent (E-10).

As you know, the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (EISA) sets a national goal of using 36 billion gallons of renewable fuels by 2022. The current blend limit significantly hinders our ability to meet the long-term and intermediate targets of the renewable fuels standard (RFS). To meet this goal, we must continue to support the expanded use of conventional biofuels as a way to transition to developing commercially available advanced biofuels, including cellulosic ethanol.

Stifling the growth of conventional ethanol undermines the goal of making cellulosic ethanol a commercial reality. Unjustified criticism of conventional efforts also stymies the development of advanced biofuels. Increasing the blending limits will expand the use of ethanol and provide support for the transition to next generational biofuels. Additionally, increasing our use of domestic energy sources, including ethanol, decreases our dependence on overseas oil.

Midwestern states have been national leaders in producing and using biofuels. As technology and production techniques improve, ethanol's performance value will also increase. Through EPA's own analysis, increased use of renewable fuels, like ethanol, will reduce traditional car pollutants, such as benzene and carbon monoxide. The U.S. Department of Energy has found that corn ethanol has been shown to decrease life-cycle greenhouse gas emissions by 19 percent, while cellulosic ethanol reduces emissions by 86 percent.

Currently, the state of Minnesota is determining the viability of using a 20 percent ethanol blend across the state. Research to date has shown that this has not posed performance problems. While the ability to increase the federal blending limits to 20 percent is still undergoing final testing, blends of up to 15 percent have been shown to be safe and would not have

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an adverse affect. In addition to a waiver, we would also ask you to work with manufacturers of gasoline powered products, such as tools, equipment and vehicles, to clarify the feasibility of expanding their warranties to include increased ethanol blend levels approved by EPA of up to 15 percent.


The ethanol industry, like other sectors of our economy, is facing tough financial times. Immediate action is necessary to ensure that this entirely domestic energy industry is preserved and allowed to take us to a new energy economy by creating new, "green", jobs. Despite the economic urgency for a decision, the granting of the waiver would be neither capricious nor impulsive, as the science and rationale for increasing the blend wall upwards of 15 percent are already in place.

If you or your staff have any questions, please contact Emily Marthaler with the MGA. She can be reached at either 202-624-8474 or emarthaler@csg.org.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Granholm
Governor of Michigan and
Chair



Pat Quinn
Governor of Illinois



Chester J. Culver
Governor of Iowa



Tim Pawlenty
Governor of Minnesota




Ted Strickland
Governor of Ohio



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- cc: Secretary Tom Vilsack, U.S. Department of Agriculture
Secretary Steven Chu, U.S. Department of Energy
Carol Browner, Assistant to the President for Energy and Climate Change
Midwestern Congressional Delegation