

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 5, 2017

The Honorable Scott Pruitt
Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
Office of the Administrator 1101A
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Pruitt:

We urge you to ensure that the EPA's final rule setting blending targets under the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) for 2018 promotes growth in the U.S. biofuel sector and in our economy.

When Congress adopted the RFS in 2005, its goal was to put in place a stable, forward-looking policy to drive innovation and investments that would bring biofuels to American consumers. The biofuel industry supports hundreds of thousands of jobs throughout the country, reduces the environmental impact of our transportation and energy sectors, and cuts our reliance on foreign oil. The stability of our policy has led to billions of dollars of investment in the biofuel sector. America's production capacity has expanded more than threefold since 2005 with fuels such as biodiesel, cellulosic ethanol, recycled-waste, algal, and other advanced biofuels.

We need to build on this progress. The 2017 final RFS rule set Renewable Volume Obligations (RVO) at the levels Congress intended. The 2018 proposed rule, while positive for maintaining the maximum blending target for conventional biofuel at 15 billion gallons, would represent a step back when it comes to advanced biofuels, resulting in less renewable fuels being blended than in 2017. The rule unjustifiably flatlines biomass-based diesel, reduces advanced biofuels, and reduces the cellulosic biofuel blending target by about 25 percent. The agency arrives at these lower targets by utilizing a new methodology more reliant on historical data than projected volumes. The RFS must by law be administered in a forward-looking manner. The final rule should address these shortfalls.

In addition, the Notice of Data Availability the agency published on September 26 would lower the blending targets by the number of gallons of biofuels imported yet still permit these imported gallons to generate compliance credits. There are also reports that the agency is considering allowing exported gallons of biofuel to generate compliance credits. Taken together, these actions would reduce renewable fuel blending in the U.S. and create uncertainty for producers.

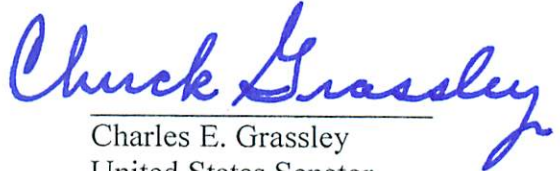
If done right, this rule is an opportunity to continue our nation's path to be not only the world leader in first generation ethanol production, but also in cellulosic ethanol and advanced biofuel production by spurring investment and manufacturing here in the United States rather than overseas.

We urge you to continue to implement the RFS as intended by Congress and release a strong final rule that would give consumers more choices at the pump, strengthen our economy and make our country more secure.

Sincerely,



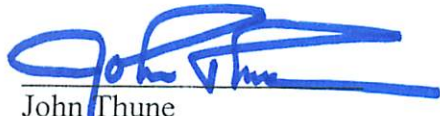
Amy Klobuchar
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Charles E. Grassley
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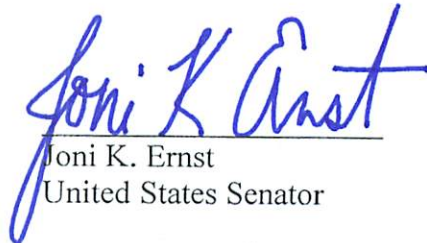
Richard J. Durbin
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Al Franken
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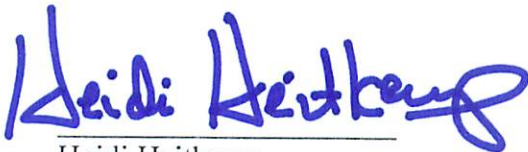
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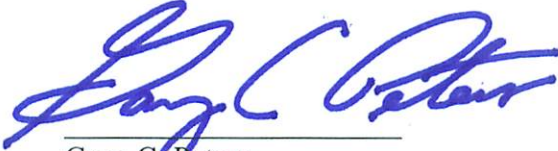
Pat Roberts
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Jerry Moran
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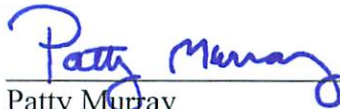
Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



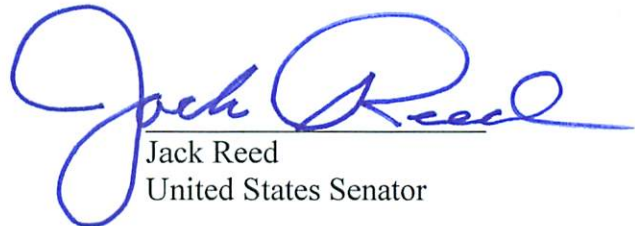
Tammy Duckworth
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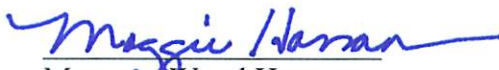
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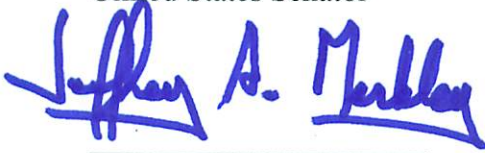
Brian Schatz
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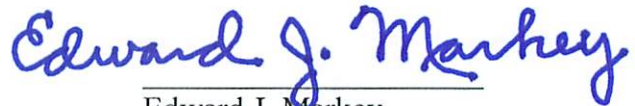
Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



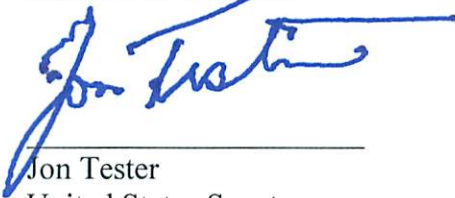
Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
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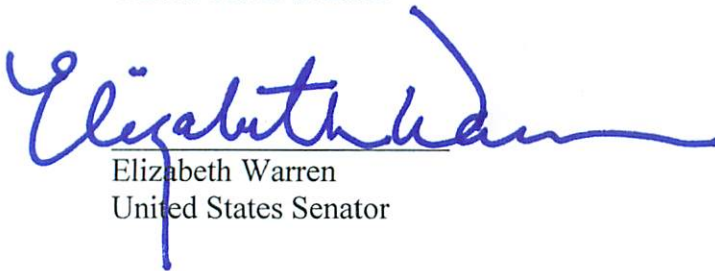
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Jon Tester
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Patrick Leahy
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Elizabeth Warren
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Michael Bennet
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