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June 30, 2021

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

President Biden:

During your campaign for President, you indicated your support for biofuel and your intent to “promote and advance renewable energy, ethanol and other biofuel.”¹ Your party’s platform included an intent to “grow the nation’s biofuel manufacturing sector, including by strengthening the Renewable Fuel Standard, supporting E15 blends, and supporting research, development, and deployment of advanced biofuel.”² Additionally, you decried the previous administration’s use of oil refinery waivers that directly harmed our farmers and biofuel producers, asserting, “Those waivers are a gigantic mistake. We should not be exempting, we should be insisting that these major companies in fact meet the criteria.”³

Yet now that you are president, having no doubt heard the same tired and debunked complaints⁴ from big oil refiners about the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) harming them, you are reportedly considering bailouts for these refineries, which would undermine the biofuel industry and the family farmers who rely on it.⁵ Apart from being inconsistent with your stated policy position on the campaign trail last year, this proposal is also contrary to your stated commitment to move our economy towards a cleaner energy future, as biofuel like corn-based ethanol reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions dramatically relative to petroleum-based gasoline.⁶

While we are aware of the power of the oil lobby, and its efforts to influence your administration⁷, I urge you not to bend to their demands to undercut the RFS, by either reducing annual blending obligations, or any by other means that destroys demand for clean renewable ethanol and biodiesel. The farmers and biofuel industries in our states would welcome the same access to your National Climate Advisor to discuss shared priorities.⁸

¹ Biden Rural Plan, October 2020 <https://joebiden.com/rural-plan/>

² 2020 Democratic Platform <https://democrats.org/where-we-stand/party-platform/>

³ Iowa PBS, August 2019 <https://www.iowapbs.org/mtom/story/34680/white-house-fights-battles-trade-wars-and-small-refinery-exemptions>

⁴ Reuters, May 2021 <https://www.reuters.com/business/aerospace-defense/exclusive-delta-air-makes-350-million-gamble-it-lobbies-biden-fuel-credits-2021-05-26/>

⁵ Bloomberg, June 2021 <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-06-15/biden-weighs-middle-of-the-road-biofuel-quota-in-nod-to-refiners>

⁶ EH&E, Harvard et. al. March 2021 <https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/abde08/pdf>

⁷ White House, March 2021 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/03/22/readout-of-the-white-houses-meeting-with-oil-and-gas-company-leadership/>

⁸ E&E News, March 2021 <https://www.eenews.net/stories/1063728195>

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Thank you and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Joni K. Ernst
United States Senator



Charles E. Grassley
United States Senator



John Thune
United States Senator



M. Michael Rounds
United States Senator



Ben Sasse
United States Senator



Deb Fischer
United States Senator

CC: The Honorable Michael S. Regan, Administrator, EPA

CC: Gina McCarthy, White House National Climate Advisor