Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 10, 2009

The Honorable Lisa Jackson
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Jackson:

We're writing to urge you to grant approval without delay of the recent application for approval of use of an ethanol-gasoline blend containing up to 15 percent ethanol by volume (E-15). The current 10 percent ethanol-gasoline blending cap threatens to restrict the development of ethanol infrastructure and capacity. Ultimately, it will restrain the development of advanced biofuels, and therefore our nation's ability to meet the historic Renewable Fuels Standard (RFS) enacted in the 2007 Energy Independence and Security Act.

In January, the Energy Information Administration projected that "available quantities of cellulosic biofuels will be insufficient to meet the new RFS targets for cellulosic biofuels before 2022, triggering both waivers and a modification of applicable volumes ...." Allowing use of ethanol blends up to E-15 will help us preserve and enhance infrastructure that is critical to the timely development of cellulosic ethanol and advanced biofuels, have significant environmental benefits, foster our nation's energy independence, create thousands of jobs, and stimulate economic development in communities across the nation. According to one estimate, allowing blending up to E-15 has the potential to create at least 135,000 jobs.

A number of studies, including by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), provide reassurance that intermediate range ethanol blends including E-15 may and can be used in standard motor vehicles, without raising concerns about tailpipe emissions or drivability. In its updated February 2009 report, DOE, the Oak Ridge National Laboratory and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory assessed the effects of intermediate ethanol blends on a 16-vehicle fleet. According to the results to date, the ethanol content essentially did not affect regulated tailpipe emissions and no concerns about operability or driveability arose.

We believe the new RFS enacted in 2007 strengthens our energy security and will further diversify our nation's fuel supply in an era of global volatility and demand for energy. It is providing essential support for efforts to supply the United States with a clean-burning, renewable fuel that is cutting oil imports and helping consumers at the pump. A key next step to implementing the RFS and advancing these goals is allowing up to E-15 ethanol blends. We respectfully urge you to approve up to E-15, and to consider the interim step of immediately allowing E-12 or E-13.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Herseth Sandlin

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IL-18

John Shimkus

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