

February 10, 2023

The Honorable Michael Regan, Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2021-0427-0421

RE: Renewable Fuel Standard Program: Standards for 2023-2025 and Other Changes

Dear Administrator Regan:

Iowa is the undisputed national leader in biofuels production, with 42 ethanol biorefineries and 11 biodiesel facilities producing 4.5 billion gallons of ethanol and 349 million gallons of biodiesel respectively in 2022. Iowa's renewable fuels industry creates value-added markets for corn, soybeans, and other agriculture feedstocks, provides good paying jobs for thousands of Iowans, and offers cleaner burning, more affordable, homegrown fuel to consumers. With that in mind, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship is uniquely suited to weigh in on EPA's Renewable Fuel Standard proposal for 2023, 2024, and 2025, and I appreciate the opportunity to submit these comments.

On ethanol, we urge EPA to finalize its proposed annual volumes of 15 billion gallons for 2023 (with a supplemental volume of 250 million gallons added to address the remand from *Americans for Clean Energy v. EPA*), 15.25 billion gallons for 2024, and 15.25 billion gallons for 2025. These volumes will set a course for increased domestic ethanol use and greater availability of higher ethanol blends such as E15 and E85 throughout the United States. Higher ethanol blends are not only lower cost, but also lower carbon, and EPA needs to update its greenhouse gas emission modeling accordingly to reflect ethanol's substantial and accelerating carbon reduction benefits. Specifically, we request EPA to embrace the U.S. Department of Energy Argonne National Laboratory's Greenhouse gases, Regulated Emissions, and Energy use in Transportation (GREET) model as the official carbon intensity calculator for the RFS going forward.

On biomass-based diesel, EPA's proposed volumes for 2023, 2024, and 2025 are unacceptably low. In fact, the proposed volume of 2.82 billion gallons for 2023 is nearly 800 million gallons below the actual production of 3.6 billion gallons of biomass-based diesel in 2022. With current production already exceeding EPA's proposed volumes and renewable diesel production

anticipated to grow exponentially in the coming years, we urge EPA to significantly raise both the biomass-based diesel levels (by 500 million gallons each year at a minimum) and the advanced biofuel levels (by 1 billion gallons each year at a minimum) for 2023, 2024, and 2025. Additionally, we ask EPA to withdraw its newly proposed language to limit the volume of separated RINs to only B20 blends, rather than the current limit of B80. This restrictive provision would unnecessarily prevent Iowa biofuel producers and suppliers from benefiting from Iowa's newly enacted retailer tax incentive for B30 blends, further stifling low-carbon biodiesel growth.

Finally, we strongly request EPA to revise its proposal for eRINs and to separate it from the rest of the proposed RFS rule. The eRINs proposal departs significantly from the spirit of the RFS program in a desperate attempt to benefit electric vehicles at the expense of biofuels. A hallmark of the RFS program has always been that a RIN may only be generated by a biofuel producer through the production of qualified biofuel from renewable biomass that is used as transportation fuel. The eRINs proposal turns the RFS program on its head by allowing electric vehicle manufacturers to generate eRINs, rather than the renewable natural gas producers that actually produce renewable electricity. EPA's eRINs proposal is inequitable, inconsistent with the statutory intent of the RFS program, and unenforceable. It disadvantages Iowa biofuel producers and Iowa renewable natural gas producers. The current eRINs proposal should be separated from the RFS volumes and reworked in a manner that is equitable to biofuels and consistent with the RFS law.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. I urge EPA to embrace the carbon reduction and cost saving benefits of American-made biofuels as it works to get this rulemaking right.

Sincerely,



Mike Naig
Iowa Secretary of Agriculture