



Dear Administrator McCarthy,

We, the Co-Chairs of the Next Generation Scientists for Biodiesel (NGSB), write you today with the intent of expressing our concern about the EPA's proposed cuts to the federal Renewable Fuel Standard. The NGSB is a student organization designed to assist in the professional development of emerging science leaders with a passion for sustainability by offering opportunities to integrate with the existing scientific community surrounding the biodiesel industry.

The support of the EPA is especially important to us, the students of the NGSB. We see your support as an investment in our future. As scientists, we can contribute to the sustainable growth of biodiesel and make it an even more valuable product for the nation's fuel supply. Cutting the RFS will weaken our career prospects by introducing undue risk into the biodiesel industry. Therefore we urge you to align policy with reality and establish a 2014 biomass-based diesel volume that is at least consistent with last year's production of 1.7 billion gallons and to set the RVO for the 2014 Advanced Biofuels program at the statutorily prescribed level of 3.75 billion gallons. Furthermore, we urge to you keep an eye to the future and establish a 2015 biomass-based diesel volume of at least 2.1 billion gallons.

The biodiesel industry is thriving and we believe it is necessary that policy reflects reality and supports its success. Thus far, the RFS has done exactly that, stimulating the collaboration of farmers, producers, blenders, distributors and retailers. The cooperation between these parties is striking, marked by a tradition of integrity and transparency that has resulted in 62,000 jobs and a record 1.7 billion gallons of biodiesel production last year. We cannot stress enough the importance of a strong policy cornerstone such as the RFS. This legislation has been instrumental in creating the broad buy-in that has led to biodiesel's widespread success as an industry. We ask the EPA to remain committed to a mandate that was set to give the biodiesel industry stability and confidence, and to expand our country's energy production in a reliable, sustainable way.

Why do we strongly support renewables? Among other reasons, the process of petroleum and natural gas extraction entails drilling far into the ground, using a number of undisclosed chemicals and questionable methods, all the while hoping that the chemicals will not contaminate groundwater and endanger the public. In contrast, biofuels facilities are installed close to their feedstock sources; directly contribute to the growth of the local economies in which they exist; and operate with a much higher degree of environmental safety and responsibility.

Biodiesel producers draw on a stream of waste vegetable oil, municipality greases, inedible corn oil, rendering oil, and excess soybean oil, which were otherwise disposed of, exported, or sold inexpensively creating limited value. The biodiesel industry has innovated novel processes that divert these commodities from the waste stream and transform them into a high-value, high-quality fuel product. For the last 20 years biodiesel has grown, regularly exceeding mandates, developing technology, and creating value. With the support of the EPA, biodiesel will continue on this unprecedented path of sustainable growth.

The RFS has been a highly successful piece of legislation thus far and we hope that you will allow it to continue to function as such moving into the future. Our greatest hope is that the United States will remain the top producer of biofuels among any country, consistent with our tradition of excellence, creating opportunities for youth, and leading the world by example.

Sincerely,
Bernardo del Campo, Iowa State University
Dan Browne, Texas A&M University
Deval Pandya, University of Texas, Arlington
Morgan Curtis, Dartmouth College