



October 13, 2021

President Joe Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

The members of the Renewable Fuels Association were alarmed and disappointed by media reports today suggesting that “the White House has been consulting with the oil industry to seek a remedy for rising gasoline prices...”¹ While we share your administration’s position that higher gasoline prices threaten to derail our nation’s economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, we strongly disagree with the notion that opening the Strategic Petroleum Reserve or increasing global crude oil production is the answer. As we expressed in our letter to you of August 13, 2021, calling upon the U.S. and world oil producers—including OPEC+ cartel—to increase oil output is clearly antithetical to your administration’s objectives regarding clean energy development, climate change resilience, domestic job creation, and energy security.²

Instead of pursuing actions that will lead to increased crude oil production, we again urge your administration to pursue a real and immediate solution to higher pump prices—increased production and use of low-carbon renewable fuels like ethanol. Using more domestically produced ethanol would not only result in lower fuel prices for consumers, but it would also support your goals related to clean energy, climate change, and jobs.

Enhancing energy security and diversity while fighting climate change was the exact purpose of the Renewable Fuel Standard, which was adopted as part of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and expanded as part of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007. As a member of the Senate, you supported this landmark legislation and you also called for increased production of low-carbon flexible fuel vehicles (FFVs) capable of running on fuel containing up to 85 percent ethanol (E85).

According to a recent study by an economic advisor to Presidents Ford and Carter, the expanded use of ethanol under the RFS has lowered gasoline prices by an average of 22 cents per gallon in recent years, saving the typical American household \$250 annually.³ In recent weeks, ethanol has sold for 25-30 cents per gallon less than gasoline at the wholesale level. And at retail stations,

¹ B. Lefebvre. Politico. “White House huddle with oil industry as gas prices climb.” Oct. 13, 2021.

² Letter from RFA President and CEO Geoff Cooper to President Biden. August 13, 2021.

<https://ethanolrfa.org/file/1431/8-13-21-President-Biden-Ltr.pdf>

³ P.K. Verleger. The Renewable Fuel Standard Program: Measuring the Impact on Crude Oil and Gasoline Prices. 2019. <https://ethanolrfa.org/file/1948/Verleger-Gas-Prices-Study-2019.pdf>

gasoline containing just 10 percent ethanol (E10) has typically sold for 35-50 cents per gallon less than gasoline with no ethanol. At the same time, the RFS is credited with reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector by nearly 1 billion metric tons since 2008.⁴

Renewable fuels can do even more to keep pump prices in check, reduce petroleum dependence, and reduce carbon emissions. We encourage your administration to expeditiously finalize robust RFS volume requirements for 2021 and 2022, take action to ensure consumers have year-round access to gasoline containing 15% ethanol (E15), and work with Congress to ensure upcoming legislation includes the incentives necessary to support increased FFV production and expanded infrastructure for higher ethanol blends like E15 and E85.

Mr. President, the solution to higher pump prices is not to drill for more crude oil. Rather, the answer lies in the American heartland, where increased production and use of low-carbon renewable fuels can deliver immediate relief to the challenges posed by high pump prices and over-reliance on petroleum.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Geoff Cooper". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Geoff Cooper
President and CEO
Renewable Fuels Association

⁴ Unnasch, S. and D. Parida (2021) GHG Reductions from the RFS2 – A 2020 Update. Life Cycle Associates Report LCA. LCA.6145.213.2021 Prepared for Renewable Fuels Association. https://ethanolrfa.org/file/748/LCA - RFS2-GHG-Update_2020.pdf