



November 29, 2023

The Honorable John Kerry  
U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Climate  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Secretary Kerry,

As you lead the U.S. delegation to Dubai to participate in the 28th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the U.N. Framework Convention of Climate Change (COP28), we encourage you to prominently highlight the U.S. biofuels industry's remarkable contributions to the fight against global climate change. We also ask that you ensure renewable biofuels like ethanol are explicitly included in our nation's plans to meet future greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction commitments.

As amended in 2007, the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) was the first policy in the world to require GHG emissions reductions from transportation fuels. The RFS program has been a phenomenal success, with cumulative GHG savings of more than 1.2 billion metric tons since implementation began. As detailed in the attached report, today's corn-based ethanol already reduces GHG emissions by roughly 50 percent compared to petroleum, and the industry is on a path to achieve net zero carbon emissions in the decades ahead. In fact, our association's biofuel producer members have pledged to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 or sooner.

These GHG reductions are largely attributable to the fact that bioenergy feedstocks effectively recycle atmospheric carbon through a relatively rapid process. Plant-based biofuel feedstocks absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere as they grow, and that carbon dioxide is re-released to the atmosphere when the biofuel is converted to energy in a motor vehicle. The carbon dioxide is then re-absorbed by the next crop of biofuel feedstocks, and the cycle continues.

Under the RFS, domestic renewable fuels production has increased five-fold since 2005, resulting in substantial climate and air quality benefits while simultaneously enhancing U.S. energy security. Indeed, U.S. petroleum imports from OPEC nations are down nearly 80 percent since the RFS was expanded in 2007. The growth in renewable fuels production

has occurred in a manner that is socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable. While the benefits of biofuels are often misunderstood or purposely mischaracterized, farmers and ethanol producers have adopted practices and principles that not only make our nation more energy secure, but also enhance food security; improve air, soil and water quality; enrich social welfare; and advance economic well-being.

Because biofuels have proven to be an effective strategy for combating climate change, more than 30 countries included ethanol and other biofuels as a means of achieving GHG reductions in their Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) submitted for COP21 in Paris in 2015. These countries recognize that biofuels are an important tool that is available today to assist in significantly decarbonizing transportation.

While the United States did not mention the important role of biofuels in its 2015 INDC submission, the Biden administration has appropriately recognized that biofuels must be a critical component of any national strategy to reduce GHG emissions from the transportation sector. The administration clearly understands that biofuels are needed not only to continue reducing emissions from light-duty passenger vehicles, but also to decarbonize the heavy-duty, marine, and aviation sectors as well. In fact, President Biden has stated “You simply can’t get to net zero by 2050 without biofuels.” And U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Michael Regan noted that his agency is “...committed to the growth of renewable fuels that play a critical role in diversifying our country’s energy mix and combatting climate change, all while providing good paying jobs and economic benefits to communities across the country.”

While biofuels like ethanol have already made extraordinary contributions in the fight against climate change, America’s farmers and biofuel producers have even more to offer. A strong endorsement of biofuels by the U.S. delegation in Dubai would not only send a powerful signal to the global community, but it would also serve to unleash further innovation and investment in the U.S. biofuels sector. COP28 is a pivotal forum to outline the U.S. vision for low-carbon biofuels, and we look forward to continuing our work with you and the entire Biden administration to make that vision a reality.

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