

November 10, 2015

The Honorable John F. Kerry
Secretary
U.S. Department of State

Dear Mr. Secretary:

In less than three weeks you will lead the U.S. delegation to Paris to participate in the 21st Session of the Conference of the Parties to the U.N. Framework Convention of Climate Change (COP21). These talks can either be a turning point in the global effort to combat the environmental threat posed by the unrestrained use of fossil fuels, or another frustrating missed opportunity because the perceived consequences of a meaningful shift away from fossil fuels prevents decisive action.

Mr. Secretary, on behalf of America's renewable fuel producers and farmers across the country poised to contribute to lower carbon fuels here and across the globe, I ask you to be bold in Paris. I ask that you encourage other nations to follow the lead of the United States, which has the single most effective and aggressive low carbon fuels program the world has to offer – and it has been a phenomenal success. As amended in 2007, the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) was the first fuels program in the world to require that liquid transportation fuels reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions at least 20% compared to gasoline, with even greater reductions required for advanced (50%) and cellulosic biofuels (60%). The cumulative GHG savings resulting from U.S. ethanol consumption alone since 2007 is roughly 232 million metric tons of CO₂-equivalent, equal to removing more than 5 million cars from the road each year since RFS2 enactment. Indeed, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Gina McCarthy recently acknowledged that the RFS is a “vital component” of America's climate strategy.

Unfortunately, to date the RFS has been America's best kept climate policy secret. As you can see in the attached report, the U.S. failed to mention the RFS in its Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) submission to the United Nations earlier this year. Indeed, there was no mention of the role of biofuels in helping the U.S. drive down GHG emissions at all. That stands in stark contrast to 28 other nations around the globe that did cite their aggressive biofuels policies in their INDC submissions. Brazil's INDC, for example, cited its intent to “increase the share of sustainable biofuels in the Brazilian energy mix to approximately 18% by 2030, by expanding biofuel consumption, increasing ethanol supply, and increasing the share of advanced biofuels.”

In addition to the carbon reductions the RFS is already providing, the program's advanced biofuel requirements have incentivized unprecedented private sector capital investment in new technologies that are being commercialized today and promise to deliver even greater carbon benefits tomorrow. The commercialization of those technologies, currently chilled by EPA's failure to aggressively implement the RFS here, could be given new life with an endorsement in Paris and a renewed commitment of the global community to replace fossil fuels with clean burning renewable fuel technologies.

Mr. Secretary, a very convenient truth is that renewable biofuels are poised to replace a dramatically increasing share of the world's liquid transportation fuel. We are doing that successfully and to great benefit in the United States. With your leadership, the world will follow. But we must not be afraid to trumpet our success.

With best wishes for a successful conference, I am

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Dinneen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Bob Dinneen
President and CEO

cc: Todd Stern, Special Envoy for Climate Change, U.S. Department of State