

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2309

November 14, 2013

The Honorable Barack Obama
President
United States of America
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear President Obama:

I am writing to express serious concerns regarding the leaked draft proposal of the Administration's 2014 volumetric targets under the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS). This approach, if adopted, would further lock our country into dependence on oil, and it would cripple the growing cellulosic and advanced biofuels industry just as it approaches the cusp of commercial-scale production. This leaked draft proposal is inconsistent with the Administration's energy security and economic growth objectives. I urge you to reject it.

At a time when new cellulosic and advanced biofuels plants are fully expected to ramp up commercial-scale production, any cut to the RFS would be particularly damaging. The RFS is a policy foundation on which the cellulosic and advanced biofuels industry must be built. Weakening this foundation just as cellulosic and advanced biofuels begin to take off would jeopardize decades of research and development and negate important economic progress in the biofuels sector.

The RFS is designed to give investors long-term, stable energy policy that they can use as a foundation for large-scale, innovative investment into the development of next-generation biofuels. The policy was intended to break the oil industry's monopoly over our nation's transportation fuel system. It was also designed to give low-carbon competitors in the cellulosic and advanced biofuels space access to the market. That is why the low renewable fuel targets in the leaked draft are of concern. While the RFS allows EPA to adjust volumetric targets when there is not enough available fuel to meet the target, the leaked draft proposal lowers targets for a number of critical biofuel categories that are meeting and even surpassing RFS targets. The uncertain investment environment this would create would be particularly harmful for innovative startup companies in the cellulosic and advanced biofuels space.

If adopted, this leaked draft would hurt innovation and investment in the U.S. economy, including rural economies. It will negatively impact our environmental and energy security goals, and it will further increase our reliance on oil. I therefore urge you to reject any proposed rule from EPA or OMB that mirrors the content of the leaked draft proposal.

Sincerely,



Al Franken
U.S. Senator