



"toni crane"
<twhemc@yahoo.com>
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To Group A-AND-R-DOCKET@EPA
cc
bcc
Subject Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2008-0380

To the EPA,

I believe that our country's ethanol mandates are hurting our economy. I am writing to ask you to grant Governor Rick Perry's request for a waiver of 50% of the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) mandate for ethanol produced from grain.

A major problem with ethanol is its impact on the environment. Though originally touted as an environmentally friendly alternative to gasoline, scientists are discovering that ethanol production has serious implications for the environment. No conclusive evidence supports claims that it helps the environment by reducing air pollutants. For example, ethanol releases high levels of nitrogen oxide -- one of the principal ingredients of smog -- when burned.

There is no doubt that ethanol production has significantly affected the price of corn, but there also is general consensus that ethanol mandates and subsidies have contributed to skyrocketing food prices in general. For the last 15 years, U.S. food prices have averaged a 2.5% increase in each year. In 2007, U.S. food prices rose 4% - the highest since 1990 - and are expected to rise 6% in 2008. With prices continuing to rise at the grocery store, Americans cannot afford to replace fuel with food.

The effects of U.S. ethanol mandates are felt across the globe, resulting in rising prices for corn, grains, and other crops. Grains account for over 50% of the diet in some of the poorest countries in the world and the rising cost of food is detrimental to these countries. These rising food prices threaten disaster for the 160 million people worldwide who survive on less than fifty cents a day.

Ethanol alone is not going to solve the energy crisis in the United States because it is not a viable liquid fuel replacement for gasoline. There simply is not enough corn to fuel our vehicles. Last year, the United States burned approximately one-quarter of its national corn supply as fuel, which only led to a 1% reduction in the country's oil consumption. Additionally, ethanol is not as fuel-efficient as regular gasoline, and it is more expensive to produce. We must look for better, more realistic alternatives to reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

Please take action immediately and address the many negative consequences that ethanol mandates are inflicting on the U.S.

Thank you,
Toni Crane