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06/11/2008 06:46 PM

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.

Corn-based ethanol has many negative implications and it is not the solution for the U.S. energy crisis. A gallon of ethanol has about a third less energy than a gallon of gasoline, so mileage drops rapidly. Furthermore, producing corn-based ethanol requires an almost equivalent amount of fossil fuel energy. We need real alternatives to gasoline that address the energy crisis without hurting the environment or affecting food prices.

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

Thank you,  
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