



STATE OF MINNESOTA

Office of Governor Mark Dayton

130 State Capitol ♦ 75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard ♦ Saint Paul, MN 55155

September 28, 2012

The Honorable Lisa Jackson
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Ms. Jackson:

I write to share my strong support for maintaining the federal Renewable Fuels Standard (RFS).

The RFS benefits the nation's energy and agricultural industries, and supports strong communities across the country, particularly in the Midwest. Recent economic analyses by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture show that more than 12,000 jobs are supported by our renewable fuels sector. Nationwide, renewable fuels support hundreds of thousands of jobs. In addition, renewable fuels production provides significant environmental and energy security benefits. Ethanol used in place of gasoline helps reduce carbon dioxide emissions by as much as 50 percent. Since 2005, the increased use of ethanol and other domestic renewable fuels has contributed to major force in reducing our net foreign petroleum dependence to less than 50 percent.

Despite the significant benefits of ethanol and renewable fuels, extreme drought conditions have triggered calls to modify the RFS. I do not dispute the drought or its harmful impact. However, I question whether changes to the policy would provide the kind of immediate and significant relief our livestock sector seeks. Furthermore, drastic steps such as waivers to the RFS would endanger the jobs and other economic benefits now generated by renewable fuels. The RFS sends a strong signal to investors at home and around the world of America's commitment to renewable fuels. Backing away from the RFS would create uncertainty about long-term U.S. energy policy, with lingering, negative impacts.

I believe we can provide more immediate assistance to our livestock industry through actions such as Agriculture Secretary Vilsack's use of Section 32 funds for commodity purchases. In the longer-term, I am pleased to learn that markets are working already to correct the drought impacts. For example, seed producers are making significant investments to produce more productive and drought-tolerant grains.

In conclusion, the RFS allows us to make strong progress toward energy independence, a cleaner environment, and job creation. I urge you to maintain the RFS. Please contact me at my office at 651-201-3499 if you would like to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Dayton".

Mark Dayton
Governor