

**Audubon * Center for Biological Diversity * Clean Air Task Force
Defenders of Wildlife * Earthjustice * Earth Policy Institute * Ecology Center
Environment America * Environment Northeast * Environmental Working Group
Friends of the Earth * League of Conservation Voters
Natural Resources Defense Council * Pew Environment Group * Public Citizen
Southern Environmental Law Center * Southern Alliance for Clean Energy
Sierra Club * Union of Concerned Scientists * The Wilderness Society
World Wildlife Fund**

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
Chairman, Environment and Public Works
Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman, Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry
Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeff Bingaman
Chairman, Energy and Natural Resources
Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

August 26, 2009

Dear Chairmen Boxer, Bingaman and Harkin,

On behalf of our millions of members, activists and contributors, we write to express our staunch support for the inclusion of emissions from indirect land-use change in the life-cycle greenhouse gas emissions from biofuels in the Renewable Fuels Standard (RFS). **We strongly oppose any attempt to undermine the accounting of the lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions associated with biofuels and look forward to working with you to ensure that biofuels deliver on their environmental promise.** Our support for biofuels has always been based on the role that low carbon biofuels can play in a clean energy economy. However, without complete lifecycle accounting, we have no assurance that biofuels are better than petroleum, and we cannot support biofuels as part of a clean energy future.

The Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (EISA) mandates that biofuels perform better than gasoline on a full lifecycle assessment of greenhouse gas emissions, including emissions from indirect land use change. Proposals like those in the House Climate and Energy Bill, H.R. 2454, would strip the critical requirement that EPA include the greenhouse gas emission impacts of indirect land use change for five years and possibly longer. As a result, this provision, and others like it, would ignore the carbon emissions from clearing of native grasslands and forests that are exacerbated by the production of biofuels. This allows biofuels that contribute more to global warming than petroleum to qualify for the RFS, thus undermining the nation's ability to reduce the pollution that causes global warming.

Agriculture and forestry are poised to be leaders in sustainable climate solutions and this represents an historic opportunity for rural development. But to realize this opportunity we need policies built on sound science, and science supports the inclusion of direct and indirect land-use change in the assessment of biofuels. We look forward to working with Congress to develop a sound scientific foundation for policies that will help us reach our common goal. The EPA is currently using the best available science to implement the RFS and is evaluating the impacts of biofuels in an open and transparent way, including a process that takes into consideration an independent peer review of EPA's methodology. That process should be respected and allowed to proceed to completion. Proposals that cut short EPA's work would prejudice the outcome of this rigorous process and remove an essential tool to ensuring we do not make global warming worse.

We urge you not to proceed with any proposal that would short circuit the lifecycle assessment in existing law and look forward to working with you to ensure that biofuels are truly sustainable. We need your support to continue to move forward on curbing global warming.

Sincerely,

Brian Moore,
Director, Budget and Appropriations
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CC: US Senate