

September 21, 2009

**RE: Vote Against Amendments in Interior Appropriations that Prevent EPA from Calculating Indirect Impacts from Biofuels Production**

Dear Senator,

We write to urge you to vote against any amendment in the Interior Appropriations Bill that will prevent the EPA from completing its assessment of the full life-cycle impacts, including those from indirect land-use change, from biofuels in the Renewable Fuels Standard (RFS). Preventing EPA from analyzing indirect land-use change is an affront to science and ignores the global impact that US energy and agricultural policies have on the world's poor.

Calculating the land-use impacts of increased biofuels production is critical to encouraging the production of biofuels that do not compete with food. As demand for biofuels increases, more and more land is shifted away from food production and towards biofuel production. When this happens, short supply of food results in volatile price spikes, that is, until more land is converted from a natural ecosystem to agricultural land. The past few years are evidence that this is happening. The calculation of indirect land-use change is the only mechanism we have to discourage the production of biofuels that cause these massive market disturbances and impact food prices.

Increased biofuel production has caused land use shifts around the world, resulting in displaced agricultural production in local communities. For example, in Colombia, communities have been forcibly removed from their farm lands as the country vastly increases its palm oil production. In country after country, we hear both that cropland is being directly converted to biofuels production and that forests and other so-called "marginal" lands are being used to produce fuel feedstocks, forcing farmers to shift food production elsewhere.

Over 1 billion people worldwide suffer from hunger. Over 10 percent of households in the US experience hunger or are at risk of hunger. US energy policy should not contribute to this already occurring epidemic. As you consider amendments to the Interior Appropriations Bill, **please vote against any amendment that would prevent EPA from calculating the full life-cycle impacts of biofuels production, including indirect land-use change.**

Sincerely,

**ActionAid International US**  
**Agricultural Missions, Inc.**  
**Center for Food Safety**  
**Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach**  
**Food First**  
**Food for the Hungry**  
**Friends Committee on National Legislation**  
**Friends of the Earth US**  
**Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns**  
**National Catholic Rural Life Conference**  
**Oxfam America**  
**Rural Coalition**  
**WHY Hunger**

CC: US Senate