

March 16, 2017

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

We are proud veterans of the U.S. military who currently work in America's ethanol industry. In serving our country both overseas and here at home, we have developed an intimate understanding of the threats to our nation's security and economic vitality posed by overreliance on foreign oil. For that reason, we support the vision of your America First Energy Plan¹ and agree that more can and should be done to develop all of our domestic energy resources, including renewable fuels like ethanol.

As part of your plan, we strongly encourage you to underscore the important role that American-made ethanol plays in reducing petroleum imports, lowering fuel costs for consumers, creating jobs in rural communities, and protecting our air and water.

Working and investing in the ethanol industry allows us to continue honoring our commitment to make America stronger and more independent. As men and women with a strong sense of patriotism and duty to country, we take great pride in knowing we work in an industry that improves our nation's energy security, economic vitality, and environmental quality each and every day. We're also proud that our industry has created tens of thousands of quality jobs in small towns and rural communities across the nation, allowing us to share with our families a way of life that is central to American values and our cultural identity.

The ethanol industry has been a key catalyst of the American energy boom over the past decade, and is poised for even larger contributions in the future. Our industry has grown from 81 plants producing 255,000 barrels per day (bpd) in 2005 to 213 plants producing more than 1 million bpd currently. Cumulatively, we have added nearly 3.3 billion barrels of low-cost, high-octane liquid fuel to domestic supplies since 2005.

Rapid growth in U.S. ethanol production has helped curtail petroleum imports in recent years. Net imports of crude oil and petroleum products peaked at 12.5 million bpd in 2005 and have since fallen to 4.7 million bpd in 2015. Together with the American oil and gas industry, we have made great strides in reducing imports and improving domestic energy security.

But true energy independence has so far remained elusive. The United States continues to import approximately 3.5 million bpd from OPEC nations, meaning our economy sends roughly \$140 million each day—or \$500 per American household per year—to the OPEC cartel. As we have seen

¹ The White House. "An America First Energy Plan." <https://www.whitehouse.gov/america-first-energy>

in recent years, OPEC continues to assert its influence on economies around the world by manipulating oil prices. In 2015, the cartel flooded the global crude oil market, which resulted in a 12-year low for world oil prices, a decline in U.S. production, and economic hardship in leading oil and gas states. In late 2016, OPEC members agreed to slash output, sending world crude oil prices significantly higher.

As veterans, many of us have witnessed firsthand the dangers of our reliance on oil imports from hostile and unstable parts of the world. We share your belief that the United States can and must do more to insulate itself from the negative impacts associated with oil import dependence and OPEC manipulation. Your continued commitment to the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) and pledge to “end restrictions that keep higher blends of ethanol from being sold” are among the strategies that will help free our economy from the influence of OPEC oil ministers once and for all.²

Thus, we respectfully urge you to include a prominent role for ethanol and the RFS in your America First Energy Plan. We look forward to working with you to further advance the goals of greater energy security, accelerated job creation, lower fuel costs for American families, and cleaner air and water.

Sincerely,

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² McConnell, Anna. “Trump Expresses Support for RFS, Biofuel Industry.” Agriculture.com. Jan. 19, 2016.
http://www.agriculture.com/news/business/trump-expresses-supt-f-rfs-biofuel_5-ar51987

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