

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 17, 2017

The Honorable E. Scott Pruitt  
Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Mr. Pruitt:

We write today to express our willingness to work with you and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to grow our country's economy and support American jobs. Thank you for all of the answers you provided to us and our colleagues over the course of your confirmation process in the Senate. We are anxious to support you in your efforts to remove harmful and unnecessary regulations that serve as barriers to economic growth and effective environmental protection.

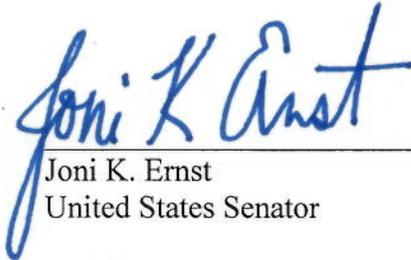
One such barrier we would like to highlight is a nonsensical regulation that makes it more difficult to sell gasoline with ethanol content above ten percent during the summer months. The Clean Air Act (CAA) limits the volatility of gasoline, as measured by Reid Vapor Pressure (RVP), to nine pounds per square inch (psi) from June 1 – September 15. In 1989, the EPA adopted an interim 1-psi RVP “waiver” for gasoline blends containing ten percent ethanol (E10), and this waiver was later codified through amendments to the Clean Air Act in 1990.

Despite repeated requests, the EPA has refused to grant this same 1-psi waiver to gasoline blends that contain more than ten percent ethanol, such as E15. As a result, sales of E15 in most of the country are severely restricted between June 1 and September 15 – the peak summer driving season. Retailers are forced to find specially tailored low-RVP gasoline blendstock to make E15 in the summertime, or avoid selling the fuel altogether. Neither of these options are practical or economical for most retailers and their customers.

Ironically, the volatility of E15 and other higher blends is actually lower than that of E10, meaning there is a slight evaporative emissions benefit associated with replacing a gallon of E10 with a gallon of E15. Unfortunately, without the waiver being extended, this archaic policy prevents E15 from enjoying the same treatment year round, discouraging retailers from installing infrastructure to distribute these fuel alternatives, and ultimately increasing costs for consumers.

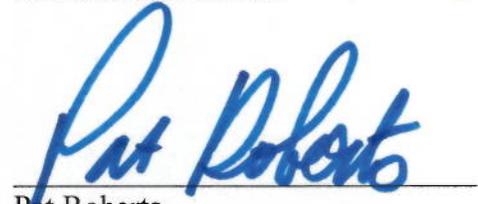
We ask that you extend the 1-psi RVP waiver to E15 and higher blends, to eliminate this needless obstacle to consumer choice. We look forward to working with you to find a permanent solution to this issue.

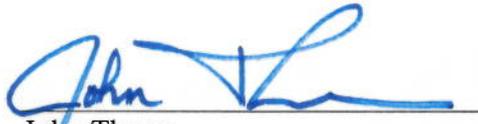
Sincerely,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joni K. Ernst  
United States Senator

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Charles E. Grassley  
United States Senator

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Roy Blunt  
United States Senator

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Pat Roberts  
United States Senator

  
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John Thune  
United States Senator