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## **America Needs a True Renewable Energy Policy**

### *Coalition of Leading Environmental Groups Release Comprehensive Biofuels Platform*

**WASHINGTON** – The blind rush by lawmakers to embrace the failed promise of current conventional biofuels has led to growing skepticism in the environmental community that even the much touted next-generation biofuels will become a viable component of a larger US renewable energy portfolio.

Flying in the face of the overwhelming evidence that corn ethanol is causing more environmental damage than good, USDA and EPA have commenced discussions aimed at raising ethanol blending levels in the United States to as high as E15 from the current level of E10. The blend move comes as the ethanol industry faces hard economic realities despite lavish subsidies and tax breaks – - federal support that should go to proven and clean renewable energy solutions like wind and solar.

Today, a coalition of leading environmental groups, released a comprehensive platform [inset link to platform] to address the critical and immediate energy challenges facing America. Highlights of the platform that encourages a sensible biofuels policy include:

- It is time to pause and take a deep breath on federal biofuels policy. Federal policy should no longer seek to expand the production and use of corn ethanol and the US government should freeze the renewable fuels mandate (RFS) for conventional fuels at current levels.
- Change the direction of US biofuels policy by phasing out the blender's tax credit while phasing in tax credits or subsidies for renewable fuels that are scaled in accordance to the fuel's relative environmental, health, and consumer protection merits.
- Rebalance the U.S. renewable energy and energy conservation portfolio to reflect the relative contribution true renewable energy options make to reducing fossil fuel use, enhancing the environment, spurring economic development, and increasing energy security.
- Proceed with caution by engaging in serious and practical research on "advanced biofuels" to ensure we avoid the same kind of "unintended consequences" that have resulted from the push to expand production of corn ethanol.

Go here [insert link] for the full platform

"It's time for energy policy to be based on sound science and not political expedients," said

Dulce Fernandes with the Network for New Energy Choices. "Taxpayer dollars should be used to support transportation fuels that bring about real reductions in greenhouse gas emissions - corn ethanol is clearly not the way to go."

"We need to re-think biofuels policy in the U.S. so we incentivize only the most sustainable biofuels," said Kate McMahon of Friends of the Earth. "Already, we're seeing environmental and social harm from biofuels, including rampant deforestation and increasing food prices. If we continue on the same course, biofuels will continue to worsen global warming but fail to reduce oil dependence in a meaningful way."

"Building a future economy based on renewable energy is absolutely critical to our country and our children. We need to overhaul our biofuels policies now to rescue any hope that sustainable biofuels will be part of that future," said Craig Cox, Midwest Vice-president for the Environmental Working Group.

"We are at a critical juncture," said Jonathan Lewis of the Clean Air Task Force. "If new policies for promoting biofuels incorporate the same flawed assumptions that plague Washington's previous efforts, we will be stuck with another generation of biofuels that undermine public health and harm the environment."

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