

Dear Iowa Candidates for Federal Office:

We are asking each of you to oppose new legislation that will have far-reaching consequences for Iowa's biofuels producers and farmers.

Earlier this week, a group of U.S. Senators and Representatives introduced legislation (the Zero-Emission Vehicles Act of 2020) that would begin restricting the sale of passenger vehicles capable of utilizing biofuels like ethanol and biodiesel by 2025 and would completely ban their sale by 2035. Alarming the bill was cosponsored by some senators who have campaigned as biofuels advocates as recently as earlier this year during the Iowa caucuses. Further, this legislation mirrors a recent Executive Order signed by Gavin Newsom, governor of California – the largest vehicle market in the United States.

Needless to say, banning the sale of new vehicles powered by biofuels would be a hammer blow to Iowa's ethanol and biodiesel producers and would crush a vital market for Iowa farmers. Today, over half of Iowa's corn crop goes into the production of ethanol and its coproducts, and over one-third of Iowa soybean oil goes to biodiesel production. Losing this market could very likely trigger another farm crisis.

Further, banning the sale of biofuel powered vehicles is a flawed approach to combating climate change. While electric vehicles (EVs) will certainly play an increasing role in meeting our nation's transportation needs, it is a fallacy to consider them "zero emission." In fact, studies have shown that in some parts of the country, a flexible fuel vehicle (FFV) running on E85 has a lower carbon footprint than an EV that was charged using electricity generated by coal. Biodiesel and renewable diesel can also outperform EVs in some situations depending on feedstock and the source of electricity. The federal Renewable Fuel Standard, California's Low-Carbon Fuel Standard, and Oregon's Clean Fuels Standard firmly establish the carbon reduction benefits of ethanol and biodiesel.

In addition, there are exciting opportunities to pair EV and biofuel technologies to produce superior performance and environmental results for consumers. Hybrid EV-FFVs could play an important role for years beyond 2035. Biofuels are also continually reducing their carbon footprint due to improved processing technologies and more efficient farming practices.

If there is to be federal legislation aimed at addressing vehicle carbon emissions, the best way to do this is to set reduction targets and let the fuel and vehicle market decide how to achieve the goals – a strategy that has worked in Oregon and California. Biofuels deserve a fair opportunity to compete in a low-carbon economy.

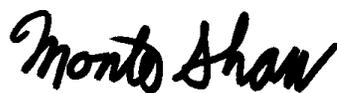
As such, we urge you to oppose any legislation, including this bill, that is not technology neutral. The environmental challenges facing this country are too great to outlaw promising biofuels technologies. The economic challenges facing rural America are too great to not fight for a vital market opportunity for farmers.

We appreciate your quick response.

Sincerely,



Grant Kimberley
Iowa Biodiesel Board



Monte Shaw
Iowa Renewable Fuels Association