

July 20, 2017

The Honorable John Barrasso
U.S. Senate Environment and
Public Works Committee
Majority Office
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Carper
U.S. Senate Environment and
Public Works Committee
Minority Office
456 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Advanced Biofuels Industry Supports S. 517

Dear Chairman Barrasso and Ranking Member Carper:

On behalf of the advanced and cellulosic biofuels industry, we are writing to urge your support for the Consumer and Fuel Retailer Choice Act (S. 517). With the Environment and Public Works Committee (EPW) hearing now behind us, we would like to touch on a few key aspects of the bill.

As we stated in a letter dated June 12, S. 517 is vital to the advanced biofuels industry. Cellulosic ethanol technology has matured to the point of being commercial ready. Our greatest challenge now is market access. This simple fix to Reid Vapor Pressure (RVP) regulations will allow higher ethanol blends to be sold in non-Reformulated Gasoline (RFG) regions year-round, which in turn will send a strong growth signal to investors in advanced and cellulosic biofuels.

Some stakeholders have characterized S. 517 as a corn ethanol bill. Cellulosic and corn ethanol are the same molecule (ethanol) produced from different feedstocks; both can be blended to make E15. However, the federal Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) sets renewable fuel blending obligations on oil companies. With the conventional biofuel standard now fulfilled (at 15 billion gallons per year), all future growth under the RFS is in advanced/cellulosic biofuels. The RFS puts the cellulosic ethanol industry in best position to benefit from passage of this legislation.

Finally, any effort to attach RFS-related amendments to S. 517 – even if intended to help advanced or cellulosic biofuels – should be abandoned and rejected. Opening the RFS to legislative change will destabilize investment and make it harder for cellulosic and advanced biofuels to thrive. Importantly, the current proposal does not change U.S. motor fuel policy – it merely clarifies that an RVP waiver already offered to 10 percent ethanol blends is available for higher ethanol blends (because they are cleaner). As stated, S. 517 is already good for cellulosic biofuels. We believe amendments will only convolute the premise of the bill as a regulatory fix and undercut its chances for passage.

Our previous letter extols the environmental and economic virtues of higher ethanol blends. E15, for example, is a cheaper, higher octane, lower carbon, American-made, renewable motor fuel that does not create air quality issues according to U.S. federal government vehicle testing. The Consumer and Fuel Retailer Choice Act (S. 517) will bring better fuels to the pump. We very much appreciate your support.

Sincerely,



