

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 16, 2021

The Honorable Gina McCarthy
Climate Czar
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Administrator McCarthy,

Nearly twelve years ago, you accepted my invitation to visit a family farm in Iowa. I again thank you for joining me for a full day of presentations and tours. That day, my goal was to help you understand American agriculture from the perspective of a family farmer and to have a close-up view of innovative advances in the areas of agriculture and biofuels.

Iowa has continued to be a leader in renewable fuel production. As the number one producer of corn, ethanol, biodiesel, and cellulosic ethanol, Iowa is proud to lead the renewable fuels industry. Most recently, a comprehensive new study by scientists from Harvard University, Tufts University, and Environmental Health & Engineering Inc., shows using corn ethanol in place of gasoline reduces greenhouse gas emissions by almost half with some corn ethanol in the market today achieving a 61% reduction.

The study shows the efficiency improvements made by both farmers and biofuels producers. The adoption of new technologies in precision agriculture has led to a dramatic reduction in the lifecycle carbon intensity of corn ethanol.

In the decade since your visit, Iowa's wind industry has exploded. Our state is proud to rank second behind Texas in terms of production. Iowa is leading the nation with the highest wind power share, and in 2019, wind turbines in Iowa generated more electricity than the state's coal-fired power plants for the first time.

As the "father" of the Wind Energy Incentives Act of 1993, I sought to give this alternative energy source the ability to compete against fossil fuel energy sources. I have been proud to be a leader in promoting alternative and renewable energy sources as a way of protecting the environment and increasing America's energy independence. In fact, Iowa's low-cost, dependable, and renewable energy grid has attracted companies like Google, Facebook, Microsoft, and others to invest heavily in the facilities in my state in order to meet their clean energy commitments¹.

All of this being said, I was quite surprised when I read a quote recently attributed to you in an interview with Kevin Adler². The quote that stuck out is the following, "We have to get the middle of the country understanding and active on climate. We have to show them what resilience looks like." We have heard similar sentiments for years from Washington D.C. that the middle of the country needs saving or that the middle of the country needs to learn from the East and West Coast.

1. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/iowa/2014/11/24/8-reasons-why-google-facebook-and-microsoft-are-investing-in-the-hawkeye-state/?sh=2bc15ce82aff>
2. <https://ihsmarkit.com/research-analysis/national-climate-advisor-gina-mccarthy-promises-jobs.html>

Let me assure you - politicians, scholars, and think tanks would be wise to look closely at how Iowa has become a leader in renewable energy production. From manufacturing, to education, to research, Iowa is a true leader in sustainable energy.

So, instead of pointing the finger, I am hoping we can again work together and learn from each other. During his inaugural address, I took President Biden's words to heart, "This is our historic moment of crisis and challenge and unity is the path forward. And we must meet this moment as the United States of America. If we do that, I guarantee you we will not fail."

Surely belittling folks in the middle of the country with disparaging comments is not what President Biden meant in his inaugural address. Therefore, in a show of unity, I would like to invite President Biden, yourself, other relevant cabinet officials, and White House staff working on energy and environmental issues to come to Iowa and learn.

In your trip to Iowa previously, you expressed a willingness to learn from people in the middle of the country. It seems that another visit is in order to see the tremendous progress we have continued to make. It would be a great opportunity for the Administration to learn just how resilient the middle of the country can be.

Iowans are committed to using our natural resources in an environmentally responsible manner. It is critical that the Biden administration understand the impact of the decisions the federal government will make that will be either beneficial or harmful to Iowa's progress and role in producing food, feed, and fuel for our nation and the world.

I look forward to your response to my invitation. I also welcome you to use my office as a resource going forward for information about the clean energy research, innovation, and products produced in the middle of the country.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Charles Grassley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "C".

Charles Grassley
United States Senator