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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-5004

August 8, 2012

Administrator Lisa Jackson
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Room 300, Ariel Rios Building
1200 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Jackson,

I am writing today to ask that you immediately consider using your existing waiver authority to adjust the corn-ethanol mandate for the Renewable Fuels Standard (RFS) to reflect the impact the mandate is having on increasing food and feed costs. Additionally, I would urge you to take into consideration that impact as you decide on the volumetric requirements for the RFS for the 2013.

According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), drought conditions and a "rapid decline in crop conditions" since early June have caused the USDA to reduce the projected U.S. corn yield by 20 bushels per acre in its latest forecast. The USDA also reported that the 50 percent of the nation's corn crop was rated as poor-to-very-poor earlier this week. Last month, similar forecasts pushed U.S. corn prices to record levels, and the price remains exceptionally high today.

The use of corn to meet the requirements of the RFS is contributing to higher prices because a substantial amount of our nation's food crop is diverted to make fuel. With approximately 40 percent of our nation's corn crop diverted from the normal food supply chain to make fuel, feed and food prices are skyrocketing to unacceptable levels for producers and working families.

All of these factors make it essential for you to use the authority given to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to waive all or portions of the RFS if there is inadequate supply to meet the mandate or when such a waiver will prevent economic harm to the country, a region, or a state. When you combine the USDA's projections for food price inflation at levels significantly higher than normal economic inflation with the already struggling economy, families and businesses will continue to struggle if you do not grant this waiver.

I look forward to your prompt consideration of this request and hope that you will agree that an immediate adjustment of the corn-ethanol mandate is necessary.

Sincerely,



Michael B. Enzi
United States Senate