Sobering Up: The Case For Ending the Ethanol Mandate

By “Coach Vance” Trefethen

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Sobering Up: The Case For Ending the Ethanol Mandate

Economist Nicolas Loris said it best in February 2016, when he said QUOTE:

“Much like many campaigns out there, the Renewable Fuel Standard that mandates the use of biofuels in our gasoline has been full of empty promises. When Congress passed the Renewable Fuel Standard in 2005 and expanded the mandate in 2007, policymakers promised reduced dependence on foreign oil, a new source of cleaner energy to lower gas prices, a stronger economy, and an improved environment. This was certainly wishful thinking, as none of it has come true.”[[1]](#footnote-1)

END QUOTE. Please join my partner and me as we affirm that The United States federal government should substantially reform its agriculture and/or food safety policy in the United States.

OBSERVATION 1. We offer the following DEFINITIONS.

**Policy**: “a high-level overall plan embracing the general goals and acceptable procedures especially of a governmental body” (*Merriam Webster Online Dictionary, copyright 2016* [*http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/policy*](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/policy))  
  
**Substantial**: “large in amount, size or number” (*Merriam Webster Online Dictionary, copyright 2016* [*http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/substantially*](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/substantially)*)*

**Agriculture:** “the science, art, or practice of cultivating the soil, producing crops, and raising livestock and in varying degrees the preparation and marketing of the resulting products” (*Merriam Webster Online Dictionary, copyright 2016* [*http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/agriculture*](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/agriculture))

OBSERVATION 2. INHERENCY, the structure of the Status Quo. One key FACT: The Ethanol Mandate

The federal Renewable Fuel Standard, RFS, mandates the use of agriculturally produced ethanol in US gasoline

NEW YORK TIMES 2016 (journalist Coral Davenport) 31 Jan 2016 “Ethanol Mandate, a Boon to Iowa Alone, Faces Rising Resistance” <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/01/us/politics/ethanol-mandate-a-boon-to-iowa-alone-faces-rising-resistance.html?_r=0>

When the Renewable Fuel Standard was enacted, lawmakers hoped to ease the nation’s dependence on foreign oil while promoting a low-carbon, climate-friendly alternative. It was viewed as such a success that Congress increased the mandate in 2007: The nation’s gasoline refiners must buy and blend an increasing amount of ethanol every year, rising to 36 billion gallons by 2022 from 15 billion now. Only the first 15 billion gallons are supposed to come from corn. The rest of the ethanol is mandated to come from nonfood crops like switch grass, to prevent ethanol from driving up food costs.

OBSERVATION 3. The HARMS.

Harm 1. Higher fuel prices. Ethanol costs $10 billion/year in higher consumer gasoline prices

Robert Bryce 2015 (senior fellow at Manhattan Institute) 5 June 2015 “The Corn Ethanol Boondoggle Continues – See the EPA’s Latest Rule” <http://www.nationalreview.com/article/419354/corn-ethanol-boondoggle-continues-see-epas-latest-rule-robert-bryce>

As I showed in a recent report for the Manhattan Institute, the Renewable Fuel Standard now imposes about $10 billion annually in additional fuel costs on motorists over and above what they would have paid for gasoline alone. Since 1982, when measured on an energy-equivalent basis (ethanol contains two-thirds as much heat energy as gasoline does), ethanol has always been more expensive than gasoline. Between 2007 and 2014, about 92.5 billion gallons of ethanol were mixed into domestic gasoline supplies. Over that eight-year period, the energy-equivalent cost of ethanol averaged about 90 cents per gallon more than gasoline. Motorists thus incurred about $83 billion — roughly $10 billion annually — in additional fuel costs over and above what they would have paid for gasoline alone.

Harm 2. Air pollution deaths. We see this in 2 subpoints

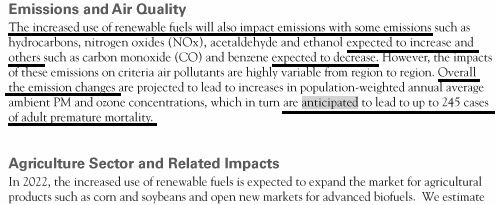
A. 80% worse than gasoline. Ethanol emissions cause 80% more air pollution mortality than gasoline

Associated Press 2014. (journalist Seth Borenstein) 15 Dec 2014 Study: Your all-electric car may not be so green <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/e493f4621bf24bf9adc94ae1a95ac296/study-your-all-electric-car-may-not-be-so-green> (brackets added; Jason Hill is an engineering professor at Univ. of Minnesota)

Hybrids and diesel engines are cleaner than gas, causing fewer air pollution deaths and spewing less heat-trapping gas. But ethanol isn't, with 80 percent more air pollution mortality, according to the study. "If we're using ethanol for environmental benefits, for air quality and climate change, we're going down the wrong path," [engineering professor Jason] Hill said.

B. EPA admits. The EPA’s own study admits ethanol emissions will cause 245 additional deaths by the year 2022

Environmental Protection Agency 2010 “EPA Finalizes Regulations for the National Renewable Fuel Standard Program for 2010 and Beyond - Regulatory Announcement” <http://nepis.epa.gov/Exe/ZyNET.exe/P1006DVM.txt?ZyActionD=ZyDocument&Client=EPA&Index=2006%20Thru%202010&Docs=&Query=%28anticipated%29%20OR%20FNAME%3D%22P1006DVM.txt%22%20AND%20FNAME%3D%22P1006DVM.txt%22&Time=&EndTime=&SearchMethod=1&TocRestrict=n&Toc=&TocEntry=&QField=&QFieldYear=&QFieldMonth=&QFieldDay=&UseQField=&IntQFieldOp=0&ExtQFieldOp=0&XmlQuery=&File=D%3A%5CZYFILES%5CINDEX%20DATA%5C06THRU10%5CTXT%5C00000015%5CP1006DVM.txt&User=ANONYMOUS&Password=anonymous&SortMethod=h%7C-&MaximumDocuments=1&FuzzyDegree=0&ImageQuality=r75g8/r75g8/x150y150g16/i425&Display=p%7Cf&DefSeekPage=x&SearchBack=ZyActionL&Back=ZyActionS&BackDesc=Results%20page&MaximumPages=1&ZyEntry=7>



Harm 3. Higher food prices and hunger. Diverting corn from food to ethanol increases food prices and hunger

NEW YORK TIMES 2016 (journalist Coral Davenport) 31 Jan 2016 “Ethanol Mandate, a Boon to Iowa Alone, Faces Rising Resistance” <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/01/us/politics/ethanol-mandate-a-boon-to-iowa-alone-faces-rising-resistance.html?_r=0>

But high corn prices have raised the cost of livestock feed, and in turn have made meat and dairy more expensive for consumers. “It’s a tax on people who eat food,” said Todd Simmons, the chairman of the National Chicken Council and the chief executive of Simmons Foods, a poultry producer in Siloam Springs, Ark. A 2013 report by FarmEcon, Mr. Elam’s consulting firm, said that in the eight years since the passage of the Renewable Fuel Standard, the average annual cost of groceries for a family of four had grown by about $2,000. “Mandates for food-based biofuels like corn ethanol increase hunger,” said Kelly Stone, a policy analyst with ActionAid USA, a nonprofit advocacy group working to end poverty.

Harm 4. Gulf of Mexico Dead Zone.

Ethanol-fueled dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico is as bad as the BP oil spill

Carolyn Lochhead 2010 (journalist) 6 July 2010 “Dead zone in gulf linked to ethanol production” SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE <http://www.sfgate.com/politics/article/Dead-zone-in-gulf-linked-to-ethanol-production-3183032.php>

While the BP oil spill has been labeled the worst environmental catastrophe in recent U.S. history, a biofuel is contributing to a Gulf of Mexico "dead zone" the size of New Jersey that scientists say could be every bit as harmful to the gulf. Each year, nitrogen used to fertilize corn, about a third of which is made into ethanol, leaches from Midwest croplands into the Mississippi River and out into the gulf, where the fertilizer feeds giant algae blooms. As the algae dies, it settles to the ocean floor and decays, consuming oxygen and suffocating marine life. Known as hypoxia, the oxygen depletion kills shrimp, crabs, worms and anything else that cannot escape. The dead zone has doubled since the 1980s and is expected this year to grow as large as 8,500 square miles and hug the Gulf Coast from Alabama to Texas. As to which is worse, the oil spill or the hypoxia, "it's a really tough call," said [Nathaniel Ostrom](http://www.sfgate.com/search/?action=search&channel=politics&inlineLink=1&searchindex=gsa&query=%22Nathaniel+Ostrom%22), a zoologist at Michigan State [University](http://www.sfgate.com/education-guide/). "There's no real answer to that question."

OBSERVATION 4. We offer the following PLAN implemented by Congress and the President

1. Congress votes to repeal the Renewable Fuel Standard biofuels mandate   
2. Funding through existing agencies and existing budgets, with funding for enforcement of RFS canceled.   
3. Plan takes effect 2 days after an affirmative ballot.  
4. Affirmative speeches may clarify

OBSERVATION 5. SOLVENCY

Repealing the mandate is the only solution

Nicolas Loris 2016 (master’s degree in economics; research fellow in Heritage Foundation's Roe Institute for Economic Policy Studies) 4 Feb 2016 “America May Be Catching On to Ethanol Racket” <http://www.cnsnews.com/commentary/nicolas-loris/finally-america-may-be-catching-ethanol-racket>

The problem with the Renewable Fuel Standard is not the use of biofuels themselves, but rather that it is a policy that mandates the production and consumption of the fuel. Having politicians centrally plan energy decisions best left for the private sector distorts markets and demonstrates the high costs and unintended consequences of government control. Congress should admit that the Renewable Fuel Standard is costly to the economy and the environment, benefiting a select group of special interests. Importantly, Congress should recognize that the federal government has no business determining what type of fuel we should use and how much of it we should consume each year. The only viable solution to this broken policy is to repeal the biofuels mandate altogether.

2A Evidence: Ethanol Mandate

DEFINITIONS & BACKGROUND

Renewable Fuel Standard = the ethanol mandate, created in 2005

WALL STREET JOURNAL 2015. 15 Nov 2015 “Should the U.S. End the Ethanol Mandate?” <http://www.wsj.com/articles/should-the-u-s-end-the-ethanol-mandate-1447643514>

The Renewable Fuel Standard, otherwise known as the ethanol mandate, requires refiners to lend an increasing amount of biofuels into the U.S. gasoline supply each year. Created in 2005, the standard was meant to help reduce carbon emissions as well as U.S. dependence on foreign oil.

Definition & background on ocean dead zones

Sarah Zielinski 2014 (award-winning science writer and editor. She is a contributing writer in science for Smithsonian.com) “Ocean Dead Zones Are Getting Worse Globally Due to Climate Change” 10 Nov 2014 <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/ocean-dead-zones-are-getting-worse-globally-due-climate-change-180953282/?no-ist>

Dead zones are regions where the water has unusually low dissolved oxygen content, and aquatic animals that wander in quickly die. These regions can form naturally, but [human activities](http://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/chinas-massive-algae-bloom-could-leave-the-oceans-water-lifeless-7262513/) can spark their formation or [make them worse](http://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/dead-zone-size-connecticut-gulf-waters-180952260/?no-ist). For instance, dead zones often occur when runoff from farms and cities drains into an ocean or lake and loads up the water with excess nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus. Those nutrients feed a[bloom](http://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/algae-problem-lake-erie-isnt-going-away-anytime-soon-180952256/) of algae, and when those organisms die, they sink through the water column and decompose. The decomposition sucks up oxygen from the water, leaving little available for fish or other marine life.

OPENING QUOTES / AFFIRMATIVE PHILOSOPHY

RFS is broken beyond repair – it should be completely repealed

Daniel Simmons 2015 (J.D. (law degree) from Univ of Va.; American Energy Alliance’s Vice President for Policy; previously served as director of the Natural Resources Task Force at the American Legislative Exchange Council; was a research fellow at the Mercatus Center, and worked as professional staff on the Committee on Resources of the U.S. House of Representatives.) 27 May 2015 “Why Congress Should Fully Repeal the RFS” <http://americanenergyalliance.org/2015/05/27/corn-ethanol-only-repeal-makes-the-rfs-worse/>

The Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) is broken. The problems with the RFS are legion— it is based on incredibly mistaken assumptions about domestic oil production, it gives EPA control over the fuels we use, and increases the cost of fuel. Congress could soon consider two types of reforms to the RFS—either a full repeal of the entire program, or a partial repeal that only would affect corn-based ethanol. A partial repeal of the RFS does not fix the biggest problems caused by the law, and therefore, the entire RFS should be repealed.

INHERENCY

Federal law mandates the use of corn ethanol in gasoline in the United States

Robert Bryce 2016 (senior fellow at Manhattan Institute) 3 Apr 2016 “Ethanol Mandates Need to Go” <http://economics21.org/html/ethanol-mandates-need-go-1736.html>

More importantly, thanks to Congress, we have a federal mandate that requires retailers to blend about [13 billion gallons](http://www.epa.gov/otaq/fuels/renewablefuels/index.htm) of corn ethanol per year into the gasoline they sell to the public. That mandate is just another form of subsidy because it requires motorists to buy a fuel that, on an energy-equivalent basis costs more than conventional gasoline.

RFS mandate doesn’t end in 2022, but switches to yearly targets set by the EPA

Nicolas Loris 2016 (master’s degree in economics; research fellow in Heritage Foundation's Roe Institute for Economic Policy Studies) 4 Feb 2016 “America May Be Catching On to Ethanol Racket” <http://www.cnsnews.com/commentary/nicolas-loris/finally-america-may-be-catching-ethanol-racket>

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 first mandated that renewable fuels be mixed into America’s gasoline supply, primarily using corn-based ethanol. The 2007 Energy Independence and Security Act increased the quotas significantly. By 2022, there must be 15 billion gallons of corn-based ethanol and a total of 36 billion gallons of biofuels blended into the nation’s fuel supply, including soybean-based biodiesel. The program does not end in 2022, however, but grants the Environmental Protection Agency authority to set yearly targets.

A/T “Cellulosic ethanol will solve problems of corn ethanol” – Cellulosic isn’t feasible on a large scale

Congressional Budget Office 2014 (non-partisan agency of Congress that researches public policy) 26 June 2014 The Renewable Fuel Standard: Issues for 2014 and Beyond <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/45477> (brackets added)

The rising requirements in EISA [Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007] would be very hard to meet in future years because of two main obstacles, which relate to the supply of cellulosic biofuels and the amount of ethanol that older vehicles are said to be able to tolerate. Fuel suppliers have had trouble meeting the annual requirements for cellulosic biofuels because making such fuels is complex, capital-intensive, and costly. Although production capacity is expanding, only a few production facilities are currently operating. The industry’s capacity in coming years is projected to fall far short of what would be necessary to achieve the very rapid growth in the use of cellulosic biofuels required by EISA (see the figure below).

MINOR REPAIR RESPONSES

Minor reforms, like eliminating corn from the mandate, would not fix the real problems

Daniel Simmons 2015 (J.D. (law degree) from Univ of Va.; American Energy Alliance’s Vice President for Policy; previously served as director of the Natural Resources Task Force at the American Legislative Exchange Council; was a research fellow at the Mercatus Center, and worked as professional staff on the Committee on Resources of the U.S. House of Representatives.) 27 May 2015 “Why Congress Should Fully Repeal the RFS” <http://americanenergyalliance.org/2015/05/27/corn-ethanol-only-repeal-makes-the-rfs-worse/>

Merely reforming the RFS, including efforts to make corn ethanol ineligible under the mandate, may appear like a good step forward. But in reality, these reforms would not fix any of the real problems with the law. The RFS gives EPA too much discretion, and EPA has abused this discretion time and time again—even doing so illegally. Getting rid of the implied corn ethanol mandate and keeping the Advanced Biofuel mandate will allow EPA to continue to mandate unrealistic amount of expensive fuel, and would certainly lead to higher fuel prices.

Repealing only the corn-ethanol mandate of RFS (and leaving the rest) loses 147,000 jobs and $27 billion

Daniel Simmons 2015 (J.D. (law degree) from Univ of Va.; American Energy Alliance’s Vice President for Policy; previously served as director of the Natural Resources Task Force at the American Legislative Exchange Council; was a research fellow at the Mercatus Center, and worked as professional staff on the Committee on Resources of the U.S. House of Representatives.) 27 May 2015 “Why Congress Should Fully Repeal the RFS” <http://americanenergyalliance.org/2015/05/27/corn-ethanol-only-repeal-makes-the-rfs-worse/> (brackets added)

If Congress were to repeal the implied corn-ethanol portion of the RFS, it leaves behind an advanced-biofuel-only RFS. As noted above, the RFS defines advanced biofuel by EPA’s estimate of the GHG [greenhouse gas] emissions from the making of the fuel. This means that an advanced-biofuel-only RFS makes the RFS essentially a Low Carbon Fuel Standard instead of a renewable fuel standard. Not only is an LCFS another inefficient and political mandate, but it is costly as well. According to a study by [Boston Consulting Group on California’s LCFS](http://www.fuelingcalifornia.org/wpcms/wp-content/uploads/LCFS-Issue-Brief-FINAL.pdf), the program could increase the price of gasoline by more than $2.50 a gallon. [SAIC [Science Applications International Corporation] looked at a possible Northeast/Mid-Atlantic LCFS](http://consumerenergyalliance.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/The-Economic-Impact-of-a-Regional-Low-Carbon-Fuel-Standard-on-Northeast-Mid-Atlantic-States.pdf) and found that it would cost 147,000 jobs and reduce GDP by $27 billion. Moving from an RFS to an LCFS means that American motorists will pay more for fuel and suffer job losses and slower economic growth.

HARMS / SIGNIFICANCE

Higher fuel prices: $5.6 billion in excess costs in 10 years in the 6 New England states alone

Center for Regulatory Solutions 2015. A High Price to Pay: The Hidden Costs of Corn-Ethanol Mandates on New England <http://centerforregulatorysolutions.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/A-High-Price-to-Pay-New-England.pdf>

While ethanol and gasoline are priced similarly, ethanol provides consumers with only two-thirds of the energy content per gallon compared to gasoline. In other words, New Englanders are paying the same price for ethanol as gasoline but are getting one-third less mileage for each gallon of ethanol they consume. This translates into an economic loss for motorists. As Table 1 illustrates, over the 10-year period between 2005 and 2014, corn ethanol mandates have cost consumers (in the form of higher fuel prices) anywhere from nearly $200 million to over $2.5 billion, depending on the state. All told, the RFS has cost New England motorists more than $5.6 billion over the past 10 years.

A/T “Ethanol subsidy was abolished” – But the consumers still lose because ethanol is more expensive than gasoline

Robert Bryce 2015 (senior fellow at Manhattan Institute) 15 Nov 2015 “Should the U.S. End the Ethanol Mandate?” WALL STREET JOURNAL <http://www.wsj.com/articles/should-the-u-s-end-the-ethanol-mandate-1447643514>

Taxpayers are no longer directly subsidizing ethanol producers, but the Renewable Fuel Standard requires retailers to blend about 13 billion gallons of corn ethanol a year into the gasoline they sell to the public. That mandate hurts consumers, is bad for the environment and does effectively nothing to reduce America’s need for foreign oil.  
**Paying at the pump**Ethanol costs motorists at the pump. The ethanol claque frequently claims its fuel is cheaper than gasoline. While that may be true by volume, the posted price doesn’t reflect ethanol’s lower energy density. It takes about 1.5 gallons of ethanol to produce the energy contained in a gallon of gasoline. [Data](http://www.neo.ne.gov/statshtml/66.html) collected by the state of Nebraska (the country’s second-largest ethanol producer, behind Iowa) since 1982 shows that when measured on an energy-equivalent basis, ethanol has always been more expensive than gasoline.

Ethanol mandate causes higher food prices: up to $3.5 billion/year in increased food costs

Sen. Diane Feinstein 2015 (D-Calif.) 26 Feb 2015 “Toomey, Feinstein Introduce Bill to Repeal Ethanol Mandate” <https://www.toomey.senate.gov/?p=news&id=1496>

"The federal mandate for corn ethanol is both unwise and unworkable. Our bill addresses that with a simple, smart modification to the Renewable Fuel Standard program," **said Sen. Feinstein**. "A significant amount of U.S. corn is currently used for fuel. If the mandate continues to expand toward full implementation, the price of corn will increase. According to the Congressional Budget Office, that would mean as much as $3.5 billion each year in increased food costs. Americans living on the margins simply can't afford that.

Ethanol mandate causes higher food prices

Nicolas Loris 2016 (master’s degree in economics; research fellow in Heritage Foundation's Roe Institute for Economic Policy Studies) 4 Feb 2016 “America May Be Catching On to Ethanol Racket” <http://www.cnsnews.com/commentary/nicolas-loris/finally-america-may-be-catching-ethanol-racket>

Now, if market forces drove corn production away from food use and toward transportation fuel because it were more profitable, there would be no problem. But that’s not what is occurring here. Producers are diverting food to fuel because of the government-imposed mandate, and since corn is a staple ingredient for many foods and an important feedstock for animals, families are hit with higher prices from a wide range of food products.

Ethanol mandate creates higher air pollution and increased mortality in the US

Michael Bastasch 2015 (journalist) 23 July 2015 “Scientist: The Ethanol Mandate Harms Air Quality, ‘Leads To Increased Mortality’” THE DAILY CALLER <http://dailycaller.com/2015/07/23/scientist-the-ethanol-mandate-harms-air-quality-leads-to-increased-mortality/>

A University of Minnesota scientist told lawmakers Thursday that mandating ethanol be blended into fuel supplies is leading to more deaths from poor air quality in the Midwest and along the East Coast. “The Renewable Fuel Standard, because it is currently dominated by corn grain ethanol, is responsible for reduced air quality over much of the U.S., which leads to increased mortality,” Dr. Jason Hill, an associate professor of bioproducts and biosystems engineering, told House lawmakers in a hearing on the federal ethanol mandate.

Ethanol increases carbon emissions over normal gasoline

Emily Cassidy 2015 (research analyst at Environmental Working Group) 29 May 2015 How Corn Ethanol Is Worse For Climate Change Than The Keystone Pipeline <http://www.ewg.org/agmag/2015/05/how-corn-ethanol-worse-climate-change-keystone-pipeline>

But our calculations show that last year’s production and use of 14 billion gallons of corn ethanol resulted in 27 million tons more carbon emissions than if Americans had used straight gasoline in their vehicles. That’s worse than Keystone’s projected emissions. It’s the equivalent of emissions from seven coal-fired power plants. So far the federal corn ethanol mandate has resulted in a massive influx of dirty corn ethanol, which is bad for the climate and [bad for consumers](http://www.ewg.org/agmag/2013/02/corn-ethanol-bad-farmers-consumers-and-environment).

More details about the 245 additional deaths from ethanol emissions

Emily Cassidy 2016 (research analyst at Environmental Working Group) 27 Jan 2016 “Corn Ethanol dealier Than VW Emissions Scam” <http://www.ewg.org/agmag/2016/01/corn-ethanol-deadlier-vw-emissions-scam>

But as Robert Bryce, a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute, points out on [Bloomberg View](http://www.bloombergview.com/articles/2016-01-20/cheating-vws-are-cleaner-than-ethanol?utm_campaign=trueAnthem:+Trending+Content&utm_content=569fa0f204d30116064d9f46&utm_medium=trueAnthem&utm_source=twitter), the government's mandate to blend corn ethanol into gasoline also increases emissions of NOx and other hazardous pollutants. A [2010 study](http://www3.epa.gov/otaq/renewablefuels/420r10006.pdf) by the Environmental Protection Agency found that the added emissions from the corn ethanol mandate “are anticipated to lead to up to 245 cases of adult premature mortality.”

A/T “How many air pollution deaths would be 80% more than gasoline” – Gasoline causes 10K deaths/year

Charles Q. Choi 2007 (journalist) “Surprise: Ethanol as Deadly as Gasoline For Now” 17 Apr 2007 LIVE SCIENCE <http://www.livescience.com/1436-surprise-ethanol-deadly-gasoline.html#sthash.NQ0qwDzI.dpuf> (brackets added)

Gasoline currently leads to roughly 10,000 premature deaths in the United States annually from ozone and particulate matter, [Stanford University atmospheric scientist Mark] Jacobson explained. ''In our study, E85 increased ozone-related mortalities in the United States by about 200 deaths per year compared to gasoline, with about 120 of those deaths occurring in Los Angeles,'' he said. ''These mortality rates represent an increase of about 4 percent in the U.S. and 9 percent in Los Angeles above the projected ozone-related death rates for gasoline-fueled vehicles in 2020.''

UN IPCC study: Ethanol increases emissions and poses risks to ecosystems

James Conca 2014 (scientist in the field of the earth and environmental sciences for 33 years, specializing in geologic disposal of nuclear waste, energy-related research, planetary surface processes, subsurface transport and environmental clean-up of heavy metals; Trustee of the Herbert M. Parker Foundation and consult on strategic planning for the DOE, EPA/State environmental agencies) FORBES magazine It's Final -- Corn Ethanol Is Of No Use 20 Apr 2014 <http://www.forbes.com/sites/jamesconca/2014/04/20/its-final-corn-ethanol-is-of-no-use/#3bb01e872ca2>

OK, can we please stop pretending biofuel made from corn is helping the planet and the environment? The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released two of its Working Group reports at the end of last month ([WGI](http://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar5/wg1/) and [WGIII](http://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar5/wg1/)), and their short discussion of biofuels has ignited a fierce debate as to whether they’re of any environmental benefit at all. The IPCC was quite diplomatic in its discussion, saying “Biofuels have direct, fuel‐cycle GHG emissions that are typically 30–90% lower than those for gasoline or diesel fuels. However, since for some biofuels indirect emissions—including from land use change—can lead to greater total emissions than when using petroleum products, policy support needs to be considered on a case by case basis” ([IPCC 2014 Chapter 8](http://report.mitigation2014.org/drafts/final-draft-postplenary/ipcc_wg3_ar5_final-draft_postplenary_chapter8.pdf)). The summary in the new report also states, “Increasing bioenergy crop cultivation poses risks to ecosystems and biodiversity” ([WGIII](http://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar5/wg1/)). The summary in the new report also states, “Increasing bioenergy crop cultivation poses risks to ecosystems and biodiversity” ([WGIII](http://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar5/wg1/)).

Biofuels = Soil erosion and fertilizer run-off into lakes & streams

Nicolas Loris 2016 (master’s degree in economics; research fellow in Heritage Foundation's Roe Institute for Economic Policy Studies ) 4 Feb 2016 “America May Be Catching On to Ethanol Racket” <http://www.cnsnews.com/commentary/nicolas-loris/finally-america-may-be-catching-ethanol-racket>

Policymakers hailed biofuels as the green solution to dirty oil. But, [in its first of three reports to Congress](http://cfpub.epa.gov/ncea/biofuels/recordisplay.cfm?deid=235881), the Environmental Protection Agency projected that nitrous oxides, hydrocarbons, sulfur dioxide, particulate matter, ground-level ozone, and ethanol vapor emissions, among other air pollutants, increase at different points in the production and use of ethanol. A [study by Iowa State University researchers](http://ageconsearch.umn.edu/bitstream/107043/2/11-WP_524.Jun6Revise.pdf) concluded that incentivizing more biofuel production with government policies leads to more adverse environmental consequences caused by farming, the use of fertilizers, and land-use conversion for agricultural production, resulting in increased soil erosion, sedimentation, and nitrogen and phosphorus runoff into lakes and streams.

Nutrient pollution has human health impacts beyond hypoxia

Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Task Force 2015 (federal task force under the Environmental Protection Agency that is studying and remedying hypoxia in the Gulf of Mexico) HTF 2015 Report to Congress <https://www.epa.gov/ms-htf/htf-2015-report-congress>

In addition to hypoxia, nutrient pollution has other impacts. High levels of nutrients in drinking water—nitrate in particular—and elevated levels of by-products from the reaction of disinfection agents with organic material (e.g., algae from nutrient excess) have been linked with increased disease risks, illnesses, and even death (State-EPA Nutrient Innovations Task Group 2009). The economic costs of treating nutrient-enriched drinking water are considerable; one USDA study estimates that the cost to all public and private sources of removing nitrate from U.S. drinking water supplies—not just drinking water supplies in HTF states—is over $4.8 billion per year (Ribaudo et al. 2011). Efforts to control Gulf Hypoxia can have the corollary benefit of reducing drinking water concerns and other more localized impacts of nutrient excess in communities located in the MARB. In Ohio, Grand Lake St. Marys, which feeds the Wabash River and flows to the Ohio River before joining the Mississippi River, is a striking example of the environmental and economic impacts of nitrogen and phosphorus pollution. Grand Lake St. Marys covers more than 13,000 acres and is Ohio’s largest inland waterbody. In 2009, nutrient loading from farm runoff, failing septic systems, and lawn fertilizers triggered unprecedented blooms of toxic algae, leading to the death of fish, birds, and dogs, as well as illnesses in at least seven people (State-EPA Nutrient Innovations Task Group 2009).

Fertilizer runoff creates vast ocean dead zones, and the ethanol mandate makes it worse

Scientific American 2008 (David Biello, senior reporter for environment & energy at Sci. American) Fertilizer Runoff Overwhelms Streams and Rivers--Creating Vast "Dead Zones" 14 Mar 2008 <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/fertilizer-runoff-overwhelms-streams/>

What is clear is that a significant portion of such fertilizer is still making its way through the soil and water to the sea. As a result, [algae and other microorganisms](http://www.sciam.com/article.cfm?id=blue-green-acres) take up the nitrogen, bloom and, after they die, suck the oxygen out of coastal waters. Such "[dead zones](http://www.sciam.com/article.cfm?id=shrinking-the-dead-zone)" have appeared seasonally near most major river mouths, including those emptying into Maryland's Chesapeake Bay as well as the Gulf of Mexico, where lifeless waters now cover more than 7,700 square miles (20,000 square kilometers) during the summer months. The bulk of this nitrate comes from fertilizer running off agricultural fields. Scientists warn that a boom in crops such as [corn for biofuel](http://www.sciam.com/article.cfm?id=grass-makes-better-ethanol-than-corn) will only make matters worse.

Donner & Kucharik Study: Ethanol-driven corn production makes it practically impossible to solve the Gulf of Mexico hypoxia/fertilizer pollution problem

Prof. Simon D. Donner and Prof. Christopher J. Kucharik 2008 (Donner - Associate Professor of Climatology at the University of British Columbia. Kucharik - Center for Sustainability and the Global Environment, Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies, University of Wisconsin) “Corn-based ethanol production compromises goal of reducing nitrogen export by the Mississippi River” Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America, March 2008 <http://www.pnas.org/content/105/11/4513.abstract>

Corn cultivation in the United States is expected to increase to meet demand for ethanol. Nitrogen leaching from fertilized corn fields to the Mississippi–Atchafalaya River system is a primary cause of the bottom-water hypoxia that develops on the continental shelf of the northern Gulf of Mexico each summer. In this study, we combine agricultural land use scenarios with physically based models of terrestrial and aquatic nitrogen to examine the effect of present and future expansion of corn-based ethanol production on nitrogen export by the Mississippi and Atchafalaya Rivers to the Gulf of Mexico. The results show that the increase in corn cultivation required to meet the goal of 15–36 billion gallons of renewable fuels by the year 2022 suggested by a recent U.S. Senate energy policy would increase the annual average flux of dissolved inorganic nitrogen (DIN) export by the Mississippi and Atchafalaya Rivers by 10–34%. Generating 15 billion gallons of corn-based ethanol by the year 2022 will increase the odds that annual DIN export exceeds the target set for reducing hypoxia in the Gulf of Mexico to >95%. Examination of extreme mitigation options shows that expanding corn-based ethanol production would make the already difficult challenges of reducing nitrogen export to the Gulf of Mexico and the extent of hypoxia practically impossible without large shifts in food production and agricultural management.

What causes the Gulf of Mexico ocean dead zone: Algae fed by fertilizer runoff from farms

Bloomberg news 2013 (James Greiff, editor) 16 June 2013 “Gulf of Mexico's Extinction-by-Ethanol” <https://www.bloomberg.com/view/articles/2013-06-14/gulf-of-mexico-s-extinction-by-ethanol>

Because the Mississippi has been dredged, straightened and channelized to control flooding and accommodate shipping, the river flows faster than it once did. Excess nutrients, instead of being absorbed and filtered during a meandering journey, are blasted into the Gulf in a manner that some have likened to a [fire hose](http://www.onearth.org/article/resuscitating-the-dead-zone). Once the Mississippi's waters reach the Gulf and the warming sun, the nutrients cause huge algal blooms. While the algae are blossoming, they suck oxygen from the water, and again after they die and fall to the bottom to decompose, where bacteria further deplete the water of oxygen. Fish either die or head farther from shore.

Ocean dead zones can lead to ecosystem collapse

Sarah Zielinski 2014 (award-winning science writer and editor. She is a contributing writer in science for Smithsonian.com) “Ocean Dead Zones Are Getting Worse Globally Due to Climate Change” 10 Nov 2014 <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/ocean-dead-zones-are-getting-worse-globally-due-climate-change-180953282/?no-ist> (brackets added)

“Temperature is perhaps the climate-related factor that most broadly affects dead zones,” they [Andrew Altieri of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama and Keryn Gedan of the University of Maryland, College Park] note. Warmer waters can hold less dissolved oxygen in general. But the problem is more complicated than that. Warmer air will heat up the surface of the water, making it more buoyant and reducing the likelihood that the top layer will mix with colder waters below. Those deeper waters are often where the hypoxia develops, and without mixing, the low-oxygen zone sticks around. As temperatures increase, animals such as fish and crabs require more oxygen to survive. But with less oxygen available, “that could quickly cause stress and mortality and, at larger scales, drive an ecosystem to collapse,” Altieri and Gedan warn.

Hypoxic zone disrupts ecosystems, damages fisheries, and kills or sickens fish

Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Task Force 2015 (federal task force under the Environmental Protection Agency that is studying and remedying hypoxia in the Gulf of Mexico) HTF 2015 Report to Congress <https://www.epa.gov/ms-htf/htf-2015-report-congress>

Low dissolved oxygen in the Gulf is a serious environmental concern that can affect valuable fisheries and disrupt sensitive ecosystems. Mobile animals, such as adult fish, can typically survive hypoxic events by moving to areas of higher oxygen, but this displacement pushes them into less optimal habitats, often along the edge of the hypoxic zone (Craig 2012; Craig and Bosman 2012). One study estimates that the hypoxic zone has resulted in about a 25 percent habitat loss for brown shrimp along the Louisiana coast, west of the Mississippi delta (Craig et al. 2005). Exposure to hypoxia can cause severe health effects to aquatic life, such as reduced growth and reproduction. Atlantic croaker, a species considered hypoxia-tolerant, exhibits sublethal physiological symptoms, including reproductive impairment, when exposed to low oxygen.

SOLVENCY / ADVOCACY

Major purpose of the ethanol mandate – reducing oil imports – no longer applies

Daniel Simmons 2015 (J.D. (law degree) from Univ of Va.; American Energy Alliance’s Vice President for Policy; previously served as director of the Natural Resources Task Force at the American Legislative Exchange Council; was a research fellow at the Mercatus Center, and worked as professional staff on the Committee on Resources of the U.S. House of Representatives.) 27 May 2015 “Why Congress Should Fully Repeal the RFS” <http://americanenergyalliance.org/2015/05/27/corn-ethanol-only-repeal-makes-the-rfs-worse/>

The RFS was created in 2005 and then expanded in 2007. At the time, Congress and President Bush assumed that oil production would continue to decrease and that America needed to mandate the use of renewable fuel in order to reduce oil imports. Congress and the president were badly mistaken. Since 2007, oil production in the United States has increased by 82 percent. Oil imports from OPEC have declined by 60 percent since 2008. One of the most important arguments for the creation of the RFS no longer applies, as domestic oil production continues to increase.

Ethanol mandate responsible for big increase in corn production

Associated Press 2013 (journalists Dina Cappiello and Matt Apuzzo) 12 Nov 2013 “AP Investigation: Obama's green energy drive comes with an unadvertised environmental cost” <http://www.courier-journal.com/story/tech/science/environment/2013/11/12/ap-investigation-obamas-green-energy-drive-comes-with-an-unadvertised-environmental-cost/3505281/>

The consequences are so severe that environmentalists and many scientists have now rejected corn-based ethanol as bad environmental policy. But the Obama administration stands by it, highlighting its benefits to the farming industry rather than any negative impact. Farmers planted 15 million more acres of corn last year than before the ethanol boom, and the effects are visible in places like south central Iowa. The hilly, once-grassy landscape is made up of fragile soil that, unlike the earth in the rest of the state, is poorly suited for corn. Nevertheless, it has yielded to America’s demand for it.

Ethanol mandate creates an incentive to pull land out of conservation and plant corn

Associated Press 2013 (journalists Dina Cappiello and Matt Apuzzo) 12 Nov 2013 “AP Investigation: Obama's green energy drive comes with an unadvertised environmental cost” <http://www.courier-journal.com/story/tech/science/environment/2013/11/12/ap-investigation-obamas-green-energy-drive-comes-with-an-unadvertised-environmental-cost/3505281/> (brackets added)

A decade ago, Washington paid them about $70 an acre each year to leave their farmland idle. With corn selling for about $2 per bushel (56 pounds) back then, farming the hilly, inferior soil was bad business. Many opted into the conservation program. Others kept their grasslands for cow pastures. Lately, though, the math has changed. “I’m coming to the point where financially, it’s not feasible,” [Iowa farmer Leroy] Perkins said. The change began in 2007, when Congress passed a law requiring oil companies to blend billions of gallons of ethanol into gasoline.

A/T “Would ending the mandate get rid of ethanol?” - Ethanol thrives because of the mandate

Margo Oge 2016 (*director of the Environmental Protection Agency’s office of transportation and air quality from 1994 to 2012) NEW YORK TIMES 29 Jan 2016* The Problem With the Ethanol Mandate That Iowa Loves <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/29/opinion/the-problem-with-the-ethanol-mandate-that-iowa-loves.html?version=meter+at+null&contentId=&mediaId=&referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F&priority=true&action=click&contentCollection=Politics&module=RelatedCoverage&region=EndOfArticle&pgtype=article>

IOWA is the nation’s top producer of corn, and nearly half of it ends up as ethanol, thanks to a government mandate that requires ethanol to be mixed into gasoline. The mandate is worth hundreds of millions of dollars to farmers there. No wonder most Iowans talk it up, as do most of the presidential candidates campaigning there in the lead up to the caucuses. Ethanol thrives because of the volume-based approach of the mandate, which specifies that a growing percentage of various renewable fuels must be mixed into gasoline every year until 2022.

A/T “They’ll keep using ethanol even without the Mandate” – 1) Great, that means disads don’t apply. 2) In a few years, replacements for ethanol will kick in

Dan Charles 2016 (journalist) National Public Radio 10 Feb 2016 “The Shocking Truth About America's Ethanol Law: It Doesn't Matter (For Now)” <http://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2016/02/10/466010209/the-shocking-truth-about-americas-ethanol-law-it-doesnt-matter-for-now>

Switching to petroleum-based octane boosters such as alkylate would not be easy, though.In the short term, Niznik says, it would be self-defeating. Oil companies are competing against each other to make cheap gas, and "the guy with ethanol is probably going to win." But those other sources of octane are getting cheaper, Niznik says, and in the long run, they might be just as cheap as ethanol. In 10 years, he says, the business case for using ethanol could disappear.

Current efforts to solve the Gulf of Mexico dead zone aren’t working. We need to kill the ethanol mandate

Bloomberg news 2013 (James Greiff, editor) 16 June 2013 “Gulf of Mexico's Extinction-by-Ethanol” <https://www.bloomberg.com/view/articles/2013-06-14/gulf-of-mexico-s-extinction-by-ethanol>

A state-federal environmental [task force](http://water.epa.gov/type/watersheds/named/msbasin/index.cfm) in 2008 set a goal of reducing the amount of nutrients in the Mississippi by 45 percent by this year. By all accounts, little progress has been made. The culprits behind the dead zone are many, but one deserves special attention: corn. Unlike, say, soybeans, which can grow without fertilizer, corn can't grow without it. It takes 195 pounds of fertilizer to grow an acre of corn. And the U.S. grows a lot of corn -- more than any other [country](http://www.indexmundi.com/agriculture/?commodity=corn). What's more, 40 percent of the U.S. corn crop is devoted to making ethanol, which fuel companies must blend with gasoline under a congressional mandate. The Gulf dead zone is yet another reason for Congress to kill that mandate.

Even if it didn’t eliminate the use of ethanol, we should still repeal the RFS

Daniel Simmons 2015 (J.D. (law degree) from Univ of Va.; American Energy Alliance’s Vice President for Policy; previously served as director of the Natural Resources Task Force at the American Legislative Exchange Council; was a research fellow at the Mercatus Center, and worked as professional staff on the Committee on Resources of the U.S. House of Representatives.) 27 May 2015 “Why Congress Should Fully Repeal the RFS” <http://americanenergyalliance.org/2015/05/27/corn-ethanol-only-repeal-makes-the-rfs-worse/>

The RFS is fatally flawed. Ending the RFS, including the advanced biofuel portion, does not mean that ethanol would no longer be used in the United States. It means that EPA would have less impact on the fuel market, that the absurd and inefficient Brazilian-U.S. ethanol swaps would be reduced, and that the American people would balance the competing uses of corn instead of the federal government dictating a certain amount of ethanol and other biofuels. The RFS is bad policy. Both the corn ethanol portion of the RFS and the advanced biofuel portion of the RFS are bad policies. The best course of action is to let people figure out what fuels work best instead of being told by Congress and EPA bureaucrats what fuels to use—regardless of whether the fuels actually exist or not.

DISAVANTAGE RESPONSES

A/T “Oil imports go up” – Ethanol mandate has done little to reduce oil imports. New drilling techniques are what’s reducing imports

Institute for Energy Research 2016 (not-for-profit organization that conducts research and analysis on the functions, operations, and government regulation of global energy markets ) 8 Mar 2016 “Despite Record Production, Ethanol Mandate Continues to Cost Public” <http://instituteforenergyresearch.org/analysis/even-with-record-production-ethanol-mandate-continues-to-cost-the-public/>

The original argument of proponents of the Renewable Fuel Standard was that it would make the United States less dependent on oil imports. But, ethanol has done little to reduce oil imports. Since 2008, net oil imports have declined by 58 percent (6.4 million barrels per day), while domestic oil production has increased by 88 percent ([4.4 million barrels per day](http://www.eia.gov/totalenergy/data/monthly/pdf/sec3_3.pdf)). Ethanol production, however, has only increased by 360,000 barrels per day. The dramatic increase in domestic oil production is primarily due to shale oil produced by using hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling technology. The increase in U.S. oil production is about five times the output of all the ethanol distilleries in the country.

A/T “Oil imports go up” – RFS has nothing to do with reduced imports. It’s the shale oil renaissance

Institute for Energy Research 2016 (not-for-profit organization that conducts research and analysis on the functions, operations, and government regulation of global energy markets ) 8 Mar 2016 “Despite Record Production, Ethanol Mandate Continues to Cost Public” <http://instituteforenergyresearch.org/analysis/even-with-record-production-ethanol-mandate-continues-to-cost-the-public/>

Congress believed that it was providing a means of reducing our dependence on foreign oil when it mandated higher RFS levels in the 2007 EISA. Clearly, Congress was wrong. Net oil imports have been reduced to 24 percent of consumption from 60 percent in 2005. Because of the shale oil renaissance, the United States is producing oil at levels last seen in the early 1970s and storage is at record capacity.

A/T “Oil imports” – They have to import feedstock to make the ethanol to meet the mandates

Michael Bastasch 2015 (journalist) 29 May 2015 “Despite Thunderous Opposition, EPA INCREASES The Ethanol Mandate” DAILY CALLER <http://dailycaller.com/2015/05/29/despite-thunderous-opposition-epa-increases-the-ethanol-mandate/>

Every year since the Renewable Fuel Standard was expanded, EPA has missed implementation deadlines, waived entire portions of annual required volumes, and has had to approve imported feedstocks for RFS compliance,” Oklahoma Sen. Jim Inhofe said in a statement.

A/T “Oil prices” – No impact. Oil prices have very small effect on the economy

Dr. Lutz Kilian 2009. (Ph.D. in Economics; prof. of economics at University of Michigan) Oil Price Volatility: Origins and Effects, December 1, 2009 <https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwiA-dyD6IDNAhUC5iYKHUxjBIgQFggdMAA&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.aeaweb.org%2Fconference%2F2009%2Fretrieve.php%3Fpdfid%3D145&usg=AFQjCNFvtMccF1WsWk46iC7CEHCpksc2SA&sig2=P9l5FiMeDv0WHXnRGLnqWA>

The second problem is that, to the extent that oil prices affect domestic output, under standard assumptions their impact should be bounded by the cost share of oil in domestic production, which is known to be very small. For example, for the United States, the ratio of imported and domestically produced crude oil in GDP has been fluctuating between 1 and 5 percent (see Edelstein and Kilian 2007). Thus, if oil price shocks are viewed as cost shocks for the oil-importing economy, their effect by construction cannot be very large. Indeed, Backus and Crucini (2000) have demonstrated that standard production-based general equilibrium models of the transmission of oil price shocks are not capable of explaining large fluctuations in real GDP. This type of result came as a surprise to many researchers who expected oil price shocks to be a major determinant of the business cycle.

A/T “Oil Imports” - Imports don’t determine US oil prices because prices are based on global markets

Dr. Keith Crane, Dr. Andreas Goldthau, Dr. Michael Toman, Dr. Thomas Light, Dr. Stuart E. Johnson, Alireza Nader, Dr. Angel Rabasa, Harun Dogo 2009. (Crane - Ph.D. economics, Indiana Univ. Johnson - Ph.D. physics, Mass. Institute of Technology. Goldthau – PhD politics, Freie University, Berlin. Toman - Ph.D. in economics, Univ of Rochester. Light – PhD economics, Cornell Univ. Nader - Masters degree in international affairs, George Washington Univ. Rabasa –Ph.D. history, Harvard Univ. Dogo - Ph.D. candidate in policy analysis, Pardee RAND Graduate School; M.S. in defense analysis, Naval Postgraduate School) Imported Oil and U.S. National Security <http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2009/RAND_MG838.pdf>

Moreover, even if total U.S. imports were cut sharply, the price of oil in the United States would still be determined by global, not national, shifts in supply and demand. A large, extended reduction in the global supply of oil would trigger a sharp rise in the price of oil and lead to a sharp fall in economic output in the United States, no matter how much or how little oil the United States imports.

A/T “Oil Imports” - Doesn’t matter where oil comes from: It’s a global market

Dr. Keith Crane, Dr. Andreas Goldthau, Dr. Michael Toman, Dr. Thomas Light, Dr. Stuart E. Johnson, Alireza Nader, Dr. Angel Rabasa, Harun Dogo 2009. (Crane - Ph.D. economics, Indiana Univ. Johnson - Ph.D. physics, Mass. Institute of Technology. Goldthau – PhD politics, Freie University, Berlin. Toman - Ph.D. in economics, Univ of Rochester. Light – PhD economics, Cornell Univ. Nader - Masters degree in international affairs, George Washington Univ. Rabasa –Ph.D. history, Harvard Univ. Dogo - Ph.D. candidate in policy analysis, Pardee RAND Graduate School; M.S. in defense analysis, Naval Postgraduate School) Imported Oil and U.S. National Security <http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2009/RAND_MG838.pdf>

The fungibility of oil has implications for energy security whose importance cannot be overstated: From an economic perspective, where the United States acquires its oil has become irrelevant. Disruptions of supplies or jumps in demand anywhere in the world will be distributed across the world market. Conversely, attempts by foreign suppliers to target supply reductions toward specific importers cannot succeed because oil will be sold on through the markets to the highest bidder, whoever that may be

A/T “Lose next-generation biofuels” – Been waiting for next-gen biofuels since the disco age. No reason to keep the RFS

Robert Bryce 2015 (senior fellow at Manhattan Institute) 15 Nov 2015 “Should the U.S. End the Ethanol Mandate?” WALL STREET JOURNAL <http://www.wsj.com/articles/should-the-u-s-end-the-ethanol-mandate-1447643514>

The always-distant dawn of “advanced” biofuels is no reason to keep the Renewable Fuel Standard alive. We’ve been enduring the hype about them since the days of Donna Summer, Studio 54 and “Saturday Night Fever.” Yet, despite lavish federal subsidies and mandates, those next-generation biofuels have yet to be produced in significant quantities at competitive prices.

A/T “RFS leads to advanced biofuels / cellulosic” – RFS mandate hasn’t worked, not needed for advanced biofuels, and RFS damage outweighs

Ryan Cooper 2013 (journalist) WASHINGTON POST 12 Nov 2013 “Time to kill the corn ethanol mandate” <https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/plum-line/wp/2013/11/12/time-to-kill-the-corn-ethanol-mandate/?tid=a_inl>

The mandate was supposed to spark the development of cleaner biofuels (like [“cellulosic” ethanol](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cellulosic_ethanol)), which are compelling in theory. But it’s been six years with no result, and the current situation is doing so much damage that it’s time to just cut our losses. Besides, a thriving biofuels industry already exists in the form of Brazilian sugarcane ethanol, which is [unambiguously a big win on climate change](http://iopscience.iop.org/1748-9326/7/4/045905). Biofuels research will continue, especially if the EPA manages new regulation on carbon dioxide.

A/T “Advanced biofuels” – EPA bungling will fail to implement advanced biofuels under RFS

Daniel Simmons 2015 (J.D. (law degree) from Univ of Va.; American Energy Alliance’s Vice President for Policy; previously served as director of the Natural Resources Task Force at the American Legislative Exchange Council; was a research fellow at the Mercatus Center, and worked as professional staff on the Committee on Resources of the U.S. House of Representatives.) 27 May 2015 “Why Congress Should Fully Repeal the RFS” <http://americanenergyalliance.org/2015/05/27/corn-ethanol-only-repeal-makes-the-rfs-worse/>

EPA cannot and should not be trusted to implement the RFS. Keeping the advanced-only portion of the RFS allows EPA to decide what constitutes “advanced biofuel.” According to the RFS, advanced biofuel must achieve lifecycle greenhouse gas emission reduction of 50 percent compared to petroleum. The problem is that EPA has to certify that a fuel, or a fuel “pathway,” achieves this reduction. Given EPA’s history of ineptitude and illegal behavior, there is no reason to think that EPA will not continue to manipulate an advanced-biofuel-only RFS.

A/T “Climate change” – Ethanol increases GHG (greenhouse gas) emissions worse than gasoline

Robert Bryce 2015 (senior fellow at Manhattan Institute) 15 Nov 2015 “Should the U.S. End the Ethanol Mandate?” WALL STREET JOURNAL <http://www.wsj.com/articles/should-the-u-s-end-the-ethanol-mandate-1447643514>

In 2014, domestic corn ethanol consumption “resulted in 27 million tons more carbon emissions than if Americans had used straight gasoline in their vehicles,” the report said. In August, John DeCicco, a research professor at the University of Michigan’s Energy Institute, [found](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B7ZwDXl-m2O9TFFiZXdRLUtsWlU/view) that greenhouse-gas emissions from corn ethanol are as much as 70% higher than those from standard gasoline.

1. Nicolas Loris (master’s degree in economics; research fellow in Heritage Foundation's Roe Institute for Economic Policy Studies ) 4 Feb 2016 “America May Be Catching On to Ethanol Racket” http://www.cnsnews.com/commentary/nicolas-loris/finally-america-may-be-catching-ethanol-racket [↑](#footnote-ref-1)