

## Harkin: A Senate Leader in Promoting Biofuels

As the former Chairman and now senior member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) has been a long-time leader in promoting the production and use of biofuels as an important part of the nation's energy strategy.

*“As part of our nation’s goal of creating good domestic jobs, reducing our dependence on foreign, slowing global climate change and promoting clean energy sources, it is important that we do everything we can to grow the biofuels industry and encourage the production and use of biofuels in America.”*

*– Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA)*

Recent Harkin initiatives and actions aimed at promoting biofuels include:

- On November 10, Harkin led a bipartisan group of Senators in calling on Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid to include provisions aimed at expanding biofuels markets in energy legislation pending in the Senate. Additionally, the Senators asked that Leader Reid consider legislation to extend the Volumetric Ethanol Excise Tax Credit (VEETC) beyond its current expiration date of December 31, 2010. It is estimated that the enactment of these policies will enable as much as a 5-fold increase in biofuels' displacement of oil-based fuel use in transportation within the next two decades. Joining Harkin in signing the letter were Senators Christopher Bond (R-MO), Tim Johnson (D-SD) and Amy Klobuchar (D-MN). A copy of the letter can be found [here](#).
- On August 4, Harkin led a bipartisan group of Senators in introducing an amendment to the pending energy bill to expand the U.S. biofuels market by increasing the percentage of vehicles manufactured for sale in the U.S. that are flex-fuel capable; increasing the number of blender pumps at refueling stations so more consumers can buy fuels with higher percentages of ethanol; and authorizing loan guarantees for renewable fuel pipelines. More information can be found [here](#).
- On August 2, Harkin convened a meeting between a bipartisan group of senators and EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson and Department of Energy Deputy Secretary Daniel Poneman to urge prompt approval of E15 ethanol blend for use in all gasoline-fueled vehicles. At the meeting, Harkin urged the approval of E-15, as well as E-20, which EPA is also reviewing. More information can be found [here](#).
- On June 28, Harkin and six other senators wrote to President Obama urging his Administration to move rapidly to integrate biofuels into the nation's transportation fuel supply. In the letter, the senators expressed concern that the Department of Energy (DOE) had not yet completed testing of higher blends of ethanol in gasoline, which would allow the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to approve the use of gasoline containing more than 10 percent ethanol. More information can be found [here](#).
- On June 23, Harkin spoke on the Senate floor expressing his disappointment in EPA and DOE's delay in making a decision on E-15 and calling for an end to the delay. Audio of that can be found [here](#).
- On December 8, 2009, Harkin sent a letter to Senators Max Baucus and Charles Grassley, the chairman and ranking member of the Senate Finance Committee. Harkin expressed the importance of extending the biodiesel tax credit before its expiration on December 31, 2009, and highlighted the dire situation that many biodiesel plants are facing. On December 22, 2009, Harkin again voiced my concern in Senate floor remarks. Efforts at addressing this in the Senate finally succeeded when the Senate chose to include this tax credit extension in the American Workers, State, and Business Relief Act of 2010 on March 10. This measure has been passed by the Senate and sent back to the House of Representatives for reconciliation with a similar House bill.