



May 11, 2026

Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of our combined members and supporters across the country, our organizations write to express concern about permanently waiving rules to allow the year-round sale of gasoline blended with 15 percent ethanol (E15).

The Green Scissors coalition is dedicated to cutting wasteful and environmentally harmful government spending. As a coalition of free-market, taxpayer, consumer, and environmental organizations, we hold a wide range of views on the proper scope of government spending. We do, however, strongly agree that the government should not implement environmentally damaging policies that increase taxpayer and consumer costs.

It is in the spirit of fiscal and environmental responsibility that we urge you to oppose legislative expansion of year-round sales of a mix of 15 percent ethanol and 85 percent gasoline, known as E15. The Clean Air Act includes provisions to limit gasoline volatility, which leads to ground level ozone (smog). Providing a waiver to these Reid Vapor Pressure (RVP) requirements would lead to increased taxpayer costs and environmental harms.

Exempting E15 from standards that apply to other competing fuels would give ethanol yet another advantage in an already distorted marketplace. Taxpayers already spend billions of dollars subsidizing the U.S. ethanol industry and mandate a market through the Renewable Fuel Standard.

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that recent legislative proposals allowing for year-round E15 would cost “single digit billions,” in effect necessitating either higher deficits, spending cuts, or tax increases. This cost does not include higher costs from the 45Z Clean Fuel Production Credit, passed originally in the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 and expanded last year in the One Big Beautiful Bill Act. The credit provides a per-gallon tax break for every gallon of ethanol produced meeting a certain carbon intensity threshold. Expanding ethanol demand and production—specifically, expanding ethanol content of gasoline year-round to E15—will directly increase the cost of the tax credit. The Department of Treasury estimates that the 45Z tax credit will cost taxpayers a total of \$53.1 billion between FY2026 and FY2035. An expansion of E15 would likely push production and 45Z claims beyond these initial estimates.



E15 also worsens air, soil, and water quality. Independent experts warn that corn ethanol can increase harmful emissions, even compared to traditional gasoline. Increased demand for ethanol has also driven producers to convert millions of acres of sensitive land into input-intensive corn production, leading to a loss of soil nutrients, increased erosion, and more pollution in groundwater and drinking water. Special treatment allowing more E15 into the market will increase these environmental harms, leaving communities and taxpayers with long-term liabilities.

E15 is also tied to a host of other issues, including:

- Lower Gas Mileage: Motorists must fill up a vehicle more often to drive the same number of miles on E15 as compared to E10 or E0.
- Compatibility Issues: Small, off-road, and older engines that cannot safely operate on E15.
- Higher Food and Feed Costs: Diverting more corn, the primary ingredient in ethanol, away from food and animal feed will increase consumer costs across the grocery store.
- Higher Costs of Fueling Infrastructure: Ethanol is more corrosive than gasoline, so tanks and fuel pumps must be replaced to dispense higher blends of ethanol such as E15 — costs that may be passed to taxpayers or consumers. More than \$800 million has been provided in taxpayer funding for biofuel infrastructure projects since 2011.

For these reasons, we urge you to oppose year-round expansion of E15. It is time for Congress to stop taxpayers, consumers, and the environment from bearing the costs of failed ethanol policies.

Sincerely,

The Green Scissors Coalition

Friends of the Earth U.S.  
Taxpayers for Common Sense  
R Street Institute  
U.S. PIRG  
Environment America