

## Governor Quinn Leads Fight Against Reduction in the Use of Renewable Fuels

Written by Grant Klinzman  
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Urges U.S. EPA to Reconsider Decision to Lower Renewable Fuel Standard; Cites Economic and Clean Air Benefits

CHICAGO – Governor Pat Quinn today announced that he is urging the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to reconsider a decision that would cause decreased production of renewable fuels such as ethanol and biodiesel. The U.S. EPA wants to reduce the volume of renewable fuels that must be used in the nation’s retail fuel supply. This decision could impact Illinois farmers who grow renewable fuel crops like corn and soybeans, and it could also affect the air we breathe since renewable fuels create less air pollution. Today’s announcement is part of Governor Quinn’s agenda to ensure a clean and healthy environment for future generations.

“Illinois farmers benefit because they produce the materials needed for renewable fuels, and less dependence on foreign energy sources means consumers have a more stable and economical source of fuel,” Governor Quinn said. “We also help the environment through the cleaner air we get when less petroleum is burned.”

Governor Quinn submitted a letter to U.S. EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy urging that the agency’s proposed new Renewable Fuel Standard rule be reconsidered. The letter accompanied comments from several Illinois state agencies about the benefits of renewable fuel production to the state and the nation’s economic and physical well-being. Governor Quinn also submitted a letter to the U.S. EPA as the new chairman of the Governors’ Biofuels Coalition, a bipartisan group of the nation’s governors pushing for biofuel development and

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use.

Biofuels have an economic impact of \$5.3 billion in Illinois according to the Illinois Renewable Fuels Association. The Illinois ethanol industry is third in the nation with 14 ethanol plants providing 4,000 jobs that produce enough ethanol to displace 35 percent of the state's petroleum usage. Illinois has five plants that produce about 200 million gallons of biodiesel. The export of Illinois dried distillers grains, a byproduct of ethanol production, topped \$1 billion in 2013, more than 20 percent ahead of the previous year; Illinois soy meal exports for fuel production were more than \$215 million last year, up 40 percent.

"The claim that the Renewable Fuel Standard eliminates a source of livestock feed is a misconception," Illinois Department of Agriculture Director Bob Flider said. "The fact is that one of the by-products of ethanol production is a ready-made livestock feed called dried distillers grains. Research demonstrates these grains have a higher protein concentration than even pre-ethanol corn, making them a more efficient animal feed. The bottom line is that renewable fuels like ethanol are good for the environment, good for economy and good for agriculture."

The use of renewable fuels has also helped improve air quality. Since ethanol contains oxygen, it contributes to the cleaner, more efficient combustion of gasoline, reducing carbon monoxide emissions by as much as 30 percent. Ethanol is also a key to increasing octane in gasoline blends, a critical element in achieving the new Corporate Average Fuel Efficiency standards of 54.5 miles per gallon in 2025.

"Illinois supports the continued use of biofuels as a direct benefit to reducing greenhouse gas emissions in this country," Illinois EPA Director Lisa Bonnett said. "Reducing the use of biofuels will result in added greenhouse gas emissions to the atmosphere and will contradict the climate change policies currently in place."

The Quinn Administration has taken the lead in the use of renewable fuels, converting much of the state's vehicle fleet to Flex Fuel Vehicles and providing incentives for retailers to dispense biofuels. The state also offers an Alternative Fuel Vehicle rebate program, providing rebates for nearly 12,500 vehicle purchases since the program began in 1999.

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