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### **EPA Ignores Environmental Warnings Over Flawed Ethanol Mandate**

WASHINGTON, August 7, 2008. Three prominent national environmental groups criticized today's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announcement that it would not grant Texas Governor Perry's request to temporarily waive the federal mandate for ethanol. Friends of the Earth, Clean Air Task Force, and the Environmental Working Group had urged the EPA to grant the waiver to Governor Perry.

The groups contend that the current Renewable Fuel Standard lacks sound environmental protections.

"America should be focusing on viable clean energy solutions like conservation, solar and wind. Instead, the misguided corn ethanol mandate is forcing farmers to plow up marginal land and wildlife habitat, while increasing global warming and dumping toxic fertilizers and pesticides into our precious water sources," said Environmental Working Group Director of Government Affairs Sandra Schubert.

"Evidence continues to mount that shows that EPA's current approach to renewable fuels will likely increase global warming pollution, and will do almost nothing to lower energy costs or increase energy independence," said Jonathan Lewis of the Clean Air Task Force. "Administrator Johnson's refusal to seize this opportunity to re-orient EPA's flawed biofuel policy is unfortunate and irresponsible."

"Biofuels are not the solution that corporate agribusiness is making them out to be," said Kate McMahon of Friends of the Earth. "They are worsening global warming and polluting our air, water and soil. That's why today's EPA decision is so important. By denying the waiver, the EPA failed to take advantage of an opportunity to limit this foolishness. Instead of getting stuck on false solutions, what we need to do is use less fuel altogether."

Other groups like the Network for New Energy Choices, which issued comprehensive recommendations for U.S. biofuels last year, voiced their concerns about the EPA's policy decision as well.

"The EPA missed an important opportunity to slow down the rush to ethanol before committing the nation to dramatic increases in production," said Dulce Fernandes, associate director of the Network for New Energy Choices, "The energy bill authorized studies of the effects of expanding the Renewable Fuel Standard. Those studies should be undertaken at once, and a sustainability standard established for ethanol production before increasing investments of acreage, infrastructure and other resources. Big picture analysis is needed – including ethanol's effects on U.S. energy independence, food prices, and the environment if the nation is to adopt biofuels in ways that are beneficial, rather than destructive."

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*EWG is a nonprofit research organization based in Washington, DC that uses the power of information to protect human health and the environment. EWG's reports on the impact modern agriculture has on the environment can be found at <http://www.ewg.org/featured/722>*