

F. JAMES SENSENBRENNER, JR.

FIFTH DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

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July 12, 2011

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Secretary Steven Chu
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Secretary Chu,

On June 1, 2011, I wrote to 14 automakers about the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) recent waiver to allow gasoline blends with up to 15% ethanol (E15). The responses were overwhelming. All 14 automakers expressed concern that E15 would damage engines and reduce fuel efficiency.

In response, the EPA said that it issued its waiver after working with the Department of Energy (DOE) to "ensure any increase would not have an adverse impact on vehicles made since model year 2001."¹

The EPA's position, however, is difficult to reconcile with the concerns of automakers. I therefore appreciate a response to the following questions by July 31:

1. Did the DOE conduct testing to determine the impact of E15 on (1) engine durability, (2) tolerance of check-engine lights, (3) the durability of components, such as a fuel pump and the fuel level sensor, and (4) the evaporative emissions from fuel leaks and permeation?
2. Is the DOE confident that it conducted sufficient testing to ensure that E15 will not have an "adverse impact" on vehicles model year 2001 and later?

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.", written over a circular stamp or mark.

F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.
Vice Chairman, Committee on Science, Space and Technology

¹ Ford, *Toyota Criticize EPA Ethanol-Blend Fuel Proposal*, Bloomberg Business Week (July 5, 2011), available at <http://news.businessweek.com/article.asp?documentKey=1376-LNVFOB6K50XV01-38SGEBA8L7DJQ9856B7F9GA386>.

cc: The Honorable Ralph Hall
Chairman, Committee on Science, Space and Technology

The Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson
Ranking Member, Committee on Science, Space, and Technology