

**Opening Statement of the Honorable Fred Upton  
Subcommittee on Energy and Power  
Hearing on “Overview of the Renewable Fuel Standard”  
July 23, 2013**

*(As Prepared for Delivery)*

As authorizers, it is our job to review the policies we establish and oversee. It's a job I take very seriously as chairman of this committee, as do our members on both sides of the aisle. And since this is the committee where the Renewable Fuel Standard originated, we have the responsibility to assess how it is working and if it can be improved. Today's hearing continues our bipartisan review of the RFS, and I would like to thank ranking member Waxman for his collaboration in this process.

Much has changed since the RFS was last revised in 2007, including the exciting new developments that have led to unexpected increases in domestic oil and natural gas production. And while I believe this committee should do all it can to facilitate this domestic oil and natural gas revolution, I also see a continued role for renewable fuels and other alternatives. Reviewing the RFS and how it fits into the changing energy mix is what we are doing today.

We began our assessment with a series of bipartisan white papers that explored key RFS topics, including the compatibility of fuels with the existing infrastructure and vehicle fleet, and the impacts on the agricultural sector and the environment. The stakeholder response has been as extensive as it has been substantive. And the range of viewpoints expressed demonstrates the far-reaching effects of the RFS.

On June 26th, this subcommittee held its first RFS hearing, and invited the federal agencies most directly responsible for implementing the RFS. The Energy Information Administration, Environmental Protection Agency, and Department of Agriculture all made a similar diagnosis – that there are some real issues with the RFS that may come to the surface in 2014. In other words, our review is timely.

Today, we invite stakeholders to continue the discussion. I welcome all of them, and of course am particularly interested in hearing from the automakers. Fuels and vehicles operate as a system, and we need an RFS that works well within that system, given the changing dynamics of the current CAFE compliance obligations.

In my view, the current system cannot stand. I hope we can start a discussion that considers a host of potential modifications and updates to the RFS, with the end goal being a system that works best for the American people. To do that, we need everyone to come to the table with a commitment to listen and to be constructive. I welcome all proposals to improve the system and look forward to hearing ideas from today's witnesses. I am especially looking forward to hearing what each stakeholder is willing to bring to the table to fix the current system. I am absolutely committed to ensuring we deliver workable reforms.

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