United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 24, 2010

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

In the wake of the worst oil spill in our nation's history, we believe our government should operate with a great sense of urgency to utilize more homegrown biofuels. We know you share this view since you have on many occasions highlighted the importance of biofuels to our economy and our national energy security.

We recently learned that the Department of Energy has not yet completed its scheduled testing of higher blends of ethanol gasoline. The completion of this testing would allow the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to issue a waiver for gasoline with blends of ethanol higher than 10 percent. We are writing to express our serious concerns about this delay and ask you to expedite this testing.

In December, EPA was supposed to issue its decision on whether to approve a waiver to increase the allowable blend of ethanol in gasoline. Instead, EPA indicated that it planned to issue a waiver by the summer of 2010 so that it could use the time to obtain data needed to support the waiver. Unfortunately, it now appears that DOE has not provided the testing data in time for EPA to issue its waiver this summer. We urge you to use all available means to ensure that DOE's testing is completed as soon as possible so that both consumers and our biofuels industry are not further harmed by this delay.

As you know, Congress has set a national goal of 36 billion gallons of renewable fuels by 2022. To meet this target it is vitally important that our domestic biofuel production continues to grow—unhindered by the 10 percent by volume limit for ethanol in gasoline blends. It has become very clear that a higher blend is feasible and any delay in implementing it is now at the doors of the DOE.

Now more than ever we need to focus our attention on diversifying our energy supply. Thank you for your attention to this important matter and we look forward to working with you to help bring about the necessary transition to a new energy economy. Please do everything you can to expedite the gathering of this data.

Sincerely,

Amy Klobuchar

Tom Harkin

Tim Johnson

Ben Nelson

Richard Durbin

Evan Bayh

Al Franken

Claire McCaskill