

Thursday, April 14, 2022

The Honorable Brenda Mallory
Chair, The Council on Environmental Quality
Executive Office of the President
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable Cedric Richmond
Senior Advisor and Director of the Office of Public Engagement
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW Washington, DC 20500

Dear Chair Mallory and Director Richmond,

Following President Biden's decision on Tuesday, April 12, 2022, to allow the sale of E15 this summer (June 1 – September 15, 2022), I am respectfully requesting a meeting to discuss the recreational boating industry's concerns with the proposed policy. While we appreciate the president's efforts to reduce the price of gas, history has repeatedly proven that adding more ethanol to the fuel supply does not significantly reduce gas prices and increases the likelihood of consumers misfuelling and environmental harm.

By way of background, the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA) is the leading recreational boating industry association in North America, representing nearly 1,300 boat, engine, accessory, and trailer manufacturers. Collectively, recreational boating and fishing is the number one contributor to the U.S. outdoor recreation economy, which accounts for \$689 billion in economic impact, 1.8 percent of GDP, and 4.3 million American jobs. According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis, boating and fishing almost single handedly kept the outdoor recreation economy afloat throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

The recreational boating community has been at the forefront of exposing the problems with higher volumes of ethanol in the fuel supply for more than a decade. First and foremost, E15 often destroys recreational boat engines, as well as power units in a wide range of commonly used consumer products, including chainsaws, generators, and lawnmowers. Because of E15's destructive properties, federal law prohibits the use of the fuel in these products. Unfortunately, a recent Harris Poll found the following:

- Eighty-five (85) percent of consumers are unaware that it is illegal to use E15 in certain engines.
- More than three in five consumers mistakenly assume E15 is compatible with all their products.
- More than half of consumers think the existing E15 warning label and misfuelling mitigation measures do not go far enough to protect consumers.

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Currently, E15 is available in at least 30 states, including top boating states like Florida, Michigan, Minnesota, North Carolina, and South Carolina. At a time when recreational boating is experiencing historic levels of interest and participation – with the number of first-time boat buyers exceeding 400,000 in 2021 for the second year in a row – it is ill-advised to advance a policy that would jeopardize the safety of millions of boaters and the backbone of the outdoor recreation economy.

Additionally, the environmental damage caused by E15 far outweighs any perceived benefits. Increased corn production to support the production of E15 leads to harmful algae blooms detrimental to waterways, marine life, and local economies, threatening tourism and hurting the recreational boating and fishing community. Furthermore, emissions from engines using E15 generate more smog-creating gases than fuels with lower levels of ethanol like E10 and E0, especially during warmer months, which is why the sale of E15 during the summer is prohibited.

Under the previous administration, the effort to expand E15 sales reached its peak, with the EPA authorizing the year-round sale of E15 for the first time since the fuel entered the marketplace. Fortunately, the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia agreed with an NMMA backed legal challenge that the EPA exceeded its statutory authority and reversed the move, which the U.S. Supreme Court confirmed earlier this year. By continuing down the path of allowing year-round sale of E15, the Biden administration will be pursuing a policy that has previously failed in the courts.

With historic levels of inflation and the war in Ukraine driving up the price of gas, we understand the administration's desire to reduce the price at the pump. It is a goal we and our members share and support. However, expanding the availability of E15 throughout the summer will not achieve this objective, but it will create a myriad of unintended and costly consequences. Rather than forging ahead with the proposal, I respectfully request you reconsider, and instead work with the recreational boating community to bolster misfuelling mitigation measures and consumer awareness.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and I look forward to discussing this important issue with you in the days ahead. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me or NMMA's senior vice president of government relations and regulatory affairs, Tillie Fowler at tfowler@nmma.org.

Sincerely,



Frank Hugelmeier
President, National Marine Manufacturers Association

cc: Zach Butterworth, Director of Private Sector Engagement, Office of Public Engagement
Matt Lee-Ashley, Chief of Staff, Council on Environmental Quality
Tillie Fowler, NMMA SVP, Government Relations and Regulatory Affairs