

Tailpipe Rule: Missed Opportunity to Reduce Carbon

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) finalized its multipollutant rule governing tailpipe emissions standards from light-duty vehicles on March 20, 2024. EPA’s modeling shows that the more stringent standards would most likely be met by 56 percent battery-electric vehicles by 2032.

EPA completely ignored the role of bioethanol and higher bioethanol blends in the decarbonization of the light-duty fleet. Not only will EPA leave millions of tons of carbon reductions on the table through an unduly optimistic emphasis on electric vehicles (see chart), but they ignore proven home-grown solutions from America’s heartland.

SOLUTIONS ON THE ROAD TODAY:

ACCELERATE NATIONWIDE E15

Also known as Unleaded 88, E15 is an ideal lower-cost, lower-carbon option, approved by the EPA for all light-duty cars and trucks model year 2001 or newer. That’s more than 96 percent of light-duty vehicles, which account for 98 percent of all vehicle miles traveled. Right now, almost every gas station in America sells a 10 percent blend, but many more are starting to offer E15, which can be found at nearly 3,500 gas stations across the country.

Nationwide access to E15 could help reduce carbon emissions by more than 17.62 million tons — the equivalent of taking 3.85 million cars off the road each year. To capture those benefits, EPA can lift outdated restrictions and provide U.S. consumers with greater access to the fuel.

ASK Cosponsor S.785 / H.R.1608 (Consumer and Fuel Retailer Choice Act of 2023); S.2707 (Nationwide Consumer and Fuel Retailer Choice Act)

PROMOTE HIGH-OCTANE, MIDDLELEVEL BLENDS

Gasoline blended with 20 to 40 percent bioethanol is considered a midlevel blend. It can be used by automakers to power smaller, more efficient engines.

Bioethanol’s high-octane rating (113 octane vs 87 octane for gas without bioethanol) provides extra power, and bioethanol is rich in oxygen, which means that midlevel blends combust more completely than petroleum fuels. The science supporting the benefits of a high-octane fuel, and specifically a midlevel bioethanol blend in the E25-E30 range, in conjunction with a high-compression ratio engine, has been well-explored by the national laboratories, automobile manufacturers, and other scientific institutions. EPA can help automakers take advantage of midlevel blends by raising octane standards and approving their use for vehicle certification.

ASK Cosponsor S.944 / H.R.2434 (Next Generation Fuels Act of 2023)

EXPAND ACCESS TO E85 AND FFVS

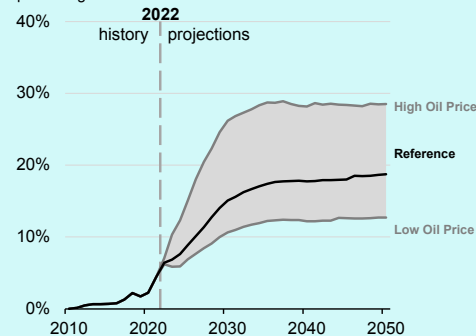
A flex-fuel vehicle (FFV) is a vehicle designed to operate on any bioethanol blend, ranging from E10 to E85. E85 contains a mix of 51 to 83 percent bioethanol and is a popular, affordable option for flex-fuel vehicle owners.

Today, there are nearly 21 million FFVs on the road and more than 5,000 fueling locations across the country. In California alone, the use of E85 has more than tripled since 2020. E85 will promote even further reductions in greenhouse gas and air toxic emissions, as well as lower consumer costs (in recent years, E85 has sold at nearly \$2 less per gallon in some markets). Given the considerable benefits, EPA should ensure the continued production of FFVs in conjunction with the growing use of E85.

ASK Cosponsor S.2635 / H.R.6508 (Flex Fuel Fairness Act)

EVs will be less than 30 percent of the automotive fleet in 2050

Market share of electric light-duty vehicles* percentage of sales



EIA, [Annual Energy Outlook 2023](#)

