Dear Candidate,

As individuals and organizations who care deeply about the environment, we are writing to ask you to reject the use of food-based biofuels as a viable solution to climate change.

In your position as a candidate for the presidency of the United States, it is imperative that you advance real solutions to tackle the global threat of climate change. Given that most biofuels are exacerbating climate pollution, we are looking to you to provide leadership to reduce the use of these fuels and promote truly effective climate solutions.

Food-based biofuels like corn ethanol and soy biodiesel require vast amounts of land. Over the past decade, increased crop production for biofuels has resulted in the conversion of 7 million acres of natural areas. This loss represents an enormous decline in wildlife habitat and contributes to increased agricultural runoff and water pollution, fueling drinking water contamination, algal blooms and dead zones in waterways.1 The climate emissions resulting from the expansion of corn and soy in the U.S. are equivalent to the annual carbon dioxide pollution from 34 coal-fired power plants,2 putting the emissions of most biofuels on par with or worse than oil and gas.

We urge you to support truly effective and local solutions to climate change. For instance, increasing wind and solar production in the Midwest would not only offer substantial emissions reductions, but would reinvigorate rural economies. Wind and solar production is also far more efficient. Solar energy, for example, can generate about 100 times more energy than food-based biofuels using the same amount of land.3 In addition, expanding existing programs to compensate landowners for restoring critical habitat, including forests, prairie and wetlands, would result in the growth of carbon sinks, a much needed solution to climate change.

As you embark on your effort to win the presidency, it’s vitally important that you support climate solutions that work. And, while second-generation or cellulosic biofuels still offer promise, food-based biofuels have done more harm than good. The Midwest will ultimately benefit from a courageous position on climate-friendly energy production. We hope that you will look beyond biofuels when advocating for real climate solutions.

Sincerely,

Statewide
Iowa Green Party
Physicians for Social Responsibility Iowa Chapter

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2 Tyler J Lark et al 2015 Environ. Res. Lett. 10 044003
Ames
Frederick Kirschenmann, Distinguished Fellow, Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture

Cedar Rapids
Prairiewoods Franciscan Spirituality Center
Sunrise Movement Cedar Rapids

Coal Valley
Joel Vanderbush, Curator of Conservation & Education, Niabi Zoo

Des Moines
Amour
Citizens Climate Lobby: Des Moines
Drake Environmental Action League
Energy & Justice For All Committee
Fontenelle Supply Co.
Heather Ryan, Community Leader
Honey Badger Urban Farm LLC
Interfaith Green Coalition
Iowa Farm Sanctuary
Kara Marie, Secretary, Urbandale Democrats
Locally Grown Clothing Co
Lynnae Marty-Hentzen, Host of “Green City” on KFMG
Matthew Canfield, Assistant Professor of Law, Politics, and Society, Drake University
Porch Light
RAYGUN
Red Lion Renewables
Thomas Rosburg, Professor of Ecology and Botany, Drake University
VegLife Des Moines
Women’s International League of Peace & Freedom: Des Moines

Dubuque
Loras LEAF

Galena
Galena Green Team

Indianola
Indianola Green Team

Iowa City
100 Grannies for a Livable Future
Bur Oak Land Trust
Fred Meyer, Community Leader
Harvest Preserve Foundation, Inc
ICOR Boxing
Iowa City Area Group of the Sierra Club
Johnson County Green Party
Mike Carberry, Green State Solutions
Net Impact
UI Environmental Law Society
UIowa Habitat for Humanity

Mechanicsville
Echollective Farm

Prairie du Sac
Curt Meine, Conservation Biologist

Quad Cities
Augustana College Professor
Augustana College Professor
Augustana College Sierra Club
Augustana Community Health Outreach Organization
Aurora Hood, Conservation Biologist
Coalition for Social Justice
Earth Keepers
Karene Nagel, Farmer
Quad Cities Democratic Socialists of America
Quad Cities Pollution Solution
Quad Cities Waterkeeper Inc.
Sage Sisters of Solidarity

Tipton
Indivisible 37/73

Waverly
Solstice Farm

Minneapolis, Minnesota
Land Stewardship Project