

Delaware Elected Officials, Labor & Business Leaders Sound Off: Save Our State's Refinery Jobs by Fixing the Broken RFS



Delawareans have been calling on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to save hundreds of high-quality union jobs in the state by fixing the federal biofuel mandate: the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS). Unfortunately, the RFS is not operating as Congress intended—as a result, the broken RFS could put Delaware's only refinery at risk.

This year, countless organized labor and business leaders from across the First State submitted public comments on EPA's [proposed biofuel blending levels under the RFS](#). Below are several comments from Delaware's union leaders, businesses, refinery workers, and associations, which were submitted to EPA's docket or delivered during the agency's public hearing on its proposal in January 2022:

- **Michael Hackendorn - Delaware Building and Construction Trades Council and United Association (UA) Local 74 Plumbers & Pipefitters:** "Independent refiners are paying more for RINs than all other operating costs combined, which puts union jobs and domestic fuel supplies at risk. Various estimates also note that the RFS is adding between 15 to 30 cents per gallon to consumer fuel costs... It is firmly our belief that if this RINs problem is not figured out, and the EPA does not make these needed changes, that at some point, the Delaware City Refinery and the refineries in our area are not going to be able to sustain and stay in business."
- **Ken Gomeringer - United Steel Workers, Delaware City Refinery:** "My job at the refinery allowed me to have the financial stability to get married and raise a family. I was able to provide a nice home for my family in a middle-class neighborhood. I was also able to provide for all my children's needs while they were growing up... The EPA needs to lower the 15-billion-gallon proposed ethanol requirement for 2022 to 13.8 billion gallons which reflects the maximum amount of ethanol that the fuel supply chain can handle given the engine and infrastructure Constraints. This will bring down RINs prices to a point that protects good paying/family sustaining union jobs and domestic fuel supplies, while reducing consumer cost."
- **James Peacock, Sr. - Delaware City Refinery:** "Refining has supported my family for the last 49 years... I will retire at some point but would like to ensure that all employees are afforded the same opportunities... We witnessed firsthand when the Colonial Pipeline was compromised by a cyber-attack that the Northeast was able to maintain product supply due to the PBF and other Merchant refineries operating in the region. This event should have made us all aware of how fragile our energy independence can be when under attack."
- **Lisa B. Himber - President, Maritime Exchange for the Delaware River and Bay:** "Refineries in our region (Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware) have been crucial industry partners for generations. These facilities provide family-sustaining livelihoods not only for those who work on ships and at the refineries, but also for maritime workers throughout the region, including vessel agents, pilots, tug companies, barge operators, and a host of others... For some time, refiners in our region have been under tremendous financial pressure from the RFS. The current structure of the RFS places the obligation to blend renewable fuels like ethanol on merchant refiners who have little or no control over the amount of renewable fuel that gets blended into the transportation fuels that they produce."
- **Martin Willis - Delaware Union Boilermaker:** "As a union boilermaker for the past 33 years, I know that the American consumer knew that there was more corn in our gas tank than in our kitchen cabinets, rest assured I would not be the only American speaking for themselves today. How can we justify in 2022 having PBF and Monroe refineries blending more corn in their distillation towards than Kellogg's has in their corn flakes and General Mills has to their corn bread."



These public comment submissions come after years of pleas from elected officials, as well as union and business leaders, repeatedly urging EPA to fix the RFS by containing the out-of-control costs of Renewable Identification Numbers (RINs). Below are some of the letters that have been sent to President Biden, Congress, and EPA in recent months urging RFS reform.

Elected Officials:

- [Governor John Carney \(D-Del.\)](#),
- [Senator Tom Carper \(D-Del.\)](#),
- [Senator Chris Coons \(D-Del.\)](#),
- [Representative Lisa Blunt Rochester \(D-Del.\)](#)

Labor Unions:

- [Delaware Building and Construction Trades Council](#)
- [Delaware AFL-CIO](#)

Business Leaders & Associations:

- [African American Chamber of Commerce of Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware](#)
- [Delaware Black Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Chemical Industry Council of Delaware](#)
- [New Castle County Chamber of Commerce](#)