



**THE
CHAMBER**
PITTSBURGH AIRPORT AREA
Connected to the world.

**850 Beaver Grade Road
Suite 101
Moon Township, PA 15108**

412.264.6270
info@paacc.com
paacc.com

August 11, 2021

The Honorable Michael Regan, Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Regan:

I write to you today regarding a matter of critical importance. The federal Renewable Fuel Standard (“RFS”) is severely broken, resulting in disproportionate harm to independent refiners around the country, including those few that still remain in the Northeast, as well as critical jet fuel suppliers in the Midwest. Without reform, our regional refineries could close, leading to ripple effects that will have significantly negative consequences for businesses and their owners, many of which are located in the economically-vibrant region surrounding the Pittsburgh Airport.

The PAACC is the voice of the business community in the greater Pittsburgh Airport area. Our organization is dedicated to helping our member companies grow and maximize their economic potential in the region and beyond. One of the foundational elements that our member companies depend upon to be successful is having uninterrupted access to reliable sources of transportation fuels, as well as numerous other feedstocks that they need to make their products. Our Northeast and Midwest independent refineries have consistently served this role, which contributes to the long-term success of our regional business community.

Although the recent shutdown of the Colonial Pipeline was relatively short-lived event, it demonstrated how quickly our country’s economic activity could come to a standstill in the face of a widespread fuel shortage. While states south of Delaware experienced gas shortages and price spikes, our region didn’t experience anything like this because we have refineries in the Northeast and Midwest, providing the transportation fuels we need to get our members’ employees to work and transport their products, all of which helps propel our economy.

More recently, some airlines warned of jet fuel shortages at midsized airports like the one in our area due to pipeline allocation issues, as well as lacking jet fuel production attributable to the fact that refiners are still recovering from the massive fuel demand destruction associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. If government fails to do something about the skyrocketing cost of tradable credits that independent refiners need to buy to show RFS compliance, called Renewable Identification Numbers or RINs, refiners supplying needed transportation fuels – including the majority of the fuel to the Pittsburgh Airport – could close. Such a situation could make airlines’ recent fuel supply warnings a permanent reality, threatening the economic viability of the entire region.

The current misalignment of the RFS program threatens all of the crucial benefits that independent refineries in our region provide to their respective communities. A more balanced approach to the RFS will provide benefits to farmers who the program is intended to support, and promote the expansion of renewable fuel use without creating an insurmountable financial burden for America's independent refiners. It will also prevent permanent supply constraints in regions like the Pittsburgh Airport area. The structure of the RFS is simply unsustainable in its current form, and a compromise solution must be realized soon because the time for action is running out.

On behalf of our entire Board of Directors, our numerous member companies, and the 34 communities that our Chamber supports, I implore you to take swift and meaningful action to reform the RFS. Thank you for your consideration of our request

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Heck". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Chris Heck
President/CEO

CC: Governor Tom Wolf, Pennsylvania
Senator Pat Toomey
Senator Bob Casey
Michael Regan, EPA Administrator
Ron Klain, White House Chief of Staff
Brian Deese, Director, National Economic Council
Marty Walsh, Secretary of Labor
Gina McCarthy, National Climate Advisor
Dan Utech, Chief of Staff, EPA
Seth Harris, Senior Advisor Labor Policy
Cedric Richmond, Sen. Advisor & Dir. of Pub. Engagement