
Higher-Ethanol Gasoline Wins House Vote in Biofuels Boost

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The US House of Representatives passed legislation to allow year-round, nationwide sales of higher-ethanol E15 gasoline, handing a long-sought win to farm groups eager to boost demand for swelling corn supplies.

The measure, which passed 218-203 in a vote Wednesday, is only a first step. It still needs approval in the Senate, where its prospects are uncertain, and then support from the president. But the result represents a major advance for biofuels following more than a decade of failed attempts to expand the market for E15.

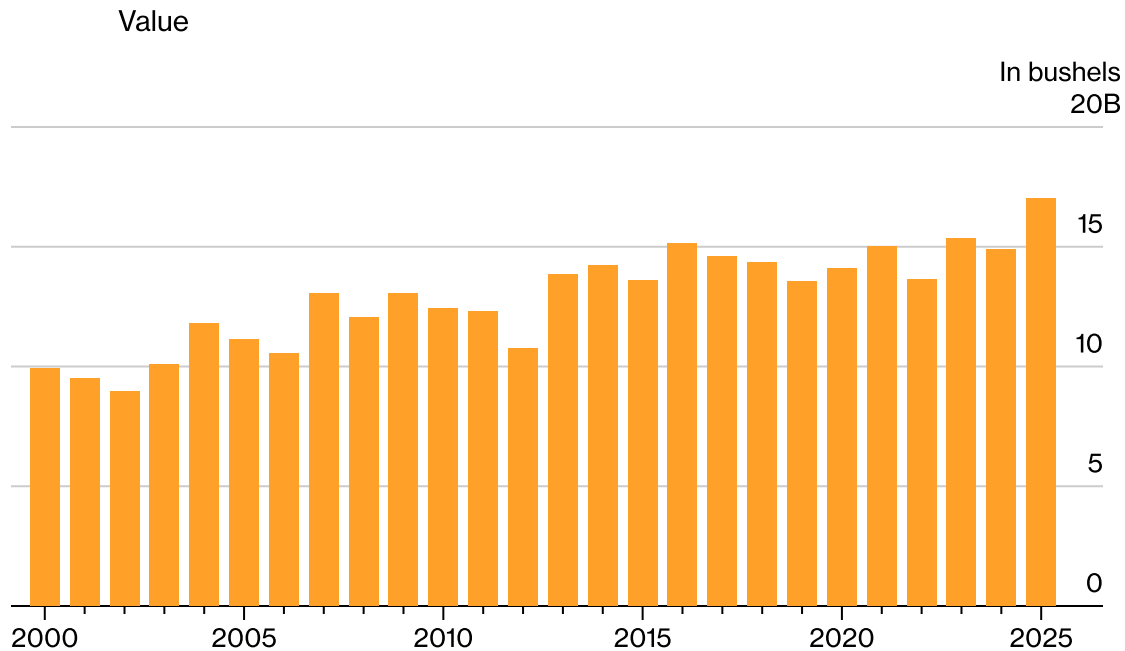
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For corn farmers, the stakes are high. E15 — gasoline made with 15% corn-based ethanol — could provide a meaningful boost to demand, and profits, at a time when growers are dealing with record crops and rising costs of inputs like fertilizer.

“At a time of extreme market volatility and higher costs, this bill provides badly needed certainty for fuel retailers, oil refiners, ethanol producers, and consumers alike,” said Geoff Cooper, president of Renewable Fuels Association. “The legislation gives Americans the freedom to choose E15 and removes three decades of red tape that had stifled competition and choice in the marketplace.”

US Farmers Produced a Record Corn Crop in 2025

Growers say more demand is needed with increased biofuel blends



Source: US Department of Agriculture

Bloomberg

Efforts to authorize permanent E15 sales have failed in the past largely due to opposition from much of the oil industry, which has argued that US biofuel blending mandates impose significant costs on refiners.

The politics this time around have been more complicated. The proposal pairs E15 expansion with limits on exemptions from biofuel-blending requirements for small refineries — a provision that has drawn support from some large oil companies but sparked fierce resistance from smaller operators.

The proposal also has split corn and soybean farmers in an unusual twist, after the American Soybean Association said earlier Wednesday that it can't support the legislation.

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A spokesperson for the ASA pointed to research by the Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute at the University of Missouri, which found that small gains in corn prices from year-round, nationwide E15 gasoline are more than offset by decreases in soybean prices. The [study](#) looked at different scenarios in how nationwide E15 could impact biofuel demand, with “mixed impacts” on farm income.

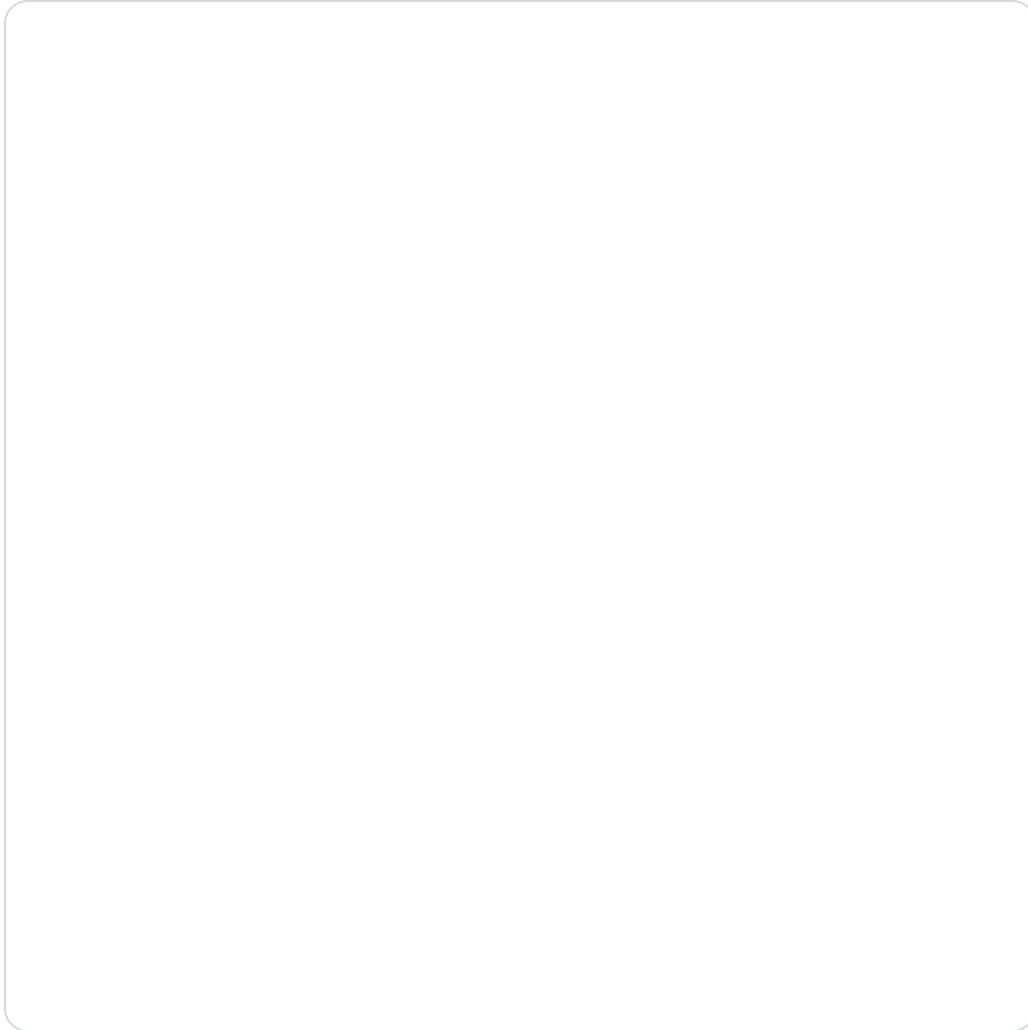
In a post on X after the vote, ASA said it continues to “fully support” year-round access to E15 and policies that strengthen domestic biofuels demand. The group said it will continue to work with lawmakers and others to seek solutions for year-round E15 “without rewarding petroleum refiners who do not comply with the Renewable Fuel Standard at the expense of a critical domestic market for US soy.”

American Soybean Association

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John Fuher, vice president of government affairs for biofuels trade association Growth Energy, criticized the study, saying it's impossible to make a reasonable calculation on how the legislation would impact soybean farmers without knowing how big blending mandates will be in years to come.

The push for E15 comes as the US **rolls out** its most aggressive biofuel blending mandates to date, finalized in March after months of delays. While the renewable fuel standards were welcomed by farm groups, they leave conventional biofuel volumes — mostly corn ethanol — largely unchanged. Current blending levels also fall short of those requirements.

That dynamic has heightened the focus on E15 as a relatively straightforward way to create more demand and close the gap. The war in Iran is also bolstering the cause for E15, as the surge in crude oil prices spurs calls to expand biofuels markets at a faster pace.

Not everyone agrees that increased biofuels use will lower costs at the pump, however. The RFS program, which was created by Congress two decades ago to bolster domestic demand and support rural communities, requires refiners to blend a certain amount of biofuels into gasoline and diesel. Each gallon of ethanol or biodiesel mixed into transportation fuels generates credits — so-called renewable identification numbers, or RINs — that oil refiners use to meet their federal blending obligations.

Refiners that lack enough blending capacity to generate sufficient RINs are exposed to higher credit costs. This is an enormous expense for some refiners. The rising costs to comply with the program, some say, means higher costs for consumers overall.

“At a time when Americans are demanding relief from high prices, it is disheartening to see the House advance legislation that stands to increase costs at the pump and weaken America’s fuel supply,” the **Fueling American Jobs Coalition**, which represents independent refiners and union workers, said in a statement.

The E15 legislation is now decoupled from the **farm bill** that’s also currently running through Congress.

(The AI summary on an earlier version was blocked for overstating the ASA's position on the legislation.)

(Adds coalition statement beginning in 15th paragraph.)

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