

May XX, 2019

The Honorable Andrew Wheeler  
Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Wheeler:

We write regarding the continued delay at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in acting on pending applications under the electric pathway of the Renewable Fuel Standard. We urge your swift review and approval of these applications, subject to the appropriation regulations.

Utilizing waste products as an energy source produces a range of important benefits. Dairy farmers, for example, can make productive use of manure by collecting methane in an anaerobic digester to generate electricity from biogas. Municipalities can invest in waste-to-energy facilities to produce energy from municipal solid waste and in anaerobic digesters that collect and reuse methane from urban food waste and wastewater biosolids. Biomass plants complement rural and urban communities by providing markets for material that would otherwise be left in the forests or in landfills to decay, effectively reducing wildfire risks. Furthermore, these applications employ rural, skilled Americans who provide invaluable services to our states and communities in the forestry and farming sectors.

On February 15, 2019, the President signed into law the Consolidated Appropriations Act, P.L. 116-6, which provided Fiscal Year 2019 funding for EPA. This law also included Congressional directive for the EPA to process pending electric pathway applications, which was clearly indicated by the adoption of the following language:

*The Committee notes the backlog of applications under the Renewable Fuels Pathway II rule finalized in 2014. No applications for the electric pathway—which could help support rural agricultural communities—have been approved since the rule went into effect. The Committee strongly encourages the Agency to take action on the existing applications within 90 days of the enactment of this Act.*

Ninety days have elapsed since this legislation was enacted, and we respectfully request EPA follow this Congressional directive and take action on electric pathway applications. Further delays will harm our farmers, truckers, landowners, loggers, and forest owners. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

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Susan M. Collins  
U.S. Senator