Neil Caskey's Testimony
EPA's Science Advisory Board Hearing

I want to thank the science advisory board for hearing my testimony today.

I am Neil Caskey, CEO of the National Corn Growers Association. Founded in 1957, NCGA represents nearly 40,000 dues-paying corn growers and the interests of more than 300,000 farmers who contribute through corn checkoff programs in their states.

NCGA and its affiliated state associations and checkoff organizations work together to help protect and advance corn growers' interests.

Studies Show Corn Ethanol Helps Cut Harmful Carbon and Tailpipe Emissions

I was concerned when I read your recent draft commentary on the *Volume Requirements for 2023 and Beyond under the Renewable Fuel Standard Program*.

Your commentary raises doubts about the ability of ethanol to significantly lower greenhouse gas emissions and asserts that the use of ethanol leads to increased land use.

Today, I want to talk about the voluminous research showing that corn ethanol plays a crucial role in fighting climate change.

There are no shortage of studies on the environmental benefits of corn ethanol. The Department of Energy's Argonne National Laboratory, for example, has conducted extensive research on the matter and concluded that corn ethanol has reduced GHG emissions in the U.S. by 544 million metric tons from 2005- 2019 and that the feedstock's carbon intensity is 44 percent lower than that of petroleum gasoline.

The vast research on this topic shows that the use of corn ethanol offers an average reduction of 46 percent in GHGs when compared to pure gasoline. Emerging technologies promise to boost that reduction over the coming years.

Corn Growers Are Achieving Higher Yields on Less Land

There are common misconceptions that the production of ethanol impacts land use. But the data shows that as corn production has risen, land used to grow corn has not.

American farmers planted an estimated 94.1 million acres of corn in 2023, which falls short of the more than 100 million acres corn farmers planted a century ago. In the past decade, U.S. corn production has been over six times the production of the 1930s with fewer corn acres.

Over the next decade, growth in corn production is expected to continue although projected land area for corn drops from today's levels to 89 million acres as yields continue to rise.

Ethanol Reduces Environmental Impacts

U.S. corn farmers believe so strongly in the case for higher blends of ethanol, because of corn ethanol's ability to improve engine performance and reduce environmental impacts, all at a lower cost to

consumers. Plus, corn ethanol contributes to rural economies across the country.

It is for these reasons that we would ask you to reconsider your commentary on this critically important biofuel.

Thank you.