The Clean Air Act includes seasonal fuel vapor pressure provisions intended to reduce evaporative emissions in the summer months (June 1 to September 15) in order to reduce smog. In the 1990 amendments to the Clean Air Act, Congress limited allowable fuel vapor pressure during the summer months to 9-pounds per square inch (psi) Reid Vapor Pressure (RVP) in certain areas of the country. Congress also specified, however, that fuel blends containing 10 percent ethanol would receive a 1.0 psi RVP waiver from the seasonal RVP limit to encourage use of ethanol-blended fuels, which provide significant reductions in tailpipe emissions.

This RVP waiver made the sale of ethanol blended fuels up to E10 possible year-round throughout the country. However, the waiver predates the introduction of higher blends of ethanol like E15, which have a lower RVP than E10.

Growth Energy supports uninterrupted access to lower-cost E15, and a permanent fix is needed. Congress can put an end to the oil industry’s efforts to limit consumer access to higher blends of renewable fuels by permanently extending the 1.0 psi summertime RVP waiver to ethanol blends beyond E10.

• E15 & higher level blends have lower evaporative emissions than standard vehicle fuels.
• Higher biofuel blends are better for air quality, reducing both greenhouse gas emissions and air toxics like carbon monoxide.
• Ethanol reduces greenhouse gas emissions by 46% when compared to traditional gasoline.
• If the United States transitioned from E10 to E15 nationwide, greenhouse gas emissions would fall by 17.62 million tons per year, which is the equivalent of removing approximately 3.85 million vehicles from the road.
• Beyond environmental benefits, nationwide adoption of E15 would add $17.8 billion to the GDP, create 182,600 new jobs, generate $10.5 billion in added household income, and save $12.2 billion in fuel costs.

For more information, visit GrowthEnergy.org