

**Growth Energy CEO Emily Skor**  
**Keynote address to the 2026 Fuel Ethanol Workshop (FEW) in St. Louis, Mo., June 3, 2026**  
**Remarks as prepared for delivery**

Thank you for that warm welcome.

It is fantastic to be **back here** with you at F.E.W.

This year, 2026, is an **extraordinary milestone** for our country — as we celebrate our 250<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Two and a half centuries of American **resilience, innovation, and progress.**

It's a natural time for us all to take a step back and **reflect.**

To **celebrate our history**... take stock of where our country stands today... and look **forward together** into the future.

Today, let's have that same conversation as an **ethanol industry**: Where we've been; where we are now; and where we are going together.

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### **1. Where We've Been**

As a nation, we are thinking back to July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1776.

Our industry's part of the story is a little more recent.

It was 50 years ago, in the mid-1970s, when Congress established the first **real incentives** for ethanol.

By 2001, the U.S. still only produced about **1.6 billion** gallons of ethanol a year.

Four short years later, by 2005, we'd more than doubled — to almost **four billion gallons.**

Four years after *that*, we'd more than doubled again — about 11 billion gallons by 2009.

What did that? What sparked that takeoff?

Three big things happened.

Number one: Our nation had gotten an **energy security wake-up call**, after September 11<sup>th</sup> and the wars in the Middle East.

Number two: Consumers were facing an **affordability crisis** at the gas pump.

And number three: Elected officials responded with policy that **met the moment** and acknowledged the value of ethanol.

That included the **Renewable Fuel Standard.**

Last year marked the **twentieth anniversary** of the RFS.

Over those two decades, American biorefiners have produced more than **250 billion gallons** of ethanol.

Ethanol plants bought **93 billion bushels** of corn.

American farmers captured more than **\$400 billion** in additional revenue.

The RFS is a prime example of an **important truth**:

When our leaders **get policy right**, it can **transform everything**.

And we are working today to make that happen again—to build momentum for **other policy transformations** that will carry us into the **next two decades** and beyond.

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Just look at the **wins we have banked** since the start of this Administration last January.

Our **planning and work** during the presidential campaign and transition, well **before Inauguration Day**, got ethanol featured in President Trump's **Day One executive order** on energy.

We secured our summer waivers for **E15**.

We locked in the strongest **RVOs** that we have ever seen under the RFS.

We took the **45Z** tax credit that was originally enacted without a single Republican vote, and not only preserved it, but *grew* it, in the "Big Beautiful Bill" that was passed without a single Democratic vote!

And our engagement with the Administration has put U.S. ethanol at the center of nearly a **dozen new trade deals** and frameworks.

Victory has not been limited to the **federal** level.

We have also made enormous headway in the **states**. I'll come back to that in just a moment.

The lesson is: None of this happens by accident.

We've built a banner team at Growth Energy to provide the level of **advocacy and support** that you deserve.

We have the strongest **relationships** and **technical expertise** in our industry — so that wherever there is an opportunity for ethanol, your trade association is **leading the way**.

From Capitol Hill to state capitals to the courtroom.

And across our issues and priorities, we are seeing a **level of unity** across the entire sector that is unprecedented.

**Ethanol producers, corn growers, and farm groups** — even the **oil majors** — are all working together in ways we have never seen before.

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## 2. Where We Are

So that brings us to the present day.

We have momentum.

Everyone wants what you make.

Once again, we have war in the Middle East and an **energy security wake-up call**.

Once again, we have American families struggling with **higher gas prices**.

And we have **real challenges** in the farm economy.

- **Input costs** are still high,
- Chapter 12 **farm bankruptcies** are spiking, and
- our nation has lost almost **150,000 farms** over the last five years.

But this is no time for pessimism.

It's time for **action**.

Because ethanol is a **key part of the answer** to every one of these challenges.

Ethanol means **American energy dominance**.

Ethanol means **lower gas prices** and **affordability**.

Ethanol means a stronger **farm economy** and **rural jobs**.

This is our time.

This is our moment.

To step up and **deliver the solutions** that our country needs.

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## 3. Where We're Going

So how do we turn all this current momentum into **permanent, unstoppable growth**?

I think about it in three stages:

- We have to push **every available gallon** here at home.
- We have to fight for **fair access** overseas.

➤ And we have to introduce our molecule into **completely new engines**.

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### 3.1. Keep Growing Domestic Demand

Step one is continuing to push domestic demand.

And that starts with E15.

As we all know — a few weeks ago, in the House of Representatives, we secured an **incredible milestone**.

At long last — a bill to **permanently** allow the **year-round, nationwide sale** of E15 passed the House on a strong, **bipartisan vote**.

That took an all-out sprint on Capitol Hill unlike anything our industry had done before.

3 fly-ins in five weeks.

300 Hill meetings.

5 separate ad campaigns.

Thousands of **calls and letters** into congressional offices.

Endorsements from President Trump and Vice President Vance for E15.

We were relentless.

We got our vote in the House — and we won.

Now, the action lies with the **Senate**.

The Senate Majority Leader, **John Thune**, supports E15.

The chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee, **John Boozman**, recently said that he believes it has enough support to pass the Senate.

But floor time in the Senate is a scarce **resource**.

Not every bill comes up for a vote.

Typically, in the spring and summer of an **election year like this one**, even fewer things get passed than normal.

And the **misstatements** and **falsehoods** from the **small** and **mid-sized refiners** are still coming hard and fast.

So we are going to **stay active, remain focused**, and use **every tool and lever** at our disposal to keep building momentum, get E15 through the Senate, and onto the President's desk.

But Washington, D.C. is not the only place we are finding success.

While we keep working on Congress, we are also fighting and **winning in the states**.

Just look at California.

For years, E15 was locked out.

But by **staying assertive, supplying the science**, refusing to take **no for an answer**, and, yes, **playing the politics**, we finally saw California lawmakers approve E15.

Now, we still face hurdles in that market.

Some **California bureaucrats** have put up some new obstacles.

But we're not stopping. We're pressing forward.

And the bottom line is that E15 is finally legal in all **50 states**.

There's more.

We now have **2 state standards**, including Iowa's E15 access standard that took effect in January.

States are continuing to invest in **infrastructure grants**, with millions more dollars going out the door in **Iowa** and **Minnesota**.

And we've helped lead **3 new states** to create E15 tax incentives in just the last 2 years.

Just this April, lawmakers in **Kansas** passed a brand new **5-cent tax credit** for every gallon sold of E15 or higher blends.

We are leaving no stone unturned — **state by state, gallon by gallon**.

And our work doesn't stop with state capitols, either.

Building demand goes beyond working to **pass new laws** or **change regulations** that hold us back.

It also means doing the **legwork with retailers** to educate them, persuade them and grow our market directly.

Our technical team has **real-world expertise** across the **fuel value chain**.

They've worked at **Exxon**.

They've worked at **Kum and Go** and **Casey's** and **Sheetz**.

As former **refiners, retailers, and chemical engineers**, they understand how fuel is **sold, moved, and marketed**.

We know how to work with the regulators – in the **states**, and **around the world**.

And we bring our **commercial credibility** to retailers — laying out the **business case**, holding their hand, explaining incentives, and guiding them **through the red tape**.

Those efforts have been paying off since the day EPA approved Growth Energy's petition to allow E15 sales back in 2011.

Last year we added 900 new E15 stores — an increase of **24 percent**.

This year, even *without* a permanent fix from Congress, we expect more than **1,200** additional E15 stores.

**With a fix**, the sky is the limit.

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### **3.2. International Market Access**

So that's the first of our three big priorities:

Moving every possible gallon here at home.

Number two is opening up **international markets**.

We know America **grows the best crop**.

We know America **makes the best fuel**.

We know that when trade is actually **fair**, and the playing field is **truly level**, we win.

We've had two years in a row of **record exports**.

And 2026 is **following that trendline**.

But we also know that foreign governments put up **unfair trade barriers** that **limit or block** our access.

That's why a key focus of Growth Energy's mission is **international**.

Part of that work is direct outreach to **build overseas demand ourselves**.

The Growth Energy team has visited **19 countries** in the last **18 months**.

We also have a President who is **completely reworking** America's trade relationships.

This is a **significant opportunity** for us, and we're seizing it.

We work **hand-in-glove** with the President's team as they negotiate.

We've made bioethanol exports one of their key tools for **narrowing the trade deficit**.

But if we really think about the future — in years and decades — the most important fights are not about the short-term tariffs.

They're the long-term debates over the **evidence supporting bioethanol**.

Foreign regulators try to hide behind outdated assumptions and incorrect science that **disadvantage U.S. ethanol**.

We cannot let them get away with it.

We have to keep pushing out the **right data** and the **best science**.

We have to keep proving the **facts are on our side**.

One more thing: I know the **carbon capture conference** is happening alongside us here at FEW.

I admit, our **national political conversation** may have moved away from a focus on climate.

But globally, over the next 5, 10 and 25 years, we know where the market is going.

The world will keep making **lower carbon fuel a priority**.

American bioethanol needs to **claim that space**.

That's why Growth Energy fought to **preserve and expand** your 45Z clean fuel tax credit.

We know 45Z isn't perfect.

It can create **winners and losers**.

But we want to arm you with as much **flexibility** and as many **incentives as possible** — a **portfolio of options** — so that you can decide how best to run your business.

And we will continue to press the **Treasury Department** and the **EPA** to ensure that every carbon capture technology and every on-farm practice is recognized and rewarded.

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### 3.3. Completely New Engines

We've covered domestic and international. But let's think even bigger.

We aren't just breaking down market barriers between states or between countries.

We want to break down barriers between **entire sectors of transportation**.

We want to get our **molecule into engines** where we've **never been before**.

Long gone are the days when people thought of ethanol as just for **cars and trucks**.

Now we get to discuss and debate what **brand new sector** ethanol is going to **dominate first** — air travel, sea transport or heavy machinery.

*This* is exciting. And it isn't hypothetical. It's happening.

These sectors have made **investments**.

They need **more energy**, and **cleaner energy**, and they need it **fast**.

For the past several years, we talked a lot about Sustainable Aviation Fuel, or S.A.F.

Like any nascent market, there are obstacles getting it off the ground.

There are technical issues with **adapting the fuel** and hurdles around the **economic incentives**.

And we are working to **continue momentum** as the market keeps evolving.

At the same time, the **maritime shipping sector** also has massive potential to move volume.

But with maritime, the future is already here, right now.

And you don't have to extensively alter the ethanol to make it work in **modern, dual fuel vessels**.

Just last month, one of the world's largest shipping companies, Maersk, successfully completed their **first ever voyage** of a cargo ship **powered entirely by ethanol**.

Marine fuel is already an 85-billion-gallon global market.

By 2030, more than a **thousand sea vessels** will be **ethanol-capable**.

That alone will represent **6.4 billion gallons** of potential ethanol demand.

That's **air and water**. Then there's **heavy machinery**.

Earlier this year at **Commodity Classic**, I got to stand with one of our member companies, **John Deere**, to showcase a **prototype of a tractor** optimized to run on E98.

It will be a while before E98 farm equipment comes to market **at scale**.

But imagine: ethanol powering the **very machines** that **harvest our own crops**.

The **ag economy coming full circle**.

Here's the bottom line.

Whether the first new frontier that takes off is SAF, Maritime, or Heavy Machinery, **we will be ready**.

We are laying the **regulatory and technical groundwork** so that we can satisfy whichever of these sectors moves first.

Our message should be:

If you want our fuel, you better move fast! Because the **demand is coming from all sides**.

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That is how I see our future:

Pushing **gallons at home**; knocking down **trade barriers overseas**; and getting into **brand-new engines**.

And Growth Energy works every day to create the **policy, legal and market landscapes** to make that happen.

Our job is to be your **champion**.

That includes analyzing the political landscape and **maximizing our influence** on all sides.

As we speak, the midterm campaigns are heating up.

And the heartland — our home turf — is filled with **swing districts** and **Senate races** that could control the fate of Congress.

The road to the majority may run **straight through cornfields**.

We have to **leverage this moment** to keep building on our years of work... and make sure that in November, "ethanol is on the ballot."

Not in the sense that only one candidate or another supports us, and our issues could win or lose. No.

We want ethanol to be up and down both sides of the ballot. All over the ballot.

Our issues should be the **new conventional wisdom**, which unites leaders and voters on both sides.

It's one of a precious **few solutions** that can immediately address the number one concern facing everyday consumers — the **cost of living**.

Standing with us should be **table stakes**. A **no-brainer**.

But that means that our education has to be **tireless**.

And our advocacy has to be **relentless**. Because the **false narratives** are still out there.

Loud and powerful voices are continuing to push **debunked attacks** on ethanol.

Like falsely claiming that nationwide E15 means a mandate, when it really means **consumer choice**.

Or the old myths about smog and air quality, when E15 actually **burns cleaner** than E10.

Or the absurd claim that mid-sized refiners are on the **brink of bankruptcy**, and E15 could push them over the edge.

We've had E15 since 2019 by **administrative action — eight years** — and, as recently confirmed by EPA **Administrator Lee Zeldin** — not a single refinery has closed because of E15.

And by the way, as Senator Chuck Grassley pointed out recently, the most **vocal mid-sized refiners** already bring in **more profit** than every single family farm in America put together.

You would be shocked at how often we still have to remind and re-educate leaders about the **very basics of ethanol and energy policy**.

Members of Congress and Administration officials — **they are aligned with us**.

But their **inboxes** and their **schedules** are incredibly busy.

People get distracted. Staff turns over.

And the job of education doesn't end with elected officials.

So many consumers still have no idea what E15 is, what ethanol does in their gasoline or how seamlessly it can work in their engines.

It is all of our job to keep **spreading the good news** and **sharing the Gospel**.

Keep reaching out to your **local officials**. Keep hosting **plant tours**.

And let's think even closer to home.

Does your **neighbor** fill up with E15?

Do your **family members** make sure to look for ethanol?

We need to be our own **evangelists** — from the White House and Capitol Hill to the **July 4<sup>th</sup> barbecues** in our backyards.

Stop by our Growth Energy booth.

Send a quick and easy message straight to your **elected representatives**.

And when you run into your neighbors and friends this summer, tell them **why you fill up** with E15 and how they can find their station too.

There is no other industry with a **story to tell like ours**.

Because nothing else helps America meet its **biggest challenges** like we do.

Our industry — from the **plant managers** and **operators**; to the **engineers** and **innovators**; to every person in this room today — YOU are the leaders who turn **seed, soil, and hard work** into **energy, prosperity, and strength for our nation**.

YOU are the reason why ethanol is **maximizing our footprint** today...

Fostering the **global markets** of tomorrow...

And unlocking a future where **American bioethanol powers the world** — by land, by sea, by air, or all of the above.

Thank you for your **innovation**.

Thank you for your **hard work**.

Now let's keep this **winning streak** alive.

**Thank you!**

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