

## Senator to Offer Bill for States to Opt-out of Ethanol Mandate

NEW YORK (DTN) -- U.S. Senator James Inhofe, R-Okla., will introduce legislation next week that would allow states to opt out of federal law requiring a certain level of ethanol be blended into gasoline, according to Matt Dempsey, the senator's spokesman.

Details of the bill are not yet available, but Dempsey said the bill could be introduced early next week, adding Inhofe was concerned about the effects on ethanol on vehicle engines.

Dempsey said the senator is acting on request from Oklahomans who are affected by the ethanol mandate program, including those who use vehicles and tools powered by gasoline only.

Ethanol is primarily blended into gasoline at a 10 percent ratio.

The Renewable Fuels Standard program was created under the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and established the first renewable fuel volume mandate in the United States. Under that law, the original RFS program or RFS1 required 7.5 billion gallons of renewable fuel to be blended into gasoline by 2012.

Two years later, the Energy Independence and Security Act was signed into law, expanding the RFS program in many ways, including raising the renewable fuel volume mandate to 36 billion gallons by 2022.

The RFS2 increased the minimum amount of renewable fuels that must be used in the transportation sector from 11.1 billion gallons in 2009 to 12.95 billion gallons this year, with most of the mandate to be satisfied by ethanol.

Dempsey told Telvent DTN that Inhofe has had long and deeply held doubts about the ethanol mandate, and voted against EISA in 2007. He said at the time Inhofe was in favor of "gradual increase" in the use of ethanol as a transportation fuel, but didn't get enough support from fellow senators.

Dempsey said the senator now thinks he can get enough support for a bill that would amend the 2007 law by allowing states that don't want to participate in the federal ethanol mandate to opt out.

"We want an opt-out because we are concerned about Oklahoma fishermen who have equipment that use gasoline only," said Dempsey.

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