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February 18, 2021

Anne L. Austin
Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator
Office of Air and Radiation
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW,
Washington, DC 20460

Docket ID No: EPA-HQ-OAR-2020-0322

Re: Comments of the U.S. Canola Association on the Notice of Receipt of Petitions for a Waiver of the 2019 and 2020 Renewable Fuel Standards

Dear Ms. Austin,

The U.S. Canola Association (USCA) appreciates this opportunity to comment on the Notice of Receipt of Petitions for a Waiver of the 2019 and 2020 Renewable Fuel Standards.

The U.S. Canola Association's mission is to increase domestic canola production and promote the establishment and maintenance of conditions favorable to growing, marketing, processing and using U.S. canola. The leading canola producing states in the U.S. include North Dakota, Montana, Idaho, Washington, Minnesota and Kansas. Canola has multiple uses and markets and is one of numerous feedstocks used to produce clean burning domestic biomass-based diesel. Canola production provides numerous benefits including crop diversity, agronomic and environmental benefits as a rotational and winter crop, and pollinator benefits for honeybees and butterflies.

The U.S. biodiesel industry is an important market for canola producers, utilizing over one billion pounds of canola oil annually. The use of canola as a feedstock is based on the geographic location of the biomass-based diesel production facilities in regions where canola is grown. Canola oil is the feedstock for approximately 10-15 percent of the annual biomass-based diesel production, providing a valuable market for canola oil not utilized for food production.

Consistent with the intent of the RFS, canola biomass-based diesel provides significant benefits to our national energy security, the environment, and the economy. Canola biomass-based diesel contributes to the expansion and diversification of U.S. fuel supplies and energy production, reduces emissions and improves air quality, and provides jobs and additional economic benefits, especially in rural communities.

USCA has numerous concerns and objections to the petitions EPA has received from refiners and others requesting a waiver of the 2019 and 2020 RFS volumes under EPA's general waiver authority citing severe economic or environmental harm. The EPA may grant such waivers only

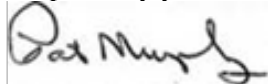
if implementation of the RFS volume requirement would severely harm the economy or environment of a State, region, or the United States, or that there is an inadequate domestic supply. This criteria has not been met. There has been no severe economic harm as a result of the RFS volume requirements and there certainly has not been an inadequate supply of biomass-based diesel.

The arguments of the petitioners citing reduced demand for gasoline and diesel as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic also are not justified. The renewable volume obligations (RVO) under the RFS are expressed as a percentage standard of gasoline and diesel demand, meaning that they self-adjust, in effect lowering the biofuel volumes required to be blended. Lower fuel demand as a result of COVID-19 does not make those percentage standards more difficult to meet—each obligated party's obligation is already lowered by the same percentage as the shortfall in fuel demand. It is important to remember that the COVID-19 crisis is inflicting economic harm on all participants in the fuel supply chain. Waiving RFS volumes would further harm biomass-based diesel producers, the farmers that provide the feedstock and rural communities across the country. The U.S. biodiesel and renewable diesel industry supports 65,000 domestic jobs across multiple sectors and contributed \$17 billion to the U.S. economy.

The claims by some petitioners that RFS volumes are contributing to climate change are off base. By definition, renewable fuel must achieve reductions in greenhouse gas emissions when compared to petroleum fuels to qualify for credits under the RFS program. To qualify as biomass-based diesel or advanced biofuel, those emissions reductions must be at least 50 percent. And in practice, the life cycle greenhouse gas emissions reductions from biomass-based diesel have been even greater—as much as 85 percent. In addition to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, biodiesel also reduces engine particulate emissions by more than 45% and hydrocarbon emissions by 67% compared to petroleum diesel.

EPA has been consistent in denying past unwarranted waiver requests in 2008, 2012, 2014, 2017 and 2018. The requests for waivers of the 2019 and 2020 RFS volumes under EPA's general waiver authority do not meet the required criteria and should again be denied by EPA.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pat Murphy". The signature is written in a cursive style and is contained within a rectangular box.

Pat Murphy
President