Ethanol for America Act: U.S. House of Representatives Legislation Introduced Addressing E15/Underground Storage Tank Infrastructure



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The United States House of Representatives' Adrian Smith (Nebraska) and Nikki Budzinski (Illinois) introduced legislation titled:

Ethanol for America Act ("Ethanol Act").

An Energy Marketers of America ("EMA") publication describes two purposes of the Ethanol Act as:

- Deem E15 compatible with existing Underground Storage Tank ("UST") system infrastructure.
- Remove the E15 fuel label requirement at the gas pump.

Some advocates have argued that regulatory barriers are blocking larger volumes of ethanol and fuel blends such as E15 from reaching the marketplace.

Ethanol is a renewable fuel made from corn and other plant materials. The blends include:

- E10 (10% ethanol, 90% gasoline).
- E85 (flexfuel/high-level ethanol blend containing 51-83% ethanol depending on the geography and season for use in flexible fuel vehicles).
- E15 (approved for use in model year 2001 and newer light-duty conventional gas vehicles).

EMA notes in its newsletter that since 1988, EPA UST regulations have required that fuel in such systems must be compatible with the system's materials of construction. The trade association further notes that:

…In addition to UST systems, fire codes require motor fuel dispensing systems (including hoses, nozzles, swivels, and break-aways) to be compatible with the type of fuel dispensed. Surveys have shown that the cost of inspecting and making necessary upgrades to bring existing UST systems into compliance with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and UL specifications can cost $250,000 or more per UST system. Unfortunately, the costs to upgrade UST systems and dispensers that support E15 sales create significant economic burdens for these business owners. Additional funding is needed to ensure safe and efficient UST systems are in place to allow all fuel marketers to offer and sell E15.

A copy of the Ethanol Act can be downloaded here.