

May 22, 2014

Robert Darbelnet
President and CEO
AAA
1000 AAA Drive
Heathrow, FL 32746

Dear Mr. Darbelnet:

Missouri recently became the 13th state to allow the sale of E15 (15 percent ethanol, 85 percent gasoline) at the pump, giving drivers a cleaner-burning, cost-saving option over conventional gasoline. It was an arduous two-year process following the extensive testing performed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) which unequivocally approved E15 for cars, trucks and SUVs model year 2001 and newer. Upon announcement of the final rule being published in the *Missouri Register*, media outlets again reported the following AAA statement on the newly approved fuel:

“AAA, the national motor club federation, has pushed back against the E15 standard, saying that 90 percent of the cars on the road are not approved by automakers to use the fuel. That could void warranties and cause engine damage, the group says.” – St. Louis Post-Dispatch, May 19, 2014

This statement misrepresents the benefits of E15 to our state’s drivers and consumers. Approximately 80 percent of the vehicles on the road today are 2001 or newer and approved by the EPA to use the ethanol blend. Add to that, more than 60 percent of 2014 vehicles sold this year will be explicitly warranted and approved by the manufacturer to operate on E15. In terms of possible engine damage, E15 is sold in 12 other states with no issues reported. We are unaware of AAA’s Roadside Assistance program picking up a single driver stranded alongside the road due to an engine issue caused by E15.

If your organization is concerned about warranties, it should be noted E15 wasn’t approved by EPA when many vehicle owner’s manuals were written. Just like aftermarket fuel additives, such as stabilizers and octane boosters, specific fuels or additives are not always listed in a vehicle’s owner manual. According to the Renewable Fuels Association, use of these non-mentioned fuels and fuel additives does not necessarily void a vehicle warranty. In fact, vehicle manufacturers may not deny a warranty claim based on use of a different fuel if that fuel did not contribute to the problem for which the warranty claim is made. In that your statement in the *St. Louis*

Post-Dispatch is contrary to the position taken by the Renewable Fuels Association, this may cause consumer concern with E15 where none should exist.

For AAA to take this stance opposing E15, you had to ostensibly ignore the 86-car test conducted by the U.S. Department of Energy showing no mechanical problems for both E15 and E20 blends. Instead, your flawed stance appears to be based solely on an 8-car study funded by the American Petroleum Institute (API) so it could be used to lobby against ethanol.

We believe drivers in the Show-Me State understand the need for energy diversification and that portfolio now includes E15. We are proud to utilize a fuel that is American made. Your organization's stance not only undermines the need for energy diversification and renewable energy sources, it misleads consumers and drivers.

On a personal note, I have been a member of AAA for 33 years. I refuse to support an organization so clearly aligned with the oil industry and am cancelling my AAA membership effective immediately. I will also be informing our members and supporters of my actions and the reasons for this decision.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary D. Marshall". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gary D. Marshall
Chief Executive Officer
Missouri Corn Growers Association

Enclosure

cc: Governor Jay Nixon
Mr. Richard Fordyce, Missouri Director of Agriculture
Mr. Rick Tolman, National Corn Growers Association CEO
Mr. Bob Dinneen, Renewable Fuels Association CEO
Mr. Tom Buis, Growth Energy CEO