



April 23, 2026

The Honorable Marco Rubio
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C St NW
Washington, DC 20451

Dear Secretary Rubio,

On behalf of the American Biofuels Maritime Initiative (ABMI), we write to thank you for your continued engagement with the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) as it considers a global framework for maritime fuels policy. Your leadership in these negotiations is critical at a pivotal moment for global energy policy and can play an essential role in reorienting the IMO negotiations to ensure any framework supports reliable and affordable fuel solutions, including American-made biofuels.

Currently, the U.S. is the world's largest producer of biofuels. We thank the Trump Administration for its recognition of the value of these fuels in the American energy portfolio, demonstrated by the March 2026 final Renewable Fuel Standard rules from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which call for the use of 26.81 billion ethanol equivalent gallons of biofuels, including ethanol, biomass-based diesel, and renewable natural gas, in U.S. transportation for 2026. In a statement announcing the new standards, EPA noted that the historic rule "realigns the program with Congress' original intent—increasing the use of homegrown American biofuels—putting American farmers first and promoting American energy independence."¹

As the IMO discussions on the future of maritime markets continue to advance, the ABMI sees a parallel opportunity to ensure that American farmers and biofuel producers take the lead on creating the next generation of marine fuels. A workable framework could unleash American energy to move global shipping, expanding export market opportunities for U.S. fuels, supporting the "American First Trade Policy Agenda", and supporting the Administration's promise to deliver long-term certainty and stability for America's farmers. As with the RFS, a workable framework would create an additional path to supercharge rural economies.

Even with the new RFS rule, American farmers face tightening margins, volatile commodity prices, and ongoing uncertainty in global export markets. Corn farmers across the U.S. are confronting a fourth consecutive year of operating losses and livestock farmers continue to face increasing input costs and market instability. Our biofuel producers need a stronger source of demand to bolster rural economies, and they can deliver on the maritime challenge, as they continue to have the production capacity to supply new markets. For the first time ever, EPA determined that consumption, not production, is the primary constraint on the renewable CNG/LNG market, indicating that renewable natural gas producers are outpacing demand in the U.S. vehicle transportation market. Maritime offers a major new opportunity.

¹ [EPA Finalizes Historic New Renewable Fuel Standards to Strengthen American Energy Security, Support Rural Economies | US EPA](#)

With the U.S. leading the way, it is estimated that LNG could supply 50% of the maritime fuel mix by 2050, with bio-LNG contributing an additional 13%.² Biofuels have a current market share of just ~0.3% of the energy for global maritime shipping, but could move to supply 5% of the global maritime fuel market, equating to a demand increase of 4–5 billion gallons, while simultaneously growing corn demand by 1.5 billion bushels or more.³

In short, biofuels, including ethanol, biodiesel, renewable diesel, bio-LNG, and biomethanol, are commercially ready and available to meet the challenge of supplying fuel to power global shipping. The ABMI is supportive of strong, forward-looking international policies that recognize and incorporate U.S. biofuels, and thereby reinforce domestic supply chains.

By increasing market opportunities for biofuels, our industry will directly support President Trump’s priorities by increasing domestic energy security, decreasing our reliance on volatile, foreign fuel suppliers, expanding U.S. export opportunities, and strengthening American agriculture and rural communities. Importantly, we will secure American dominance in this rapidly evolving global market for years to come, ensuring that U.S. producers and shippers remain competitive and well-positioned.

In its March 2026 submission to the MEPC, the United States called for any IMO framework to use a market-based approach that prioritizes energy abundance, technology neutrality, and economic viability for the global shipping industry, while supporting industry-led innovation and commercially available solutions. We share the Administration’s concerns that the existing IMO proposal is unfairly and unscientifically biased against certain fuel types, and we thank the Administration for insisting that any framework include “recognition of biofuels as viable marine fuels.”

If a cohesive international framework is not implemented in the near-term, restrictive, regional regulations like FuelEU Maritime, which effectively prohibits the use of American-made biofuels, will continue to unduly burden the international shipping market. Regional and national programs create a patchwork system, which can cause higher costs and lower predictability than a unified approach.

Therefore, we urge the U.S. Department of State to support initiatives and proposals that:

- Support currently available alternative fuels that utilize abundant resources and can help marine sector stakeholders meet global compliance requirements;
- Create a level, technology-neutral playing field that includes biofuels;
- Ensure the phasing out of unnecessary and harmful regional maritime fuel policies;
- Set global fuel targets which provide for market-based exchanges of surplus reductions and other market mechanisms to reduce costs, increase flexibility for compliance, and provide a market signal for clean fuels such as biofuels;
- Provide new long-term market demand for American farm products; and
- Leverage the technical expertise of the U.S. departments of Agriculture, Energy, Homeland Security, Transportation, and others to ensure any emission-based target setting remains

² Vanguard Renewables, *Harnessing the Untapped Energy Potential of America's Heartland*

³ Renewable Fuels Association, *Clean Marine Fuels Are an Enormous Market Opportunity for U.S. Biofuels and Ag—Don't Let It Sink*

technology-neutral and recognizes the performance of U.S. biofuels using a full lifecycle analysis.

On behalf of the ABMI members, we express our sincere appreciation to the U.S. Department of State for its commitment to strengthening global marine policies and look forward to continued efforts ahead of the 84th MEPC session. We welcome the opportunity to serve as a partner and resource to the Trump Administration. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns.

Respectfully submitted,

American Biogas Council
Renewable Fuels Association
National Corn Growers Association
Growth Energy
Marquis Energy
Roeslein Renewables

Cc: The Honorable Brooke Rollins, Secretary of Agriculture
The Honorable Chris Wright, Secretary of Energy
The Honorable Howard Lutnick, Secretary of Commerce
The Honorable Sean Duffy, Secretary of Transportation