



350 Contra Costa
350 East Bay
350 San Francisco
350 Marin
350 Silicon Valley
350 Sonoma
Napa Climate NOW!

February 20, 2024

California Air Resources Board
Sacramento, CA

Dear Colleagues,

350 Bay Area is a non-profit organization focused on ensuring a sustainable climate and associated environmental and economic justice for all, with a reach of over twenty-two thousand people, primarily concentrated in the nine Bay Area counties. At this critical stage in the transition to renewable clean energy, California should be a national and international leader supporting real solutions based on a full life cycle analysis, rather than entrenching policies which incent counterproductive and polluting false solutions such as manure biogas and corn ethanol.

Specifically this revision of the Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS) must correct the distorted economic incentives that reward some of the worst factory farming practices, both in California and across the country, providing lavish subsidies to operations that are getting paid to pollute. The program's flawed accounting practices assign factory farm biogas a lower "carbon intensity" than even solar and wind energy, creating a smokescreen for continued pollution.

Furthermore, a study found that corn ethanol, promoted through the LCFS, is [24% more carbon-intensive](#) than traditional fuel. The enormous rise in nitrogen fertilizer to raise corn for ethanol has increased emissions of nitrous oxide, a potent greenhouse gas that is [289 times as powerful](#) as CO₂. Fertilizers used in corn production, including for ethanol, also cause vast water pollution extending from drinking water in Iowa to the [Dead Zone](#) in the Gulf of Mexico. Building ethanol infrastructure locks in ethanol and gasoline for decades, reducing incentives for investors or policymakers to shift towards more sustainable transportation.

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¹ Environmental outcomes of the US Renewable Fuel Standard PNAS 2022
119 (9) e2101084119
<https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2101084119>

We urge that CARB revise the staff proposal to:

- Eliminate avoided methane crediting for fuel derived from livestock manure.
- Oppose proposed LCFS amendment loophole to allow petroleum projects with carbon capture & storage past the 2040 phase-out.
- Conduct and incorporate a full life cycle assessment of all air pollution and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions for all pathways, and their implications for environmental justice communities.
- Create ZEV multipliers to boost electric school bus and electric public transit bus and rail system deployments.
- Eliminate credit generation from factory farm gas projects that would have happened anyway due to other programs or investments.

CARB has the power to shift California towards truly clean energy solutions and remove the incentives that enable the continued reliance on combustion fuels, especially those which artefactually increase dairy biogas and corn ethanol production. The staff proposal includes policies noted above that make the climate and pollution crisis worse. CARB must take decisive action to reform the LCFS and protect the communities most affected by its current flaws.

Sincerely,

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Claire Broome
Clean Energy Team Lead
350 Bay Area