

September 14, 2026

Clerk of the Board
California Air Resources Board
P.O. Box 2815
Sacramento, CA 95812

Submitted online via <https://carb.commentinput.com/?id=4sTAbd8UM>

Dear CARB,

POET appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the California Air Resources Board's ("CARB") Proposed Amendments to the California Reformulated Gasoline Regulations published on July 28, 2026, (the "Proposed Rule") which support the sale of E15 in California. This Proposed Rule comes after Governor Gavin Newsom signed Assembly Bill ("AB") 30 into law which allows the sale of gasoline blends containing 10.5% to 15% ethanol.¹ POET strongly supports the Proposed Rule and commends CARB's efforts to facilitate E15 sales in California by providing regulatory clarity around E15 requirements. CARB should finalize the Proposed Rule as soon as possible to enable California E15 sales.

POET's trade association, Growth Energy, has submitted comments on the Proposed Rule. POET incorporates Growth Energy's comments by reference into this comment.

I. About POET

POET's vision is to create a world in sync with nature. As the world's largest producer of biofuel and a global leader in sustainable bioproducts, POET creates plant-based alternatives to fossil fuels that unleash the regenerative power of agriculture and cultivate opportunities for America's farm families. Founded in 1987 and headquartered in Sioux Falls, POET operates 35 bioprocessing facilities across nine states and employs more than 2,600 team members. With a suite of bioproducts including POET Distillers Grains, POET Distillers Corn Oil, POET Purified Alcohol, and POET Biogenic CO₂, POET nurtures an unceasing commitment to innovation and advances powerful, practical solutions to some of the world's most pressing challenges. Today, POET holds more than 140 patents worldwide and continues to break new ground in biotechnology, yielding ever cleaner and more efficient renewable energy. Through technological innovation, investments in carbon capture and renewable energy, and programs to reduce on-farm emissions, POET is steadily lowering the lifecycle emissions of its ethanol. With appropriate regulatory signals, POET is well-positioned to produce net-zero carbon ethanol to decarbonize on-road transportation,

¹ CA Health & Saf. Code, § 43013.7.

supply international markets, and serve as a feedstock for the next-generation fuels that will power maritime transportation and the aviation industry.

II. POET Supports the Proposed Rule

POET appreciates CARB’s responsiveness to stakeholder feedback in drafting the Proposed Rule and believes the Proposed Rule creates a workable regulatory framework that will incentivize E15 sales. The Proposed Rule establishes an E15 specification as part of the California Reformulated Gasoline (“CaRFG”) Regulations, providing certainty for fuel retailers and suppliers while avoiding costs and delays that would result from treating E15 as an alternative fuel.² Treating E15 as gasoline aligns with how the United States Environmental Protection Agency (“EPA”) regulates E15.³ Additionally, the Proposed Rule allows retailers to produce E15 by blending E10 and E85 or by blending additional ethanol to CARBOB or CaRFG.⁴ Allowing downstream blending provides retailers flexibility and ensures consistency with E15 practices in other states.

CARB does not propose to require California-specific labeling or warning requirements to prevent misfuelling. As Growth Energy highlights in their comments, robust federal requirements exist that sufficiently address the possibility of misfuelling. Under federal law, E15 producers must submit and implement a Misfuelling Mitigation Plan before selling E15.⁵ EPA regulations require retailers dispensing E15 to include labels that “clearly identify which control the consumer will use to select E15.”⁶ These requirements sufficiently protect consumers and retailers from misfuelling. Moreover, E15 is approved for use in all cars, light-duty trucks, and SUVs after model year 2001, so the risks of misfuelling continue to decrease with each successive year. Additional California misfuelling requirements would be redundant with federal law and could cause consumer confusion at the pump.

III. CARB’s Cost Analyses

a. E15 Cost Benefits

E15 is significantly cheaper than E10. Yet, CARB’s analysis in the Initial Statement of Reasons (“ISOR”) does not address these cost benefits. For completeness in the administrative record,

² CARB, *Proposed Amendments to the California Reformulated Gasoline Regulations, Staff Report: Initial Statement of Reasons* at pg. ES-1 (July 28, 2026), https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/barcu/regact/2026/e15%20Reform%20Fuel/E15_ISOR%20w%20updated%20TOC.pdf (hereinafter “ISOR”).

³ 40 C.F.R. § 1090.80.

⁴ CARB, *Notice of Public Hearing to Consider Proposed Amendments to CaRFG Regulations* at pg. 4, https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/barcu/regact/2026/e15%20Reform%20Fuel/E15_Note_of_Public_Hearin_g.pdf; ISOR at pg. 19; Proposed Rule § 2266.5(g)(2)(C).

⁵ See EPA, *Fuels Registration, Reporting, and Compliance Help; E15 Registration*, <https://www.epa.gov/fuels-registration-reporting-and-compliance-help/e15-fuel-registration> (last visited Sept. 8, 2026).

⁶ 40 C.F.R. § 1090.1510.

POET provides the following price information to demonstrate E15's cost benefits compared to E10. CARB should include these benefits in its finalized analysis of the Proposed Rule.

Last year, Americans saved an average of 22 cents per gallon when purchasing E15 instead of E10. Recent gasoline price data shows that average E15 prices are \$3.73 compared to average E10 prices of \$4.04 and E0 prices of \$4.75.⁷ Growth Energy's data finds that E15 can save consumers up to 30 cents per gallon, and in a state with a robust LCFS program like California, savings could be even greater.⁸ Below are photos of gas prices from April 2026, illustrating that in some cases, consumer savings with E15 were more than \$1 per gallon:



In the ISOR, CARB discusses decreases in energy content associated with moving from E10 to E15.⁹ However, the United States Department of Energy test program data “showed no statistically significant loss of vehicle performance (emissions, fuel economy, and maintenance issues) attributable to the use of E15 fuel compared to straight gasoline.”¹⁰ Likewise, studies conducted by the University of California, Riverside, indicate that E15 may decrease fuel economy, at worst, by 1% or increase fuel economy in some newer engines by as much as 6%.¹¹ Consumer cost savings more than compensate for the negligible difference in energy density associated with E15 compared with E10..

⁷ E15Prices.com, <https://e85prices.com/> (last visited Sept. 8, 2026).

⁸ Growth Energy: E15 Could Save Consumers More than \$150 Million This Summer (May 6, 2026), available at <https://growthenergy.org/2026/05/06/e15-save-consumers-150-million/>.

⁹ ISOR, Appendix B at pg. 9, https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/barcu/regact/2026/e15%20Reform%20Fuel/E15_ISOR_Appendix%20B.pdf.

¹⁰ Brian H. West et al., *Intermediate Ethanol Blends Catalyst Durability Program*, ORNL/TM-2011/234 (Oak Ridge Nat'l Lab., Feb. 2012), <https://info.ornl.gov/sites/publications/files/Pub31271.pdf>.

¹¹ Jiacheng Yang et al., *Impacts of Gasoline Aromatic and Ethanol Levels on the Emissions from GDI Vehicles: Part 1. Influence on Regulated and Gaseous Toxic Pollutants*, 252 Fuel 799 (2019), <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0016236119307094>.

Because CARB's ISOR does not accurately account for E15 cost benefits, it does not fully analyze the impact of increasing E15 sales in California. In finalizing its analysis as part of this rulemaking, CARB should revise the ISOR to include a robust discussion of E15 impacts including cost benefits compared to E10.

b. CARB's Estimated Infrastructure Costs

CARB's analysis in the ISOR includes estimated retailer costs to "upgrade infrastructure and equipment to support E15 deployment," including "costs to retrofit or replace tanks, dispensers, pumps, hoses, nozzles and other equipment with equipment specifically manufactured and certified for compatibility with E15."¹² As Growth states in its comment, these estimates overstate the costs for most retailers given the availability of retail fuel dispensing equipment that is compatible with E15. CARB itself recognizes that infrastructure in the state is ready for E15, describing that "existing [underground storage tanks] in California are nearly all E15 compatible as the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) required E15 compatible tanks as of January 1, 2026."¹³ CARB should revise its cost analysis to reflect this reality.

As Growth Energy notes in its comment, over 90% of dispensers nationwide are manufactured by companies with equipment warrantied for E15 or higher, and hanging hardware (hoses, nozzles, breakaways, etc.) is often compatible with E15 as evidenced by manufacturers' warranty statements indicating compatibility. POET urges CARB to accept manufacturers' statements or warranties as sufficient proof of compatibility which would greatly reduce retailers' infrastructure costs.

IV. E15 GHG and Health Benefits

CARB correctly describes air quality and greenhouse gas ("GHG") benefits of E15 compared to E10. CARB conducted a multimedia evaluation of E15 (the "MME") as required under Health and Safety Code § 43830.8 to determine whether a new E15 specification would cause significant adverse impacts to public health or the environment.¹⁴ The MME concluded that E15 "does not pose a significant adverse impact on public health or the environment compared to gasoline with up to 10% ethanol (E10)."¹⁵ Instead, CARB found that E15 reduces particulate matter (by 18%), totally hydrocarbons (by 5%), and total carbon monoxide (by 17%) from vehicle exhaust emissions compared to E10.¹⁶ CARB concluded that there is no statistically difference in NOx vehicle exhaust or carbon dioxide vehicle exhaust for E15 compared to E10 and that E15 has no significant impact on evaporative emissions compared to E10.¹⁷ Finally, CARB found that increased ethanol use in gasoline reduces benzene, aromatics, and 1,3butadiene emissions associated with the

¹² ISOR, Appendix B at pg. 3, 6.

¹³ *Id.* at pg. 7.

¹⁴ ISOR at pg. 1.

¹⁵ *Notice of Public Hearing* at pg. ES-1.

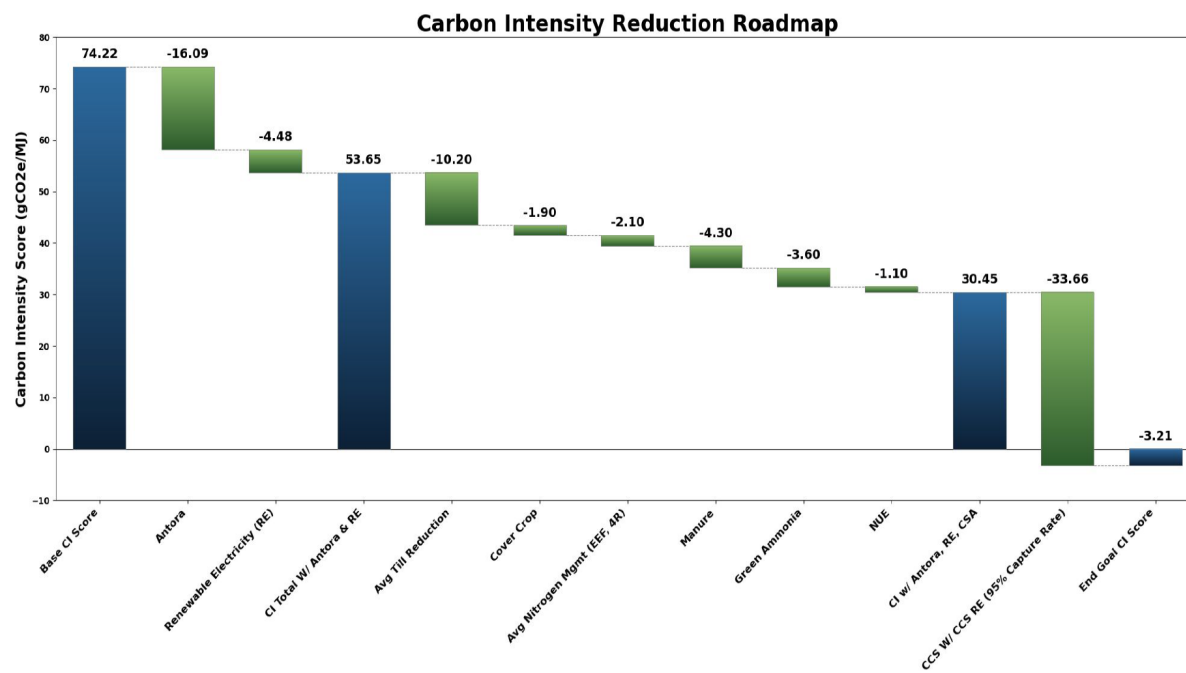
¹⁶ ISOR at pg. 22, 28-29.

¹⁷ *Id.* at pg. 22.

combustion of petroleum-based gasoline.¹⁸ In the ISOR, CARB concludes that reducing emissions from fuel combustion “brings benefits to the State including areas of the State where communities have been disproportionately impacted by poor air quality due to transportation impacts.”¹⁹ POET appreciates CARB’s thorough analysis of ethanol’s emissions benefits.

As CARB notes in the ISOR, transportation is the largest source of GHG and air pollution in California.²⁰ CARB correctly notes that ethanol reduces lifecycle GHG emissions of gasoline and that additional ethanol use in California “would support progress toward achieve greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals while reducing several air pollutants.”²¹ Ethanol has been a key driver of the California LCFS’ success and is responsible for more than 30% of GHG emissions reductions achieved by the LCFS. This is the equivalent of taking 6 million cars off the road per year and displacing 3 billion gallons of gasoline. E15 would reduce annual GHG emissions in California by 2 million metric tons.

POET continues to innovate and reduce lifecycle emissions. Ethanol has the potential to achieve significant GHG emissions reductions compared to petroleum fuel. The chart below, which illustrates the GHG reductions associated with technologies and practices that can be deployed throughout the ethanol production process, shows the lifecycle emissions reduction potential of ethanol from a base CI score of 74.22 CI:



¹⁸ *Id.* at pg. 23.

¹⁹ *Id.* at pg. 29.

²⁰ *Id.* at pg. 3.

²¹ *Id.* at pg. 6.

As it continues to decarbonize, ethanol is poised to help California meet its climate and emissions reductions goals.

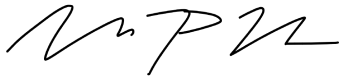
V. Definition of E15

The Proposed Regulations define E15 as gasoline with ethanol percentages between 10.1% and 15%.²² E10 is defined to include ethanol blends of up to 10.0%.²³ These definitions create a small gap – a tenth of a percent is not included in the definitions of E10 and E15. While this gap is not a significant issue, CARB should prevent possible future uncertainty and confusion by adopting the federal EPA definition of E10 and E15. EPA defines E10 as “gasoline that contains at least 9 and no more than 10 volume percent ethanol” and E15 as “gasoline that contains more than 10 and no more than 15 volume percent ethanol[.]”²⁴

VI. Conclusion

POET appreciates the opportunity to comment on CARB’s E15 rulemaking and looks forward to continued cooperation with CARB to promote the use of low-carbon corn ethanol in California transportation fuel supply. If you have any questions, please contact me at Josh.Wilson@POET.com or (202) 756-5612.

Sincerely,



Joshua P. Wilson
Senior Regulatory Counsel

²² Proposed Rule § 2260.

²³ *Id.*

²⁴ 40 CFR § 1090.80.