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The Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program (HBIIP): An Overview

November 5, 2026

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R49508

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The Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program (HBIIP): An Overview

SUMMARY

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Kelsi Bracmort
Specialist in Natural Resources and Energy Policy

Biofuels—fuels made from biomass—have been used in the United States as a transportation fuel for decades. Ethanol produced from corn starch and biodiesel produced from soybean oil are two examples of biofuels used in vehicles. In most cases, these biofuels when used as transportation fuel in vehicles are blended with their petroleum fuel counterpart at a low level. In general, low-blend fuel (LB fuel) includes ethanol blended at a rate of 10% or lower (e.g., E10) and biodiesel blended at a rate of 5% or lower (e.g., B5). High-blend fuel (HB fuel) includes biofuel blended at a higher rate, such as ethanol blended at a rate greater than 10% (e.g., E15, a fuel blend of gasoline blended with 10.5-15% ethanol).

The Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program (HBIIP) is an initiative created by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in 2020 to increase the sales and use of higher blends of ethanol and biodiesel. HBIIP funding has mostly come from the USDA Commodity Credit Corporation. However, under the law commonly known as the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (P.L. 117-169), Congress provided $500 million to HBIIP for "installing, retrofitting, or otherwise upgrading fuel dispensers or pumps," among other investments.

One HB fuel that HBIIP supports, E15, receives considerable attention in the 119th Congress:

- In May 2026, the House passed H.R. 1346, the Nationwide Consumer and Fuel Retailer Choice Act of 2025, which would, in part, allow for the year-round sale of E15.
- In September 2026, the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry reported out of committee S. 5526, the Agricultural Act of 2026, which would also allow for the year-round sale of E15.

The second Trump Administration has taken several actions related to HBIIP, including the freezing of funds for HBIIP and releasing obligated funding for HBIIP for projects. Regarding E15, in the June 2026 supplemental funding request to Congress, the Trump Administration requested "an urgent and needed fix that codifies the permanent, year-round sale of E-15."

Congress may have questions about HBIIP and choose to conduct oversight of the program. For example, Congress may want to know more about the value received from HBIIP, program funding and implementation going forward, if there are environmental impacts associated with the use of HB fuel, monitoring nationwide HB fuel use, transportation fuel projections that could impact biofuel markets, and more. Alternatively, Congress may choose to take no action.

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Introduction

Congress has discussed high-blend fuel (HB fuel) and has provided support for HB fueling infrastructure.[1] In short, a biofuel is a fuel (e.g., ethanol, biodiesel, biogas) produced from a biomass feedstock (e.g., crops, tree residue, animal waste, food waste) that can be used for transportation (e.g., cars, aviation). Typically, for most applications, biofuel has been blended at a low level with its petroleum counterpart for use in vehicles as a transportation fuel. For this report, low-blend fuel (LB fuel) includes ethanol blended at a rate of 10% or lower (e.g., E10) and biodiesel blended at a rate of 5% or lower (e.g., B5).[2] The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) reports that the "most common blend of ethanol is E10 (10% ethanol, 90% gasoline)."[3] And, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reports that "almost all gasoline are E10 blends."[4] In general, an HB fuel is a biofuel-petroleum fuel mixture with biofuel blended at a higher rate, such as ethanol blended at a rate greater than 10% (e.g., E15, a fuel blend of gasoline blended with 10.5-15% ethanol).

One type of HB fuel that has received attention from Congress is E15, gasoline blended with 10.5-15% ethanol.[5] In January 2026, the House established the E-15 Rural Domestic Energy Council (Council) to investigate the sale of E15, among other actions.[6] In May 2026, the House passed H.R. 1346, the Nationwide Consumer and Fuel Retailer Choice Act of 2025, which would, in part, allow for the year-round sale of E15.[7] In a supplemental funding request sent to Congress

[1] The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) defines *biofuels* as "biomass converted to liquid or gaseous fuels." DOE, *Full Text Glossary*, accessed October 22, 2026, https://www.energy.gov/cmei/fuels/full-text-glossary#B. CRS searched Congress.gov for legislation from 2007 to the present pertaining to HB fuel infrastructure and found multiple bills. See, for example, H.R. 4864 (119th Congress), Ethanol for America Act of 2025; S. 227 (117th Congress), Renewable Fuel Infrastructure Investment and Market Expansion Act of 2021; H.R. 7606 (117th Congress), Lower Food and Fuel Costs Act; H.R. 6671 (116th Congress), Clean Fuels Deployment Act of 2020; S. 187 (112th Congress), Biofuels Market Expansion Act of 2011; and H.R. 5632 (111th Congress), Consumer Fuels Choice Act of 2010. In addition, in the law commonly known as the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (IRA; P.L. 117-169), Congress extended various tax credits for biofuels and other "clean fuels" that had recently expired (or were about to expire) through the end of 2024. Starting in 2025, the IRA established the Clean Fuel Production Credit, which applies to fuels with life-cycle emissions of no more than 50 kilograms of carbon dioxide (CO_2) or CO_2 equivalent per 1 million British thermal units. There have been numerous discussions in Congress, academia, and elsewhere about the suitability of using biofuels to address environmental concerns (e.g., greenhouse gas emission reduction), how to measure the environmental impact of biofuels, feedstock competition that might stem from increased biofuel use, and other issues. This report does not cover these topics.

[2] For the Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program (HBIIP), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) considers HB fuel to be "higher blends of ethanol (i.e., greater than 10 percent ethanol) and biodiesel (greater than 5 percent biodiesel)." USDA, "Notice of Funds Availability for the Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program (HBIIP) for Fiscal Year 2020," 85 *Federal Register* 26657, May 5, 2020.

[3] DOE Alternative Fuels Data Center, *Ethanol*, accessed October 15, 2026, https://afdc.energy.gov/fuels/ethanol.

[4] U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), *Ethanol Waivers (E15 and E10)*, accessed October 15, 2026, https://www.epa.gov/gasoline-standards/ethanol-waivers-e15-and-e10.

[5] For more information on E15, see CRS Insight IN10979, *Year-Round Sale of E15*, by Kelsi Bracmort; and DOE Alternative Fuels Data Center, *E15*, accessed November 3, 2026, https://afdc.energy.gov/fuels/ethanol-e15. Biofuel blends are presented as codes that include the type of biofuel and the percentage of the biofuel. For example, B20 is a blended fuel made up of 6%-20% biodiesel, and E15 is a blended fuel made of 10.5%-15% ethanol. See DOE Alternative Fuels Data Center, "Ethanol Blends," accessed November 3, 2026, https://afdc.energy.gov/fuels/ethanol-blends; and DOE Alternative Fuels Data Center, "Biodiesel Blends," accessed November 3, 2026, https://afdc.energy.gov/fuels/biodiesel-blends.

[6] H.Res. 375. The Council was directed to develop and submit legislative solutions to Congress by February 15, 2026, with the intent for Congress to consider legislation no later than February 25, 2026.

[7] H.R. 1346 would also change the small refinery exemption component of the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS). For more information on the RFS, see CRS Report R43325, *The Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS): An Overview*, by Kelsi Bracmort.

in June 2026, the Trump Administration requested "an urgent and needed fix that codifies the permanent, year-round sale of E-15."[8] In September 2026, the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry reported out of committee S. 5526, the Agricultural Act of 2026, which would also allow for the year-round sale of E15.[9]

Congress has considered the year-round sale of E15 previously. Congress included a provision for the permanent year-round sale of E15 in a short-term FY2025 spending bill introduced in the House in December 2024 (H.R. 10445; 118th Congress), but it was removed from the FY2025 continuing resolution package that became law (P.L. 118-158).

Congress has taken action to both revoke and issue federal funding for HB fueling infrastructure (e.g., blender pumps).[10] For example, the Agricultural Act of 2014 (2014 farm bill; P.L. 113-79) precludes the use of Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) funding for any mechanism for dispensing energy at the retail level (e.g., ethanol-gasoline blender pumps).[11] Conversely, the law commonly known as the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (P.L. 117-169) provided $500 million to the Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program (HBIIP) for "installing, retrofitting, or otherwise upgrading fuel dispensers or pumps," among other investments.

HBIIP is an initiative led by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to "increase significantly the sales and use of higher blends of ethanol and biodiesel."[12] In 2025, the Trump Administration froze funding for HBIIP and then announced it would release obligated funding under the program.[13] In 2026, the Trump Administration announced that "[f]unds for the program have now been exhausted, and USDA will not be making further obligations absent future appropriation."[14]

This report provides an overview of HBIIP and HB fuel usage and infrastructure costs and contains questions Congress may consider in its oversight of HBIIP.

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[8] Office of Management and Budget, *Supplemental Funding Request*, June 24, 2026, page 2, https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/2026.06.24-Letter-to-the-Honorable-Mike-Johnson.pdf. E15 generally cannot be sold during the summer driving season (June 1-September 15) because it does not meet gasoline Reid vapor pressure (RVP) requirements, which limit fuel volatility under the Clean Air Act (CAA). For more information, see CRS Insight IN10979, *Year-Round Sale of E15*, by Kelsi Bracmort.

[9] Like its House counterpart, S. 5526 would also change the small refinery exemption component of the RFS. The Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry held a markup on the bill on September 16, 2026. U.S. Congress, Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, *Farm Bill 2.0*, 119th Cong., accessed October 22, 2026, https://www.agriculture.senate.gov/agricultural-act-of-2026-farm-bill-20; U.S. Congress, Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, *Business Meeting for S.—, Agricultural Act of 2026*, 119th Cong., September 16, 2026.

[10] DOE defines *blender pumps* as "dispensers that draw and blend fuel from two tanks." DOE Alternative Fuels Data Center, "Ethanol Blends," accessed October 22, 2026, https://afdc.energy.gov/fuels/ethanol-blends.

[11] USDA had previously used REAP funding for blender pumps. See USDA, "Rural Energy for America Program: Interim Rule with Request for Comments," 76 *Federal Register* 21110, April 14, 2011; Secretary Tom Vilsack, "Flex Fuel Pumps and a Green Energy Economy," White House blog, April 21, 2011, https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/blog/2011/04/21/flex-fuel-pumps-and-green-energy-economy; and USDA, "Agriculture Secretary Vilsack Announces Funding to Create Jobs, Reduce Energy Costs for Agricultural Producers and Rural Small Businesses," press release, December 14, 2011, https://web.archive.org/web/20140812152448/https://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentidonly=true&contentid=2011/12/0515.xml.

[12] USDA, "Notice of Funds Availability for the Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program (HBIIP) for Fiscal Year 2020," 85 *Federal Register* 26657, May 5, 2020.

[13] For more information on actions taken under the Trump Administration, see the section "Selected Actions Under the Second Trump Administration (2025 Through June 2026)."

[14] USDA, *Notice of Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program Conclusion*, May 8, 2026, https://www.rd.usda.gov/media/file/download/rbcs-sa-hbiip-conclusion-05082026.pdf.

Biofuels

Biofuels are liquid fuels and blending components produced from biomass feedstocks, used primarily for transportation.[15] The two leading biofuels produced and used for transportation in the United States are ethanol and biomass-based diesel.[16] LB fuel is approved for use in light-duty vehicles by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and vehicle manufacturers.[17] HB fuels include higher blends of "ethanol (i.e., greater than 10 percent ethanol) and biodiesel (greater than 5 percent biodiesel)."[18] The approval to use HB fuels in light-duty vehicles can vary by fuel type, vehicle model year, and vehicle manufacturer.[19]

In general, infrastructure required for HB fuel is the same type of infrastructure required for LB fuel (e.g., fuel dispenser, underground storage tank), but the HB fueling infrastructure is constructed specifically to endure the composition of HB fuel.[20] In short, not all vehicles on the road are certified by their vehicle manufacturer to use HB fuel, and not all fueling stations have the required infrastructure to sell HB fuel.

Both corn-starch ethanol and biomass-based diesel are established biofuels that can be blended into conventional fuel (i.e., petroleum fuel). For several years, production, consumption, and logistics for these fuels have been traditionally centered on low percentage levels (i.e., 10% ethanol and 5% biodiesel). In current LB fuel markets, industry knows how to produce the biofuel, the infrastructure exists to get the LB fuel to market, and consumers know that their vehicle manufacturer has approved the use of the LB fuel. Corn-starch ethanol and biomass-based diesel may be blended into conventional fuel at a higher rate. Using these biofuels at higher-blend

[15] U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), *Glossary*, accessed October 22, 2026, https://www.eia.gov/tools/glossary/index.php?id=B.

[16] Biomass-based diesel includes biodiesel and renewable diesel. EIA, *Monthly Energy Review*, DOE/EIA-0035(2026/9), September 2026; USDA Economic Research Service, *U.S. Bioenergy Statistics*, accessed October 19, 2026, https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/us-bioenergy-statistics.

[17] For example, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reports that almost all gasolines are E10 blends—fuel blends of 10% ethanol and 90% gasoline. For more information, see EPA, "Ethanol Waivers (E15 and E10)," accessed October 22, 2026, https://www.epa.gov/gasoline-standards/ethanol-waivers-e15-and-e10.

[18] USDA, "Notice of Funds Availability for the Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program (HBIIP) for Fiscal Year 2020," 85 *Federal Register* 26657, May 5, 2020.

[19] For example, EPA has approved the use of E15 in model year 2001 and newer vehicles. See EPA, "E15 Partial Waivers," accessed October 22, 2026, https://www.epa.gov/gasoline-standards/e15-fuel-partial-waivers. The Renewable Fuels Association reports that for the 2026 model year, most vehicle manufacturers have approved their vehicles to use E15. See the table "E15 Approval Status for U.S. Light-Duty Vehicles" in Renewable Fuels Association, *Ethanol Unleashed: 2026 Ethanol Industry Outlook*, February 24, 2026, p. 18, https://ethanolrfa.org/file/3049/2026%20Outlook_Master_FINAL_No%20Bleeds_Combined%20cmp.pdf.

[20] Researchers and others have examined the infrastructure needs for HB fuels. See, for example, Kristi Moriarty and Janet Yanowitz, *E15 and Infrastructure*, NREL/TP-5400-64156, National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), May 2015, https://afdc.energy.gov/files/u/publication/e15_infrastructure.pdf (NREL was renamed the National Laboratory of the Rockies in 2025); and USDA, *Assessing Future Market Opportunities and Challenges for E15 and Higher Ethanol Blends*, May 2022. USDA reports that "[s]toring and dispensing E15, E85, or other high blends of ethanol for transportation fueling facilities, such as automotive, freight, rail, and marine, with equipment that is not compatible with higher blends of ethanol fuel can result in leaks and releases that contaminate land and groundwater. Older and even some newer existing underground storage tank (UST) systems (which include but are not limited to tanks, pumps, ancillary equipment, lines, gaskets, and sealants) are not fully compatible with E15 or higher and require modification before storing these fuels. Biodiesel blends above B20 have similar requirements; some infrastructure changes may even be necessary when storing blends greater than B5." USDA, "Notice of Funding Opportunity for the Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program (HBIIP) for Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024," 88 *Federal Register* 41877, June 28, 2023.

rates could require different infrastructure and may raise some questions by lawmakers, consumers, and others.[21]

The predicament, mainly for biofuel supporters, is adapting the existing infrastructure—potentially nationwide—to use HB fuel.[22] This might require, at a minimum, legislative and regulatory changes (depending on the HB fuel), funding (e.g., private funding, federal appropriations), administrative support (e.g., program staff to issue federal funding, technical expertise to install the infrastructure), and a willingness by industry and consumers to do so (e.g., a station owner who will upgrade their equipment, a consumer who will purchase an HB fuel). It remains unclear whether federal involvement and investment would encourage fueling station owners and others to upgrade their infrastructure to handle HB fuel and motivate consumers to purchase HB fuel.

HB fuel brings opportunities and challenges. Increased production of biomass feedstocks and biofuels could stimulate certain rural economies and segments of the agricultural sector. Conversely, if consumers were to purchase additional amounts of HB fuels, the increased demand could cause competition for feedstocks, interrupt feedstock pricing, and raise environmental concerns, among other issues.

Some HB fuels face circumstances unique to the biofuel blend type. For example, for ethanol, consumers may consider the energy content and engine performance of the HB fuel (e.g., E15). Ethanol has a lower energy content than gasoline yet a higher octane rating than gasoline.[23] Consumers choosing to use HB fuel may consider fuel economy and performance, among other factors.

HB Fuel Consumption and Infrastructure

It is not clear how much HB fuel is consumed in the United States annually.[24] Due to variations in fuel mixtures (e.g., E15, E20, E85, B20), infrastructure capacity, vehicle manufacturer

[21] For example, multiple parties have expressed their concerns about the use of biofuels, biofuels' potential impacts, and how those impacts should be measured and accounted for. For example, see California Air Resources Board, *Biofuels and Land Use Change Public Forum*, November 6, 2025, https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/low-carbon-fuel-standard/lcfs-meetings-and-workshops.

[22] In 2015, when implementing the Biofuels Infrastructure Partnership (BIP), the predecessor to HBIIP, USDA reported that "[i]nfrastructure constraints and other barriers currently limit the market for biofuels and thereby the commodities used to produce them, contributing to lower commodity prices. In particular, the nation's fueling infrastructure is not sufficiently flexible to accommodate large additional quantities of higher ethanol blends that could enable biofuels to fill a significantly greater portion of the nation's fuel supply." USDA, "Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA); Biofuel Infrastructure Partnership (BIP) Grants to States," 80 *Federal Register* 34363, June 16, 2015.

[23] DOE reports that denatured ethanol (98% ethanol) contains about 30% less energy than gasoline per gallon. DOE Alternative Fuels Data Center, "Ethanol Fuel Basics," accessed October 22, 2026, https://afdc.energy.gov/fuels/ethanol-fuel-basics. One study reports, "In road trials, cars running on E15 get 1% to 2% fewer miles per gallon than those burning E10." Aaron Smith, "California Now Allows More Ethanol in Gasoline: Is This Going to Save Drivers Money?," Giannini Foundation of Agricultural Economics, University of California, January 8, 2026, https://s.giannini.ucop.edu/uploads/pub/2026/01/08/v29n2_3.pdf. For information on octane ratings, see DOE Alternative Fuels Data Center, "Ethanol Benefits and Considerations," accessed October 22, 2026, https://afdc.energy.gov/fuels/ethanol-benefits; DOE Alternative Fuels Data Center, "Fuel Properties Comparison," accessed October 22, 2026, https://afdc.energy.gov/fuels/properties. EIA reports, "The higher an octane number, the more stable the fuel." EIA, "Gasoline Explained: What Is Octane?," accessed October 22, 2026, https://www.eia.gov/energyexplained/gasoline/octane-in-depth.php.

[24] The federal government collects and reports biofuel data. For instance, EIA provides data on fuel ethanol, biodiesel, renewable diesel, and other biofuels. EIA, *Monthly Energy Review*, June 25, 2026.

requirements, and state regulations—and for other reasons—it is difficult to ascertain nationwide consumption trends for HB fuel using publicly available data.[25]

Some states and stakeholders monitor HB fuel consumption, but their observations are generally focused on specific HB fuel(s) and/or a particular region. For example, the Iowa state government prepares an annual report of fuel gallons sold or dispensed in Iowa.[26] The report contains a table that provides Iowa gasoline, diesel, and biofuel sales for 2025, as reported by retailers, including 870.7 million gallons of E10, 410.1 million gallons of E15, 0.9 million gallons of E20, and 24.0 million gallons of E85.[27] The annual report also states that "ethanol blends of E15 or higher constituted 27 percent of all gasoline sold or dispensed in 2025."[28]

It is also not clear how many fueling stations sell HB fuel. This is partly due to the variety of HB fuels that can be sold. Some data are available for certain HB fuels, but comprehensive data are not available. For example, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) reports that more than 3,000 fueling stations sell E15, and more than 4,200 fueling stations sell E85.[29] DOE also provides the number of public and private biodiesel fueling station locations by state that offer HB fuel of B20 or higher.[30] For example, DOE reports Illinois has 490 such public biodiesel fueling stations.[31] The fueling stations that sell HB fuel are a small fraction of the total number of fueling stations located in the United States. For example, the Oak Ridge National Laboratory reports there were 142,000 conventional refueling stations in 2020.[32]

The cost of equipping a fueling station to sell HB fuel varies.[33] Infrastructure costs are facility-specific depending on what HB fuel will be sold and what equipment the station may need to upgrade to sell HB fuel. DOE reports there are approximately 60 pieces of equipment at a fueling station that handle fuel and vapor, some of which are below ground.[34] Station owners interested in selling an HB fuel might inspect their fueling station equipment to determine what equipment may be compatible and what equipment would need to be upgraded, and may also take into

[25] B20 is a biodiesel blend consisting of 6% to 20% biodiesel. See DOE Alternative Fuels Data Center, "Biodiesel Blends," accessed November 3, 2026, https://afdc.energy.gov/fuels/biodiesel-blends.

[26] Iowa Department of Revenue, *2025 Retailers Fuel Gallons Annual Report*, April 2026.

[27] Iowa Department of Revenue, *2025 Retailers Fuel Gallons Annual Report*, April 2026, p. 5.

[28] Iowa Department of Revenue, *2025 Retailers Fuel Gallons Annual Report*, April 2026, p. 4.

[29] DOE Alternative Fuels Data Center, "Ethanol Fueling Stations," accessed October 21, 2026, https://afdc.energy.gov/fuels/ethanol-stations.

[30] DOE Alternative Fuels Data Center, *Biodiesel Fueling Station Locations by State*, interactive map, accessed October 21, 2026, https://afdc.energy.gov/data/10365.

[31] DOE Alternative Fuels Data Center, *Biodiesel Fueling Station Locations by State*, interactive map, accessed October 21, 2026, https://afdc.energy.gov/data/10365.

[32] Stacy C. Davis and Robert G. Boundy, *Transportation Energy Data Book: Edition 40*, ORNL/TM-2022/2376, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, June 2022, https://tedb.ornl.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/TEDB_Ed_40.pdf.

[33] This report focuses on the potential fueling station infrastructure needed to sell HB fuel because this is where USDA has appeared to place its focus for HBIIP. For example, in 2020 USDA announced it would provide up to $100 million in grants under HBIIP. USDA also reported that $86 million will be made available to transportation fueling facilities (e.g., fueling stations, convenience stores) for eligible implementation activities related to higher blends of fuel ethanol greater than 10% ethanol, such as E15 or higher, and that approximately $14 million will be made available to transportation fueling facilities and fuel distribution facilities (e.g., terminal operations) for eligible implementation activities related to higher blends of biodiesel greater than 5% biodiesel, such as B20 or higher. USDA, "Solicitation of Applications for the Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program (HBIIP) for Fiscal Year 2020," 85 *Federal Register* 29395, May 15, 2020.

[34] Kristi Moriarty and Janet Yanowitz, *E15 and Infrastructure*, NREL/TP-5400-64156, NREL, May 2015, https://afdc.energy.gov/files/u/publication/e15_infrastructure.pdf. NREL was renamed the National Laboratory of the Rockies in 2025.

consideration the design life of the existing equipment and consumer demand, among other things, before making a decision to upgrade or not upgrade their equipment to sell an HB fuel.

Using ethanol as an example, USDA reports that "[w]hile virtually all stations have equipment necessary for storing and dispensing E10, it is difficult to discern how many have fueling equipment compatible with ethanol blends above E10."[35] USDA reports the costs, as calculated by researchers with the U.S. DRIVE Partnership, under various conversion scenarios for a station to sell different ethanol-gasoline fuel blends.[36] As of 2019, the individual equipment station upgrade costs for E11-E25 fuel ranged from approximately $21,000 for a light conversion scenario to $379,000 for an extensive conversion scenario.[37]

EPA has taken actions pertaining to HB fueling infrastructure. In 2021, EPA released a proposed rule to, in part, make "changes to E15 fuel dispenser labeling requirements" and "to modify underground storage tank (UST) regulations to accommodate the safe storage of E15 and higher gasoline-ethanol blends at retail stations' existing tank systems."[38] EPA reports that "the chemical and physical properties of biobased fuels, such as ethanol and biodiesel, can be more degrading to certain UST system materials than petroleum alone."[39] EPA also acknowledges the growth in biofuels over time and the fuel waivers EPA issued allowing for the sale of E15 in the summer, and EPA thus proposed "a requirement that UST systems installed, or UST equipment and components replaced, must be constructed with equipment and components compatible with ethanol blends up to 100 percent."[40] EPA has not yet issued the final rule.[41]

The Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program

Program Overview

HBIIP, a USDA initiative created in 2020, aims to "increase significantly the sales and use of higher blends of ethanol and biodiesel" and "is intended to encourage a more comprehensive approach to marketing higher blends by sharing the costs related to building out biofuel-related

[35] USDA, *Assessing Future Market Opportunities and Challenges for E15 and Higher Ethanol Blends*, May 2022, https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/e15-market-opportunities.pdf.

[36] DOE reports that U.S. DRIVE is a "non-binding and voluntary government-industry partnership focused on advanced automotive and related energy infrastructure technology research and development." DOE, *U.S. DRIVE*, accessed October 21, 2026, https://www.energy.gov/cmei/vehicles/us-drive.

[37] USDA, *Assessing Future Market Opportunities and Challenges for E15 and Higher Ethanol Blends*, May 2022, pp. 17-18, https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/e15-market-opportunities.pdf; and Rebecca Monroe et al., *Potential Impacts of Increased Ethanol Blend-Level in Gasoline on Distribution and Retail Infrastructure*, U.S. DRIVE Partnership, February 2019, pp. 23-24, https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2019/03/f60/USDRIVE_FWG_PotentialImpactsIncreasedEthanolBlend-Level.pdf.

[38] EPA, "Notice of Proposed Rulemaking: E15 Fuel Dispenser Labeling and Compatibility with Underground Storage Tanks," accessed October 22, 2026, https://www.epa.gov/renewable-fuel-standard/notice-proposed-rulemaking-e15-fuel-dispenser-labeling-and-compatibility; EPA, "E15 Fuel Dispenser Labeling and Compatibility with Underground Storage Tanks," 86 *Federal Register* 5094, January 19, 2021.

[39] EPA, "E15 Fuel Dispenser Labeling and Compatibility with Underground Storage Tanks," 86 *Federal Register* 5099, January 19, 2021.

[40] EPA, "E15 Fuel Dispenser Labeling and Compatibility with Underground Storage Tanks."

[41] H.R. 1346 and S. 5526 both contain a fuel infrastructure rulemaking section that requires EPA to finalize a rule that "shall modify the E15 fuel dispenser labeling requirements and the underground storage tank regulations of the Environmental Protection Agency with respect to compatibility with gasoline-ethanol blends." Some Members have requested EPA finalize the rule. See Sen. Joni Ernst, "Ernst Pushes to Remove Regulatory Roadblocks, Expand Consumer Access to Homegrown Biofuels," press release, August 6, 2025, https://www.ernst.senate.gov/news/press-releases/ernst-pushes-to-remove-regulatory-roadblocks-expand-consumer-access-to-homegrown-biofuels.

infrastructure."[42] HBIIP awards cost-share grants that assist transportation fueling and biodiesel distribution facilities with upgrading or installing new infrastructure to be compatible with high-blend ethanol and biodiesel (e.g., E15 fuel dispensers, B20 fuel dispensers, ethanol storage tanks, and biodiesel storage tanks).[43] USDA reports that consideration will also be given to biodiesel terminal operations and home heating oil distribution centers.[44]

HBIIP has been mentioned in the Unified Agenda of Federal Regulatory and Deregulatory Actions (unified agenda).[45] According to the Fall 2023 unified agenda, HBIIP is "intended to encourage a more comprehensive approach to market higher blends by sharing the costs related to building out biofuel-related infrastructure."[46] The Fall 2023 unified agenda also states that the USDA Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBCS) implements the program and that the "underlying statutes authorizing RBCS to create these regulations are 5 U.S.C. 301 and 7 U.S.C. 1989."[47] According to a 2026 unified agenda entry for HBIIP, RCBS intends on "proposing a rule to codify the policies and procedures for the program in the Code of Federal Regulations" and "intends to conduct public engagement to hear from stakeholders and potential applicants about what they would like to see in the regulation."[48]

[42] USDA, "Notice of Funds Availability for the Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program (HBIIP) for Fiscal Year 2020," 85 *Federal Register* 26657, May 5, 2020. For more information on HBIIP, see the USDA HBIIP web page at https://www.rd.usda.gov/HBIIP. USDA reports that HBIIP "will build on biofuels infrastructure investments and experience gained through the Biofuels Infrastructure Partnership (BIP). USDA administered BIP from 2016–2019 through state and private partners to expand the availability of E15 and E85 infrastructure to make available higher ethanol blends at retail gas stations around the country." USDA, "Request for Information on a Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program," 85 *Federal Register* 2699, January 16, 2020. In 2020, USDA requested input on opportunities to consider infrastructure projects to facilitate increased sales of higher biofuel blends (E15/B20 or higher). See USDA, "Request for Information on a Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program," 85 *Federal Register* 2699, January 16, 2020. See USDA, "USDA Seeks Input on New Ethanol Sales Infrastructure Incentive Program," press release, January 16, 2020, https://www.usda.gov/about-usda/news/press-releases/2020/01/16/usda-seeks-input-new-ethanol-sales-infrastructure-incentive-program.

[43] For more information, see USDA, *Projects Receiving Funding Through the Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program (HBIIP) and the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) Renewable and Energy Efficiency Program (Total: $14,000,418)*, January 13, 2025, https://www.rd.usda.gov/media/file/download/reap-and-hbiip-grant-awards-1-13-2025-0.pdf; and USDA, "Announcement of Future Competitive Grant Funds Availability for Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program (HBIIP) for Fiscal Year 2020," 85 *Federal Register* 11946, February 28, 2020.

[44] USDA, "Announcement of Future Competitive Grant Funds Availability for Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program (HBIIP) for Fiscal Year 2020," 85 *Federal Register* 11946, February 28, 2020.

[45] The Unified Agenda of Federal Regulatory and Deregulatory Actions reports on the actions administrative agencies plan to issue in the near and long term. There are five editions of the unified agenda that contain an entry for HBIIP—fall 2023, spring 2024, fall 2024, spring 2025, and 2026 (Regulatory Information Number 0570-AB11). Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, *Unified Agenda and Regulatory Plan Search Results - 0570-AB11*, accessed October 21, 2026, https://www.reginfo.gov/public/Forward?SearchTarget=Agenda&textfield=0570-AB11&Image61.x=0&Image61.y=0.

[46] Regulatory Information Service Center, "Introduction to the Unified Agenda of Federal Regulatory and Deregulatory Actions—Fall 2023," 89 *Federal Register* 9314, February 9, 2024.

[47] Regulatory Information Service Center, "Introduction to the Unified Agenda of Federal Regulatory and Deregulatory Actions—Fall 2023."

[48] Regulatory Information Service Center, "Introduction to the Unified Agenda of Federal Regulatory and Deregulatory Actions—2026," accessed October 21, 2026, https://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/eAgendaViewRule?pubId=202510&RIN=0570-AB11.

Funding

HBIIP funding comes from the USDA Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC).[49] The program received $500 million in supplemental funding from the law commonly known as the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (IRA; P.L. 117-169).[50] The funding is statutorily authorized in 7 U.S.C. §8103(i).[51] Congress has not authorized or directly appropriated additional funding for the program since the IRA. USDA last issued a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for HBIIP in June 2023, establishing five consecutive quarterly application windows that accepted submissions starting July 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024, with the option for a sixth application window if funding was not exhausted.[52] As of October 2026, USDA reports that "[f]unds for the program have now been exhausted, and the Department will not be making further obligations absent future appropriation."[53]

Award Administration

USDA has released some award data for HBIIP (see **Table 1**). CRS estimates of HBIIP awards provided in **Table 1** are not comprehensive, were derived from publicly available information, and may not reflect all HBIIP awards granted by USDA. The publicly released HBIIP award data announced in 2026 are less granular than the award data announced in prior years. In January 2025, USDA reported that "[t]o date, USDA has invested … more than $287 million in 345 projects through HBIIP that increase the availability of domestic biofuels across the country" and "[s]ince the start of the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA has invested … more than $323 million in 399 awards through HBIIP."[54] CRS estimates in **Table 1** for HBIIP awards that USDA announced in 2020 through 2025 derived from publicly available information differ from what USDA reported on January 10, 2025.

The HBIIP awards announced in January 2025 give financial support for infrastructure (e.g., fuel pumps, dispensers, and storage tanks) that supports ethanol and biodiesel fuel mixtures, mostly in

[49] For example, for FY2020, the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) made available "up to $100 million in the form of cost-share grants to eligible entities." See USDA, "Notice of Funds Availability for the Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program (HBIIP) for Fiscal Year 2020," 85 *Federal Register* 26656, May 5, 2020. Also, for FY2022, the CCC made available "approximately $100 million in competitive grants to eligible entities." See USDA, "Notice of Funding Opportunity for the Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program (HBIIP) for Fiscal Year 2022," 87 *Federal Register* 51641, August 23, 2022. For more information on the CCC, see CRS Report R44606, *The Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC)*, by Megan Stubbs.

[50] P.L. 117-169, §22003. For a discussion of how the IRA funding was spent, see USDA, *IRA Climate and Energy Solutions: Washington Updates*, accessed October 22, 2026, p. 3, https://www.rd.usda.gov/media/file/download/ira-climate-washington.pdf.

[51] See also USDA, "Notice of Funding Opportunity for the Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program (HBIIP) for Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024," 88 *Federal Register* 41876, June 28, 2023.

[52] USDA, "Notice of Funding Opportunity for the Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program (HBIIP) for Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024," 88 *Federal Register* 41876, June 28, 2023.

[53] USDA, "Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program," accessed October 21, 2026, https://www.rd.usda.gov/HBIIP.

[54] USDA, "USDA Invests in Additional Domestic Biofuels and Clean Energy Projects to Lower Costs and Increase American Energy Security Across the Nation," press release, January 10, 2025.

the forms of E15, E85, and B20.[55] The program also supports B100.[56] For example, there is a project focused on the infrastructure for a home heating oil distribution facility company (i.e., modify a storage tank to store B100 and blend B20) and a fleet facility company (i.e., install two B100 fuel dispensers and one B100 storage tank).[57]

Table 1. Announced Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program (HBIIP) Awards Identified by a Public Search

Year[a]	Total Grant Amount	Total Number of Projects	States Where Entities Will Receive Project Award and/or Infrastructure Improvements due to an Award
2020	$21,793,983	40	CA, FL, IA, IL, IN, KS, KY, MN, MO, NE, NY, OH, UT, and WI
2021	$25,807,599	34	CA, CT/RI/TX, FL, GA, IA, IL, IN/KS/OH, IN/OH, KS, KS/MO/OK, KY, MA, MA/NM/TX, ME, MI, MO, MO/OK, MS, NC, NE, NY/TX, OH/KY, TX, TX/IL, and WI
2023	$25,777,328	59	CA, CA/CO, GA, IA, IA/MO, IL, MN, MO, ND/MN, ND, NE/CA, NH/RI/NY, NY, SD, WA, and WI
2024	$14,212,044 (HBIIP) $25,188,768 (HBIIP IRA)	7 (HBIIP) 32 (HBIIP IRA)	AR, CA, FL, IA, IL, KS, MD/NC/OH/PA/VA/WV, MI, MN, NE, RI, TX, and WI
2025	$14,603,820 (HBIIP) $45,072,178 (HBIIP IRA)[b]	9 (HBIIP) 61 (HBIIP IRA)	AL/GA/IN/OH/OK/SC/TN/TX, CA, FL, FL/TX, IA, IA/NE, IL, IN/KY/MI/WI, IN/NY, KS, MA, MI/WI, MN, MN/ND, MO, NE, NY, PA, SD, TX, and WI
2026	$4,174,131	6	IA

Sources: Adapted by CRS from award tables provided by U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), *Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program*, October 8, 2020, https://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/NR_HBIIP_CHART10082020.pdf; USDA, *Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program*, August 19, 2021, https://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/usda_rd_nr_hbiip_chart.pdf; USDA, *Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program*, June 26, 2023, https://www.rd.usda.gov/media/file/download/usda-rd-nr-hbiip-chart-06262023pdf; USDA, *Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program*, October 29, 2024, https://www.rd.usda.gov/media/file/download/final-hbiip-102924.pdf; USDA, *Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program*, January 10, 2025, https://www.rd.usda.gov/media/file/download/reap-hbiip-final-01102025.pdf; and USDA, "USDA Rural Development Invests $11.5 Million in 13 Projects to Advance Economic Development and Expand the Sale of Renewable Fuels in Iowa," press release, April 7, 2026.

Notes: Data in this table should not be considered comprehensive. Data are based on a search of publicly available information using certain keywords. For example, USDA reports $570.6 million in investment dollars for 646 investments for HBIIP. See USDA, *Rural Investments by State/County Dashboard – Grants and Loans by Program*, accessed November 3, 2026, https://www.rd.usda.gov/rural-data-gateway/rural-investments/by-county. Additional information for the HBIIP awards—including the recipients, project grant amounts, project descriptions, and congressional representatives—are provided in the USDA sources referenced above. The

[55] USDA, "USDA Invests in Additional Domestic Biofuels and Clean Energy Projects to Lower Costs and Increase American Energy Security Across the Nation," press release, January 10, 2025, https://www.usda.gov/about-usda/news/press-releases/2025/01/10/usda-invests-additional-domestic-biofuels-and-clean-energy-projects-lower-costs-and-increase; USDA Rural Development, *Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) Renewable and Energy Efficiency Program and HBIIP Award Table*, January 10, 2025, https://www.rd.usda.gov/media/file/download/reap-hbiip-final-01102025.pdf.

[56] B100 is 100% pure biodiesel. DOE reports that B100 is "rarely used as a transportation fuel." DOE Alternative Fuels Data Center, "Biodiesel Blends," accessed November 3, 2026, https://afdc.energy.gov/fuels/biodiesel-blends.

[57] USDA Rural Development, *Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) Renewable and Energy Efficiency Program and HBIIP Award Table*, January 10, 2025, https://www.rd.usda.gov/media/file/download/reap-hbiip-final-01102025.pdf.

combination of two or more states, separated by forward slashes, indicates that entities operating in multiple states may receive infrastructure improvements under the project award.

a. The year the awards were announced by USDA.

b. Some projects were funded under HBIIP and some under funding provided for HBIIP by the law commonly known as the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA; P.L. 117-169).

Selected Actions Under the Second Trump Administration (2025 Through June 2026)[58]

In the first three months of the second Trump Administration, the White House froze funding for HBIIP, implemented USDA staffing changes, and reported that it had released obligated funding under HBIIP for projects. On January 20, 2025, President Trump issued Executive Order 14154, which paused the disbursement of funds appropriated through the IRA and required a review of the processes for issuing grants for programs funded by the IRA, among other things.[59] Also on January 20, 2025, President Trump ordered a hiring freeze for the executive branch and requested the creation of a federal hiring plan, among other things.[60] On March 31, 2025, the Trump Administration announced it would release approximately $537 million in obligated funding for HBIIP for 543 projects, including "new projects approved within the first 100 days of the Trump Administration".[61]

The second Trump Administration continues to take actions where the outcome to HBIIP is unclear. For example, it is not clear if the staffing changes at USDA will impact USDA's implementation of HBIIP.[62] On June 17, 2026, USDA announced the reorganization of the Rural Development (RD) mission area, including for the RBCS, which administers HBIIP. USDA reported, "Select functions and positions with the Rural Business-Cooperative Service will relocate from the [National Capital Region] to Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas, which will serve as the primary national hub for the agency's RBCS and RUS [Rural Utilities Service] loan and grant functions."[63] On July 24, 2025, USDA Secretary Rollins announced the reorganization of USDA.[64] Finally, on July 29, 2026, Secretary Rollins announced a USDA "100 Hires in 100

[58] This section considers selected actions taken by the second Trump Administration from January 20, 2025, to July 31, 2026, and is based mostly on information provided in executive orders and USDA press releases. This is not a comprehensive summary of all second Trump Administration actions or resources that may relate to HBIIP. In addition, this analysis does not include actions required of USDA under the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025 (P.L. 119-4) (e.g., an operating plan). This summary also does not discuss legal challenges to Trump Administration actions.

[59] Executive Order 14154 of January 20, 2025, "Unleashing American Energy," 90 *Federal Register* 8353, January 29, 2025.

[60] White House, "Hiring Freeze," presidential memorandum, January 20, 2025; Executive Order 14170, "Reforming the Federal Hiring Process and Restoring Merit to Government Service," 90 *Federal Register* 8621, January 20, 2025.

[61] USDA, "USDA Delivers on Rural Energy Commitments, Strengthens U.S. Energy Security and Increases American-Grown Fuels," press release, March 31, 2025, https://www.usda.gov/about-usda/news/press-releases/2025/03/31/usda-delivers-rural-energy-commitments-strengthens-us-energy-security-and-increases-american-grown. USDA did not provide a breakdown of previously awarded projects and new projects and their respective funding amounts.

[62] For information on USDA staffing levels, see USDA, *U.S. Department of Agriculture Staffing Levels*, OAI Report 25-064-01, December 17, 2025, https://www.oversight.gov/sites/default/files/documents/reports/2025-12/USDA%20Staffing%20Levels%20Final%20Report%20-%20Dec%2017_508-signed.pdf.

[63] USDA, "Rural Development: Reorganization," accessed October 22, 2026, https://www.rd.usda.gov/reorganization.

[64] USDA, "Secretary Rollins Announces USDA Reorganization, Restoring the Department's Core Mission of Supporting American Agriculture," press release, July 24, 2025, https://www.usda.gov/about-usda/news/press-releases/2025/07/24/secretary-rollins-announces-usda-reorganization-restoring-departments-core-mission-supporting.

Days" initiative that will "recruit veterans, transitioning service members, and military spouses."[65]

Issues for Congress

The Supreme Court has established that Congress has the power to conduct oversight of federal programs.[66] As such, Congress may or may not choose to assess past, current, and potentially future HBIIP administration by USDA. And Congress may or may not choose to consider HB fuel consumption rates, infrastructure costs, potential environmental impacts, and other issues related to HBIIP. Congress could choose to take no action. Alternatively, Congress could decide to explore the above-mentioned areas, and may consider the following questions and data requests, which are presented in no order of priority.[67]

Program Funding and Outlays

- Request USDA provide a comprehensive funding and spending history for HBIIP for each fiscal year since FY2020, to include funding from the CCC, the IRA, and any other sources as well as unobligated funding, rescinded funding, and carryover funding.
- Request USDA provide the HBIIP funding amount, funding source, and funding announcement date USDA anticipates for future fiscal years, if any.[68]

Program Implementation

- Request USDA summarize any new priorities and program implementation changes the Trump Administration has made regarding HBIIP, including the Administration's anticipated timeline for implementing any program changes, and specify how and when the Administration will communicate any changes to Congress and the public.
- Request USDA explain how or if it will consider program continuity in its administration of the program. For example, how will the Trump Administration carry out HBIIP if awards are issued and there is a sudden funding lapse or program personnel change so that awardees can continue their business operations and fulfill any commitments that may be dependent on the HBIIP award they received?
- What criteria will USDA use to measure the success of the program?
- How will USDA report HBIIP performance to Congress and how often?
- How much financial support will USDA provide for the program and for how long? Where will the financial support come from (e.g., the CCC)?

[65] USDA, "Secretary Rollins Launches USDA Initiative to Recruit Veterans, Transitioning Service Members, and Military Spouses," press release, July 29, 2026, https://www.usda.gov/about-usda/news/press-releases/2026/07/29/secretary-rollins-launches-usda-initiative-recruit-veterans-transitioning-service-members-and.

[66] For more information, see CRS In Focus IF10015, *Congressional Oversight and Investigations*, by Todd Garvey, Mark J. Oleszek, and Ben Wilhelm.

[67] This is not a comprehensive list.

[68] As of October 22, 2026, the HBIIP web page reports that "[f]unds for the program have now been exhausted, and the Department will not be making further obligations absent future appropriation." USDA, "Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program," accessed October 22, 2026, https://www.rd.usda.gov/HBIIP.

Program Awards

- Request USDA provide a list of HBIIP awards for each fiscal year granted under the second Trump Administration. For each award, list the award recipient, amount awarded, project location, project status, and project summary.[69]
- Request USDA provide the current operational status of the infrastructure that was installed using HBIIP funds for each fiscal year since FY2020.
- Request USDA provide the value and volume of HB fuel annual sales for locations that installed infrastructure using HBIIP funds for each fiscal year since FY2020.

Program Communication

- Request USDA provide past written and oral HBIIP communications for each fiscal year since FY2020, to include announcements such as a notice of funding opportunity, award recipients, and other communications (e.g., *Federal Register* notices, press releases, stakeholder announcements, social media).
- Request USDA explain how and when it will provide communications about HBIIP, in written and oral form, to both Congress and the public (e.g., program alerts, listservs, webinars, a performance dashboard).

Staffing

- Request USDA provide the current HBIIP staffing chart and any significant changes from the past two years.
- Request USDA explain to what extent, if any, the USDA Rural Development relocation and reorganization will impact HBIIP.

General Considerations

- Is federal support needed for HB fueling infrastructure?
- Do fueling stations need financial support to invest in HB fueling infrastructure?[70]
- What would happen, if anything, to the biofuel market and the HB fueling infrastructure market in the absence of HBIIP?
- What additional information about HBIIP is necessary for Congress to determine if HBIIP is influencing the HB fuels market?

[69] See USDA, *Projects Receiving Funding Through The Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program (HBIIP) and The Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) Renewable and Energy Efficiency Program*, January 13, 2025, https://www.rd.usda.gov/media/file/download/reap-and-hbiip-grant-awards-1-13-2025-0.pdf.

[70] For example, some stakeholders argue that E15 fueling infrastructure costs are difficult for some fueling stations to absorb. See, for example, Luke Geiver, "A Hand Up for Higher Blends," *Ethanol Producer Magazine*, October 7, 2024. Others have expressed concerns about federal funds being spent on ethanol blender pumps. See, for example, Taxpayers for Common Sense, *Blinders for Blender Pumps*, July 21, 2015, https://www.taxpayer.net/agriculture/golden-fleece-blinders-for-blender-pumps/; Taxpayers for Common Sense, *Biofuel Infrastructure Subsidies: Costing Taxpayers Billions*, February 2026, https://www.taxpayer.net/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Biofuel-Infrastructure-Subsidies-Costing-Taxpayers-Billions.pdf; and Taxpayers for Common Sense, *E15: 15 Percent Ethanol*, February 2026, https://www.taxpayer.net/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/E15-Factsheet-Feb-2026.pdf. Stakeholders have discussed other issues related to E15 besides infrastructure costs. These matters are beyond the scope of this report.

- How could Congress determine if consumers want HB fuels? And if so, why do consumers want HB fuels? If not, why not?
- Are there environmental impacts associated with biofuels that should be considered?[71]
- Are some biofuels more environmentally friendly than other biofuels? If so, how should those more environmentally friendly biofuels contribute to any requested increase in HB fuel usage?
- Will support for HB fuel use in vehicles impact biofuels used for other transportation purposes (e.g., aviation)?[72]
- How much gasoline will be consumed annually for the next 10 to 20 years?
- Should Congress codify HBIIP in statute?
- If Congress chooses to provide future appropriations for HBIIP, should Congress stipulate additional program goals (e.g., a minimum threshold of U.S. fueling stations will be equipped to sell E15, a target for annual E15 sales)?
- If Congress provides additional funding to HBIIP, how long will federal financial support be needed (e.g., the program is to be run annually for a maximum of five years)?
- If Congress chooses to fund HBIIP, what type of funding will it consider (e.g., discretionary appropriations or mandatory funding)?
- If Congress wants to support HB fueling infrastructure, are there better or more cost-effective ways to do so than HBIIP?
- What parts of the economy may improve due to the additional use of HB fuel? And what parts of the economy may be weakened?
- Is there a way to record nationwide consumption of HB fuel?
- Is there a way to record how much HB fuel is being used for home heating oil, vehicles, etc.?
- Is there enough biomass feedstock supply to support an increase in biofuel production for HB fuel? If not, what would be the effects on food prices, land used for agriculture versus other purposes, and other markets?
- If Congress further supports HB fueling infrastructure, what data could the federal government collect to measure program performance and effectiveness?
- What interaction effects would there be between HBIIP and other federal, state, and local programs?

[71] See, for example, World Resources Institute, "Statement: Over 30 Organizations Issue Letter to US Senate Opposing Year-Round Ethanol 'E15' Proposal," press release, July 14, 2026, https://www.wri.org/news/statement-over-30-organizations-issue-letter-us-senate-opposing-year-round-ethanol-e15.

[72] See, for example, CRS In Focus IF12757, *Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF): An Overview of Current Laws and Legislation Introduced in the 119th Congress*, by Kelsi Bracmort.

- Are there current or expired state programs or tax incentives that should be taken into consideration (e.g., Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Tax Credit, Iowa Renewable Fuel Infrastructure Program)?[73] For instance, in August 2026, the Iowa state government reported that "the Renewable Fuels Infrastructure Program (RFIP) Board has approved more than $2 million in cost-share grants for 38 E15 and biodiesel infrastructure projects across Iowa."[74] Can and should the RFIP be replicated in more states nationwide?
- Should Congress assign the U.S. Government Accountability Office to evaluate the impact of the HBIIP investments made thus far?[75]

Author Information

Kelsi Bracmort
Specialist in Natural Resources and Energy Policy

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[73] DOE Alternative Fuels Data Center, "Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Tax Credit," accessed October 22, 2026, https://afdc.energy.gov/laws/10513; Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, "Iowa Renewable Fuels Infrastructure Program," accessed October 22, 2026, https://iowaagriculture.gov/IRFIP.

[74] Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, "Secretary Naig Announces More Than $2 Million for 38 E15 and Biodiesel Infrastructure Projects," press release, August 7, 2026, https://iowaagriculture.gov/news/e15-biodiesel-infrastructure-proj.

[75] In 2022, the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) reviewed USDA's new rule titled "Notice of Funding Opportunity for the Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program (HBIIP) for Fiscal Year 2022." See GAO, *U.S. Department of Agriculture, Commodity Credit Corporation, Rural Business-Cooperative Service: Notice of Funding Opportunity for the Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program (HBIIP) for Fiscal Year 2022*, B-334572, August 30, 2022, https://www.gao.gov/assets/730/722669.pdf.