



MEMO

Media Backgrounder

CONTACT

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TO: Interested Parties

FROM: FUELlowa

SUBJECT: Media Briefing: The Voice of the Fuel Industry

DATE: February 3, 2022

Please consider these perspectives and background information from FUELlowa as you report on the following topics:



[Text Wrapping Break]

As the voice of Iowa's fuel industry, [FUELlowa](#)'s members include fuel distributors, fuel cooperatives, convenience and grocery stores, refiners, biofuel producers and other local businesses that support these companies.

Today's economy demands a robust and responsive fuel distribution network that provides accessible, reliable, and low-cost fuels. FUELlowa's unique perspective in working with each aspect of the fuel network and its expertise on fuel choice, quality, competition, c-store challenges and infrastructure projects makes the organization well-equipped to tackle the most pressing fuel and infrastructure issues of today. Investments in innovative and quality fuel options are essential for Iowa's future more than ever before.

Below you will find more information related to Iowa's fuel industry and FUELlowa's priorities.

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Twitter: [@FUELINGIowa](https://twitter.com/FUELINGIowa)

Facebook: [@FUELlowa](https://www.facebook.com/FUELlowa)

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About FUELlowa

- FUELlowa is the voice of Iowa's fuel industry, representing hundreds of members across the state who play a vital role in the state's economy. With membership that includes fuel distributors, fuel cooperatives, convenience and grocery stores, refiners, biofuel producers and more, FUELlowa members are essential to getting Iowans where they need to go.
- FUELlowa members work to ensure that all Iowans have access to the food, fuel, and supplies they need each and every day. Our members work to make Iowa a leader in convenience, low-cost fuels, and energy independence.
- The fuel industry has been resilient during the events of the pandemic. Many of our members, Iowa's convenience and grocery stores, are the first places Iowans look toward to find the resources, power, food and fuel they need.

Fuel Industry Resources:

- [2020 Retailers Fuel Gallons Annual Report](#)

FUEllowa Leadership

Ronald N. Langston – President and CEO



Ronald N. Langston is the President and Chief Executive Officer of FUEllowa. Langston worked in Washington D.C. as a Senior Consultant and Director of Small and Medium Enterprises with The Stevenson Group, as well as Principal Consultant for Langston Global Enterprises, LLC. While in the nation's capital, Langston served two administrations with a presidential appointment to the U.S. Department of Commerce and served as the first National Director of the Minority Business Development Agency and initiated the U.S. Commerce Global Minority Enterprise Initiative. He also served as a Special Assistant in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

During his previous time in Iowa, Langston was appointed by the Governor to serve as Iowa State Transportation Commissioner at the Iowa Department of Transportation. He also worked as Vice President of Administration and Organizational Management for EMCO Manufacturing, Statewide Economic Development Director for the Institute of Social and Economic Development, Director of National Marketing for the Principal Financial Group, and Vice President of Governmental Affairs for the Greater Des Moines Chamber of Commerce Federation.

Earlier in his career, Langston worked as a Legislative Assistant for the U.S. Senate and as a Research Analyst for the Iowa Legislative Services Bureau. Langston has a Master's in Public Administration (MPA) from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He also earned a Master of Public Administration from Baruch College at City University of New York, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from the University of Iowa.

Gary Koerner – Executive Vice President



In his role as Executive Vice President, Gary is responsible for Membership, Operations and Finance. Gary is focused on engaging and growing FUEllowa's membership and membership offerings while also establishing best in class operational and financial management practices with the goal of building a strong foundation for the association for years to come. Prior to FUEllowa, Gary worked for 18 years at Meredith Corporation in a variety of leadership roles in Marketing, Sales, Business Development, Category Management and

Finance. Most recently, Gary served as the Executive Director of Retail, responsible for all sales, marketing and distribution at retail for all magazine brands in North America.

Gary earned his undergraduate degree in Marketing from the University of Northern Iowa, and his MBA from the University of Iowa. He and his wife Gail have four children and reside in West Des Moines.

John Maynes – Regulatory Affairs Manager



John's responsibilities include assisting members with regulatory and government compliance issues. He is primarily responsible for renewable fuels compliance and transportation issues but also is adept at the tax issues and aboveground tank questions that come into the office.

Jim Ewing – Membership Marketing Manager



Jim serves as our Membership Marketing Manager. In this role, Jim plans and directs all operational activities related to membership retention and recruitment, member business program sales and service, sponsorship and advertising sales and event marketing. Prior to FUEllowa, Jim was an Energy Account Manager with GROWMARK Energy covering eastern Iowa, Illinois and eastern Missouri. Prior to GROWMARK, Jim worked eleven years at Solar Transport, where he had various roles in recruiting and sales management. Jim was ultimately responsible for developing bulk petroleum transport business through inventory management, dedicated fleet, and private fleet conversion services. Jim earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Northern Iowa. He and his wife Amanda have three children Ben, Olivia, and Charley residing in Norwalk.

FUEllowa's priorities

- **Build a strong fuel distribution network** that is essential for Iowa's rural and urban communities to succeed while working to provide fuel choice, fuel quality, fair competition, consumer and environmental protection, and fairness in the marketplace.
- **Support a balanced approach to fueling the economy**, and promote the selling of a broad mix of gasoline, diesel, propane, biofuels, consumer products and services that diversify our state's available resources and keep our economy growing.
- In addition to traditional fuels that power the economy, **support agricultural economy through the growth of ethanol and other innovative fuels.**
- As part of offering higher blended fuel options, **make infrastructure funding a key priority to truly have higher blended fuels available** in all markets large and small.
- FUEllowa estimates that 85% of retail fuel facilities in Iowa – many of which are small and medium-sized c-stores in rural communities – do not have compatible systems to sell E15 due to outdated systems and financial hurdle.
- **Reform and modernize Iowa's bottle bill** to better reflect its original public policy directive. Iowa's grocery and c-stores developments are facing additional staff and financial burdens just to keep cans and bottles in their stores.
- The challenges emerging around the bottle bill during the pandemic further underscore the need to come together to have a comprehensive review that will help modernize the legislation. FUEllowa committed to preserving the original intention of the bottle bill – “to keep Iowa beautiful” and be a recycling leader.

FUELlowa 2022 Legislative Priorities

The 2021 Iowa State Legislative Session was one of the most active in recent FUELlowa history. From a biofuel mandate to a bottle bill reform, our organization and its members advocated at the State Capitol to deliver value and impact across our industry. Our work continues into the 2022 legislative session, to support the following priorities.

Opposition to Fuel Mandates

Last year's biofuel mandate fight was one of the most challenging legislative battles that we have faced. Despite its challenging nature, we were victorious in rejecting the mandate in 2021. However, the fight is not over. While this year's bill offers a slight improvement, the fuel mandate remains concerning.

The 2022 mandate would still hurt small, rural fuel retailers, due to onerous and costly infrastructure upgrades, and force some out of business. Most likely, the retailers that will be forced to shutter are those in communities that need their services the most, miles from other gas and grocery options in rural parts of Iowa. We remain committed to finding a beneficial path to biofuels, that does not put small fuel retailers out of business.

Growing Incentives

Two key drivers of biofuel growth in Iowa include product incentives and infrastructure investment dollars. This important combination allows businesses to upgrade facilities in order to offer and market homegrown biofuels to customers.

This approach has proven its value in Iowa. For example, biodiesel sales comprise over 70 percent of the on-road diesel fuel sold in the state, and last year, E15 saw significant growth, surpassing the 50M gallon mark in annual sales.

Reformation of the Iowa Bottle Bill

FUELlowa's work to reform Iowa's bottle bill continues. The 40-year-old legislation, while created with the best intentions, needs significant upgrades to be compatible with modern day recycling processes. In 2021, we advocated for reform, but fell short of a solution, despite coming as close as we ever have to reaching one.

In 2022, we will continue to advocate for reform, including the following recommendations and requirements:

- Transparent accounting of the unclaimed value of cans and bottles
- Comprehensive economic viability assessment of statewide redemption centers
- Increase the total number of redemption centers, while providing tax incentives for local grocery and convenience stores to expand their storage facilities as potential profit centers

Iowa Underground Storage Tank Fund Legislation

Our work continues in 2022 to ensure that any changes to Underground Storage Tank Fund legislation do not affect current or planned projects. We recognize that requiring infrastructure upgrades to be compatible with E85 significantly increases project costs, and we will continue to push back against any mandate that may put these projects at risk.

Legislative Asks

- Collaborate with committee chairs on legislation to provide long-term E15 infrastructure funding.
- Take no action on IUST Fund legislation until assurance is provided to active fuel marketing businesses that environmental protection needs are satisfied.
- Evaluate how bottle and can redemption money is being redeemed, and allow for opt-outs of redemption requirements.

Recent Activity

→ *On Rural Infrastructure Funding/E15*

[Gov. Reynolds tries again to expand biofuels access in Iowa](#)

January 25, 2022

FUEllowa Statement

The following statement is attributable to Glenn Hasken, Chief Operating Officer of Molo Companies and past Chair of FUEllowa:

“Fuel retailers are concerned the unintended consequences of this bill will shut down hundreds of small gas stations in rural Iowa. We share Governor Reynolds’ goal of making higher blends of renewable fuel available to more consumers, particularly in small towns with older gas stations which need to be upgraded to make this a reality.”

“We have been negotiating with all stakeholders in an effort to find a mutually acceptable solution, but our position is clear—we will not support an approach which puts all of the burden on the most vulnerable small stores in rural Iowa that cannot afford to lose their limited retail fuel options.”

