



One Massachusetts Avenue NW, Suite 820
Washington, DC 20001
202.289.3835
www.ethanolRFA.org

October 22, 2008

David Fanning, Executive Producer
Martin Smith, Producer
Frontline
1 Guest Street
Boston, MA 02135

Dear Messers Fanning and Smith:

Last night's Frontline report on global warming, "Heat," aside from examining America's energy policy responses to climate change, included what can only be described as a one-sided, misleading tirade against America's corn farmers and ethanol industry.

Aside from ignoring or ridiculing the facts and science that demonstrate the environmental benefits of increasing the use of renewable biofuels, Frontline's biased report relied almost solely on the views of ethanol critics. In segments on the coal, oil, electric utility and auto industries, Frontline's report contained interviews with representatives of those respective industries – spokespeople for Arch Coal Company, ExxonMobil, American Electric Power, and GM. However, when it came to ethanol, there were no farm or ethanol industry representatives interviewed, although Frontline did use some of the interview with the GM spokeswoman – hardly a fair substitute.

The critics included Mindy Lubber, a former U.S. Environmental Protection Agency official. Lubber has been a long time ethanol critic. Then there was T. Boone Pickens, hardly an ethanol advocate, chosen to talk about the politics of Midwest farmers, as if there were no politics associated with providing federal support for his wind and natural gas ventures. Other critics included Jeffrey Ball, an energy and environmental editor with the historically anti-ethanol *Wall Street Journal* and Eric Pooley, a former *Fortune* editor and current writer at TIME Magazine, which in April published its own attack on ethanol. Lastly, Frontline interviewed two other critics -- Daniel Kammen, a professor of nuclear engineering at the University of California at Berkeley and Amy Jaffe at the oil industry funded James Baker Institute at Rice University.

The unfounded one-sided attacks on ethanol questioned ethanol's carbon emissions, reliance on corn as a feedstock and even movement toward cellulosic feedstocks like switchgrass. The report also recycled easily refuted charges about ethanol's impact on

food production and prices. But, Frontline, in order to paint a pre-determined picture, provided no opportunity for its audience to hear or see any serious rebuttal, thereby deliberately leaving only a negative impression.

Frontline's highly touted and promoted "investigation" came up short in presenting its audience with the facts. It seems there was an underlying framework which resulted in tarnishing an industry that has not only reduced America's dependency on imported oil and helped put downward pressure on gasoline prices, but also provides far more environmental benefit – cleaner air (never mentioned) and lower CO2 emissions (derided) than burning oil (never compared). Further, most recent academic and government studies have demonstrated that increased ethanol production has had a minimal effect on food prices and that higher oil prices, increased worldwide demand, bad weather and other factors have had a much more pronounced impact. Again these facts were no where to be seen or heard on last night's program.

We would like an opportunity to correct the record and meet with you to provide you with some factual information that counters what you have reported as well as more specific comments on last night's report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Dinneen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Bob Dinneen
President