US Senate 1419 - Reid (D-NV)
Renewable Fuels, Consumer Protection, and Energy Efficiency Act of 2007.

Summary: Senate Bill 1419's objective is to move the United States toward greater energy independence and security. The bill would increase the production of clean renewable fuels; protect consumers from energy price gouging; increase the energy efficiency of products, buildings and vehicles; promote research, development, and implementation of greenhouse gas control measures; and improve the energy usage performance of the Federal Government and other sectors of economy. This bill is a comprehensive piece of legislation that encompasses many subject areas including, but not limited to, air quality, energy efficiency, energy independence, and consumer protection.

The bill is presently 160 pages and is expected to morph repeatedly. Nevertheless, this is the acknowledged energy bill of the majority power in Congress and some version of the bill is expected to pass.

This legislation will establish mandatory funding amounts for the research and development of bioenergy and calls for the establishment of eleven research facilities throughout the United States as a means to study and increase the availability and efficiency of biofuels in the greater marketplace.

Another pillar of the legislation is to establish standards for various alternative fuels, provide funding for the installation of alternative fuel pumps and also sets increasing goals for annual the national production of renewable fuel. Another function of this legislation is to establish criteria for a system of voluntary labeling of renewable fuels based on life cycle greenhouse gas emissions and other consumer friendly information on each fuel.

Funding is provided for the study of a variety of alternative fuels and their application to the greater marketplace. These studies range from the study of renewable electricity in vehicles to the durability of engines using biodiesel and the various grades versus petroleum based diesel. Studies will also be funded in order to review renewable fuel incentives, the lifecycle of biofuels and the optimization of E-85. Funds will also be allocated to study the possibility of an ethanol pipeline and the adequacy of railroad transportation of domestically-produced renewable fuel.

Recommended Position : Watch and work with the author and conference committee to address AQMD concerns.

Justification: On balance, there are many positive elements to this legislation; however, in its current form, there are some concerns regarding Title I of the bill which focuses on biofuels. Biofuels enjoy broad support in the environmental community, but it must be recognized that they may have both positive and negative air quality impacts. Although the intention of this bill is to address major energy and conservation issues, it could result in air quality problems. Section 142 (b)(4) of the bill calls for environmental studies to evaluate the impact of ethanol blends on evaporative and exhaust vehicle emissions and it seems to be the only place where

environmental issues are addressed. The bill does not specifically provide a mechanism to adequately address the potential negative air quality impacts that could result from its implementation. This is a important element that should be incorporated into the bill to ensure that the implantation of the bill does not result in negative air quality impacts.

Support:	Opposition:
Unknown	Unknown