JUL 29 2009

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
Committee on Finance
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510-6200

Dear Senator Grassley:

Thank you for your letter of July 28 regarding the nomination of Thomas Shannon as U.S. Ambassador to Brazil and the U.S. import surcharge on Brazilian ethanol. We appreciate your leadership on U.S. energy security, as well as many other issues critical to U.S. foreign and trade policy, and to the American people.

The Obama Administration is committed to developing our domestic biofuels industry in order to reduce U.S. dependence on oil imports and increase our use of renewable energy resources. There has been no change of policy with respect to the U.S. import surcharge of $0.54 per gallon on ethanol. The Administration has no plans to seek changes to the import surcharge.

We hope this information is useful to you. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we may be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Ron Kirk
United States Trade Representative

Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State