



Political Papers

AUGUST 2012

CONGRESSIONAL CALENDAR

Aug 6—Sept 7—District Work Period

Sept 10-21—Session

September 24-28—District Work Period

October—1-5 Session

Oct 8—Nov 9—District Work Period

Nov 6—Election Day

GENERAL ASSEMBLY CALENDAR

Nov 27-29—VETO session

Dec 4-6—VETO session

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FARMERS ON THE HILL

The Illinois Corn Growers Association spent four days in Washington DC lobbying for your issues on July 16-19. On



Illinois corn leadership with Congresswoman Judy Biggert who represents the 13th Congressional District.

top of attending Corn Congress and electing the new Corn Board Members, Illinois Corn met with Congressmen and women and

their staff to encourage movement on the House's version of the Farm Bill, gain more supporters for locks (WAVE4), as well as defending ethanol (RFS).

In every meeting Congressman

and woman asked for updates on the current drought conditions back here in the state and wanted to understand what if any effects this would have for Illinois farmers and the state as a whole.

Board members informed our elected officials of the current effects of the drought yet reminded them that the overall effects will not be known until harvest. They stressed the importance of a farm safety net and crop insurance in times like these. Crop Insurance will help farmers and their families make it through this drought.

FARM BILL NOW!

Farm Bill negotiations in Washington, DC continue. For those of you that haven't been following the debate, we now have a Senate version of the Farm Bill that Illinois Corn supports and a version that has passed the House Ag Committee that we like significantly less. However, our main focus for Farm Bill 2012 negotiations is simply to get something passed through the House and conferenced with the Senate bill for the President to sign prior to the end of 2012.

Our focus on a "Farm Bill Now"

(Continued on page 3)



Senator Debbie Stabenow addressed the delegates of the National Corn Growers Association Corn Congress proudly wearing our "Farm Bill Now" pin on her lapel.

CONNECT WITH YOUR LEGISLATORS



The Illinois Corn PAC evaluation recommended some new ways to gain recognition with key members of congress.

We are introducing "Shop Talks" which are designed to be a town hall style meeting between members of Congress and fellow farmers and Illinois Corn members in the

district. The events would take place on the farm of an Illinois Corn member. This is a good chance for the candidates to see a farm and connect with their constituents.

The goals of Shop Talks are to have members become more active in their districts and have them meet face to face with their elected representatives.

In addition, Illinois Corn plans to hold member only fundraisers for candidates. Putting our members in small private group meetings with candidates is the best way for them to discuss the issues in more depth.

If you are interested in attending a Shop Talk or fundraiser for your member of Congress please contact Lindsay at lmitchell@ilcorn.org.

CORN FARMERS COALITION: EDUCATING WASHINGTON, DC

The Corn Farmers Coalition, a coalition of fourteen state corn grower associations and the National Corn Growers Association, is back again this summer delivering key educational messages to your elected officials in Washington, DC. The campaign this year ran from June 1 through July 31 and featured many of the farm families and educational messages we have seen in previous years with new families from Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, and Michigan added.

CFC has pioneered a new marketing technique in Washington, DC called "station domination." Essentially, the campaign buys every ad space in metro stations heavily trafficked by Congressional staffers and other members of our target audience for the duration of the campaign, guaranteeing that everyone passing through that station sees the information. This includes Congressmen and Senators, their staffs, lobbyists, Agency

There is more you should know about America's biggest crop.

CORN FARMERS COALITION
INNOVATION IS GROWING

www.CornFarmersCoalition.org

The Corn Farmers Coalition is an alliance of the National Corn Growers Association and 14 state corn associations representing tens of thousands of farmers.

employees from USDA to EPA, Environmental groups and think tanks. The campaign also relies heavily on digital media with ads running on the web sites of popular Hill publications and media powerhouses from the Washington Post to the New York Times. The strategy has worked really well.

"During our focus group sessions earlier this year, participants clearly remembered seeing our ads even though they had not been in the market for months. This Strong recall of

the CFC brand and recognition of our ads is tremendous and very uncommon for marketing campaigns. We are definitely doing something right," said Mark Lambert, NCGA.

The numbers show that the campaign is making noticeable progress with the important people in Washington, DC and that the image of farmers and the trust your elected officials have in farmers is not losing ground.

Learn more about
the exciting Corn
Farmers Coalition
campaign in
Washington, DC at
www.cornfarmerscoalition.org.

FARM BILL NOW *(cont)*

(Continued from page 1)
 is a priority because if the current Farm Bill is allowed to expire and Congress simply issues an extension to get us into the 2013 crop year, we risk losing more baseline on some programs with virtually no hope to regain it later.

For the 2012 Farm Bill, we are advocating for updates and simplification to the current ACRE program. We still hope for a revenue-based safety net and a robust crop insurance program that will enable you to better manage your risk. Our ideal program would eliminate overlapping coverage with individual crop insurance, provide a new tool for the event of multi-year revenue decline, make farm policy fair and equitable across all crops

and regions of the U.S., and eliminate payments made to producers who have not experienced a loss. The program would also be based on 100 percent planted acres and establish crop reporting districts as the trigger for revenue loss.

The Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) program passed through the Senate contains a majority of these modifications to the 2008 bill. The program passed in the House Ag Committee favors southern U.S. crops like cotton, rice and peanuts and potentially distorts soybean and wheat planting. Your elected officials will have much to debate in conference committee if the House proceeds with their current version.

Still, your needs are best served by a Farm Bill passed in 2012. Illinois Corn continues to advocate for a bill sooner rather than later, even if



we have to compromise on some of our priorities. Farmers, environmentalists, and humanitarians all understand the need to preserve the baseline budget we are currently working with by passing a "Farm Bill Now."

Farm Bill Now is a priority because if the current farm bill expires and Congress passes an extension, we lose baseline budget and face painful and severe cuts in 2013.

ILLINOIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY UPDATE

The Illinois Spring legislative Session came to an end in a typical way, with screaming, papers flying through the air and long drawn out floor debates. With major issues of the State Budget, Medicaid, and Pensions on the docket one could only expect a tough session. Even with these hot button issues the legislature made progress and got a lot of work done.

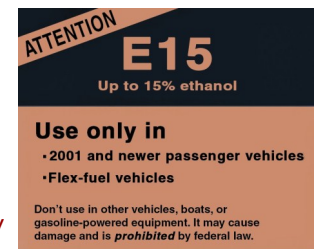
State Budget: The legislature had been working for weeks on bi-partisan efforts to reform the state pension system as well as pass a budget. Yet in the final days the negotiations fell apart over the issue of pensions. Thus to pass the budget it came down to votes straight down party line. The Democrats voted in support of the budget and Republicans voted against it. Eventually, they did pass a budget that reduces spending.

Medicaid Reform: This became the hot button issue in Springfield in the final weeks in the session as they came down to the wire. Through a lot of negotiations and long floor debate a bi-partisan bill emerged. It set to save millions in the states expenditures along with attempting to increase revenues. The final compilation of reform bills included an increase on the taxes levied on cigarettes. In the end both the House and Senate passed the 4 bills that brought changes to the current system.

Pension Reform: There seemed to be head way in the negotiations that could have lead to a bi-partisan bill but each side had their sticking points that they would not compromise on. The result of all of this activity is that no pension reform package passed both Chambers.

USE/OCC TX-GASOHOL - HB 4700 (REP. BRADLEY) & SB 3616 (SEN. SULLIVAN/REP. BRADLEY)

IL Corn has been working to increase the awareness and use of E15 within the state. Negotiations on these bills have been occurring between the Corn Growers and the Petroleum groups to allow this to happen while providing an economic benefit to the state. SB 3616 turned into a shell bill by removing its substantive language to allow the bill to continue to move through the process. Unfortunately this shell bill was used in the last days of the session to allow the enterprise zones reauthorization to pass. So now Illinois corn along with other organizations are gearing up for a veto session push to find another vehicle to pass the E15 legislation.



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ELECTIONS TO WATCH

Election day is November 6 and Illinois faces more contentious federal races than we have seen in a long time. Now that we are through the primary, here are a few races to keep your eyes on.



District 8 shows Congressman Joe Walsh, an incumbent, running against Tammy Duckworth, Democrat, who is backed by Senator Dick Durbin. Walsh won the seat from Democrat Melissa Bean in 2010.

The open seat left by Congressman Jerry Costello after his retirement will be filled by either Republican Jason Plumer or Democrat Bill Enyart. This district has been Democrat for the past 18 years.

Incumbent Republican Bobby Schilling will work to win the District 17 elec-

tion against Cheri Bustos who has connections with Colleen Callahan and Senator Durbin.

Judy Biggert who has served the 13th District since 1999, was redistricted into the 11th District where she will have to face Democrat Bill Foster who served the 14th District from 2008-2010. This race is almost incumbent against incumbent and promises to be close.

Republican Bob Dold is seeking reelection in the 10th District against Brad Schneider. Dold only narrowly won this election in 2010.

Congressman Tim Johnson's retirement leaves an open race between David Gill, Democrat, and Rodney Davis, Republican for the 13th District. This is a new district built during the recent redistricting process so which way this election will swing is anyone's guess!

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