



# Political Papers

AUGUST 2018

## CONGRESSIONAL CALENDAR

### House:

July 30—August 31: District work periods

Sept 4—14: In session

Sept 25—Oct 12: In session

Nov 13—16: In session

Nov 27—Dec 13: In session

### Senate:

August 4—Sept 3: District work periods

Sept 4—Oct 26: In session

Nov 13—16: In session

Nov 26—Dec 14: In session

Right: Congresswoman Cheri Bustos addressed the 2018 Corn Congress and is pictured here with IL Corn Board Members from her district and ICGA Board President Aron Carlson.

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## CORN ON THE HILL

During the week of July 16-20, the IL Corn journeyed to our nation's capital in Washington D.C. Equipped with research materials and directives from Illinois corn farmers, our board took to the Hill to address the issues closest to you. The top four priorities farmers shared with elected officials were the need for a strong Farm Bill in 2018, pushing for higher blends of ethanol fuels and

continuity with the RFS, funding for locks and dams, and express concerns with America's recent trade policies.

Each of these priorities is rooted in increasing corn demand and easing America's ability to sell corn. As our members expressed the importance of all these issues, their concerns were well received. The Congressmen and Congresswomen

heard your concerns with farmer profitability and understand that the success of Illinois lies in a successful agricultural economy.

Perhaps the biggest piece of discussion was the 2018 Farm Bill. The House

named its conferees while our members were on the Hill and our elected officials heard the messages of how important a strong crop insurance program is for farmers. They heard that without SNAP there is no Farm Bill, therefore bipartisanship is key.

Another important component of this trip was the presence of blue FFA jackets on Capital Hill. For the third year in a row the Illinois FFA State Officer Team joined forces with IL Corn to provide priceless experience with this country's lawmakers. We look forward to calling on this experience one day as these future leaders step into the agriculture industry.



## TRADE, NOT AID

President Trump announced a \$12 billion trade aid package as a bandage for the bleeding agricultural economy this month. The tariffs and diminishing trade deals have impacted America's Heartland through dropping commodity prices. Many farms across Illinois are staring at declining incomes for the fifth year in a row. Secretary Perdue an-

nounced that the administration is authorizing USDA to put in place three programs amounting in value of up to \$12 billion, a value in direct relation to the administration's analysis of the retaliatory tariffs that have impacted farmers. "This is a short-term solution that will give President Trump and his administration time to work on long

-term trade deals that benefit agriculture and all sectors of the American economy," Perdue explained. While a short-term solution is a welcome sight for many farmers, the true fix for these problems is trade, not aid. To correct the lows our farmers are facing, demand for corn needs to increase domestically and abroad.

July PAC Distributions*John Shimkus- \$5,000**Darin LaHood- \$2,000**Rodney Davis- \$1,500**Cheri Bustos- \$1,000*

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## PAC 101: Policy Development

IL Corn's Political Action Committee (PAC) is 100% member directed. We support the candidates you support and we work on the policy that means the most to you.

When our board members go out to Washington DC in March and July they voice our farmers' opinions. Unique to Illinois

is the way we collect our farmers greatest concerns through the November Member Survey and Member Session.

Our PAC finances come from member contributions and through fundraising events, like our Annual Illinois Corn PAC Auction. The direction of these finances also comes

as a result of the events in November.

In order for IL Corn and the IL Corn PAC to function at our best we need these grass roots connections to drive us forward. We look forward to hearing what is pressing to you in the coming year.

## Rural America Waits Anxiously for Vital Legislation

For the first time since 1990, it appears a farm bill will be on time. On June 21, the full chamber of the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 2, their version of the Farm Bill, with a vote of 213-211. One week later, the full chamber of the Senate passed their version of the Farm Bill with a vote of 86-11.

Currently the two Farm Bills sit idle waiting to begin the conference process. The Illinois Corn Growers Association hopes the bill will pass out of conference committee as soon as possible.

The Senate Bill has great bipartisan support made evident by the large number of senators who voted yes on the bill. The House Bill has been earmarked by the partisan Supplemental

Nutrition Assistance Program. Despite the differences between the two bills and the heavy debate that will occur during the conference process, our Representatives seem confident that the bill will be passed before the September 30 deadline.



Congresswoman Cheri Bustos (D-17) released the following expressing her hope for bipartisan effort during the conference process: "I am hopeful that once we get this bill to conference, both sides of the aisle will come together

and work to develop a Farm Bill that strips out these highly partisan provisions and instead strengthens our farmers, grows our rural economy, and keeps putting food on the plates of Americans across our nation."

Congressman Adam Kinzinger (R-16) had a similar message: "The 2018 Farm Bill is a critical piece of legislation that advances important priorities for our farmers and gives them the certainty they need to provide food security to the world. I look forward to seeing this measure reach the President's desk soon."

As both of sides seek to work together to get a Farm Bill to President Trump before September 30, Rural America' anxiously awaits this legislation.

# Youth Leading the Way

When real world experience meets strong leadership qualities the results can be astounding. For this reason Illinois Corn Growers Association has been partnering with the Illinois Association FFA State Officer Team. It is our third year taking Illinois FFA members to Washington D.C. for Corn Congress. This partnership has resulted in many great moments and experiences, but has also provided Illinois' future leaders

with fundamental real-world experience in politics. Giving students this level of exposure helps them understand how important this arena is to agriculture and their everyday life. For many students this is the main take away from the trip, but for others it has ignited a passion for policy and D.C.

Two members of the inaugural trip are currently working in Washington D.C. for the USDA. Another, served as the 2016-17 State FFA President and happens to be our very own legislative intern, J.C. Campbell! "Corn Congress opened my eyes to the world of policy. I never really understood the importance of being actively engaged in government and how important my story can be to agriculture industry," said Campbell.

Reflecting on this trip, several members had similar experiences to past years. Some have had their eyes opened to new opportunities and career paths they had not previously considered.

"The Corn Congress trip opened my eyes to the possibilities that Washington D.C. has for anyone interested in agriculture. Our Agriculture industry is ran in Washington D.C.. What a great experience it would be to work right in the middle of it!" said State FFA Vice-President Eliza Petry.

It is because of stories and experiences like this that IL Corn is proud to work with Illinois FFA and invest in our state's future leaders.



## Illinois State Elections and IL Corn

The time has come again. The decisions Illinois' voters will make at the polls will determine the direction of our state for the next



Above: Republican Attorney General Candidate Ms. Erica Harold pictured with ICGA Board President, Aron Carlson.

four years. The race for Illinois Governor has come down to two main candidates, the Republican incumbent Bruce Rauner and the Democratic candidate J.B. Pritzger. These two gentlemen are very different candidates with different values and ideas for the future of Illinois.

In this race where there is not much consistency, IL Corn is standing as the voice for Illinois Agriculture, working to protect our farmers and those who serve them.

IL Corn is also working with the candidates for the state legislature and attorney general. The Republican Candidate for Attor-

ney General, Ms. Erica Harold visited the office to speak with members of the boards. She spoke of her hope for positive change in our state. She also discussed some of her goals if elected.

Among these goals are to combat public corruption, address the opioid epidemic in Illinois, and fight against harassment in schools, government, and across our state.

IL Corn is grateful Harold took the time to speak with us and look forward to working alongside her in the coming months.

## Illinois Corn Growers Association

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## YOU'RE INVITED!

Please consider attending IL Corn's annual November Political Action Committee (PAC) Auction on November 19th, 2018. Similar to past years the event will consist of a nice meal, an opportunity for our farmers to get together, many great items to bid on, and a raffle. The auction is taking place in Bloomington, IL.

The proceeds from the auction will be used to fund the Illinois Corn Growers Association PAC, which contributes to candidate and elected official campaigns. The funds are disbursed to Illinois politicians who support legislation that represent our farmers and their interests at the discretion of the PAC Board of Directors.

This auction is an event to get farmers together, and to raise money to support efforts in Springfield and Washington.



## DONATE

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and fill out the form below.

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