



Political Papers

APRIL 2015

CONGRESSIONAL CALENDAR

May 4-11—Recess

May 22-31—Recess

June 29-July 6—Recess

July 31-Sept 7—House District Work Days

GENERAL ASSEMBLY CALENDAR

May 31—Adjournment

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TRADE PROMOTION AUTHORITY

Why Illinois farmers need it and should be prepared to lobby Congress to get it

As corn farmers look to increase demand in the face of abundant supply, the importance of Trade Promotion Authority to U.S. farmers has gained particular importance. By passing TPA, the President gains the necessary means for negotiating the trade agreements that facilitate access to important export markets and thus helps ensure American farmers remain competitive in meeting the world's need for food, fuel and fiber.

Simply, Trade Promotion Authority does three things. It allows Congress to give direc-

tion to the Executive Branch on trade policy priorities while providing negotiating objectives for trade agreements. It also establishes Congressional requirements for notifying and consulting stakeholders and the public before and during negotiations. Finally, TPA renews the president's authority to submit trade agreements to Congress for an up-or-down vote without amendments, assuring our trading partners that a final agreement won't be altered by Congress.

TPA has existed in its current form since 1974 but, at this time, has not been updated since it expired in 2007. American farmers should value the importance

of passing Trade Promotion Authority for a variety of specific reasons but, most importantly, because it will facilitate trade agreements and open markets for U.S. corn.

Only by renewing TPA can the U.S. government conclude and pass new trade agreements, such as the Trans Pacific Partnership, that allow the U.S. agricultural sector to compete on a level playing field in the global market. As countries around the world are moving forward with agreements that will give their farmers preferential access to the world's fastest growing markets, it is imperative the United States

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YOUR LEADERSHIP LOBBIED ON THE HILL

On March 16, 17, and 18, your IL Corn Directors lobbied on the hill, telling the Illinois Congressional delegation exactly what important programs like crop

insurance, and funding for locks and dams could mean to you.

The group also discussed ethanol concerns, GMO labeling issues, and the need for Trade Promo-

tion Authority with your elected officials.

The Illinois delegation was excited to meet with farmers from their home state and were anxious to discuss the issues.

For the most part, IL Corn leadership heard a lot of support on their priority issues, including a number of Congressmen willing to sign onto a letter encouraging pre-engineering funds for locks and dams, and most supporting the national Safe & Accurate Food Labeling Act instead of state by state legislative initiatives.

Pictured left: Congressman Danny Davis with Ted Mottaz of Elmwood and Bill Leigh of Minonk after discussing ethanol and trade concerns. Cong Danny Davis has always supported ethanol and looks forward to the E15 ordinance passing in Chicago.



“EVERY MAN OWES A PART OF HIS TIME AND MONEY TO THE BUSINESS OR INDUSTRY IN WHICH HE IS ENGAGED. NO MAN HAS A MORAL RIGHT TO WITHHOLD HIS SUPPORT FROM AN ORGANIZATION THAT IS STRIVING TO IMPROVE CONDITIONS WITHIN HIS SPHERE.” ~ THEODORE ROOSEVELT

Have you ever wondered how you could get more involved in the Illinois Corn Growers Association or its Political Action Committee?

Let us know your interest and we can certainly find an activity that fits you and your interest level. If you support a certain candidate, ICGA can help you hold a fundraiser for that candidate. If you are interested in seeing firsthand what ICGA does in Washington, DC, there

are opportunities to accommodate that as well.

Simply email lmitchell@ilcorn.org to express interest in getting more involved.

We look forward to seeing you soon!

Volunteering is simple!



TED MOTTAZ, ELMWOOD, ON CNN!

Whether you call it luck or not, your Illinois leaders were in Washington, DC during Congressman Aaron Schock’s resignation speech. In fact, your leaders were in Schock’s office at the time of his resignation.

Upon leaving the office, they were hit with a media barrage, wanting comment from the Congressman, his staff, or his constituents. Ted Mottaz, District VIII Director from Elmwood, was featured as a constituent in the Washington Post, on CNN, and others.

“I’m very surprised that this happened. I’m sad that it happened, especially the way that it did. I honestly didn’t think it would cause him to resign, but it’s still sending a bad message to constituents,” said Mottaz.

In this case of excellent timing, it was an honor for Illinois farmers to represent the 18th district during a time of turmoil.



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IL FARMERS NEED TPA

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has the ability to negotiate similar agreements, for the benefit of American producers, in a nimble, agile fashion.

While approximately 260 preferential trade agreements worldwide exist today, only 20 involve the United States. Despite the superior efficiency of U.S. farmers, their competitive edge has been and, without TPA, will continue to be eroded by less-efficient competitors with preferential agreements.

Trade Promotion Authority provides a positive advantage in that it facilitates the negotiation of the most beneficial deals possible from our trading partners. From lowering tariffs, to addressing non-scientific sanitary and non-sanitary

trade barriers, TPA defines negotiating parameters that other countries know they will have to meet in order for the agreement to be supported by Congress. Additionally, TPA allows our partners to put their best deals on the table with confidence that it will not be undone during an amendment process.

Finally, trade agreements yield positive results for American agriculture. With the seeds for trade planted by the U.S.-Colombia free trade agreement approved by Congress in 2011, Colombia went from the 17th largest market for U.S. corn farmers to the 4th largest market in just one year. In 2014, the country bought 166 million bushels of U.S. corn worth about \$900 million - an astounding five-fold in-

crease from the 21 million bushels worth \$180 million the country bought in 2011. The positive impact of this agreement continues to benefit farmers as, in the 2015 marketing year, U.S. corn farmers are projected to capture 95 percent of this 142 million bushel market.

With agricultural exports supporting more than one million U.S. jobs, both on and off the farm, while playing a key role in supporting the U.S. trade balance, the passage of TPA will increase the prosperity of Americans whether they live on or off the farm.

By passing TPA, the President gains the necessary means for negotiating the trade agreements that facilitate access to important export markets and thus helps ensure American farmers remain competitive in meeting the world's need for food, fuel and fiber.

GMO LABELING-NATIONAL BILL IS THE ANSWER

State Senator Dave Koehler of Peoria, who represents Illinois' 46th District, has reintroduced a Genetically Modified Organism labeling bill to the state legislature.

According to Senator Koehler and those who support the bill, the issue is a "right to know" concern, with consumers deserving the right to understand what is in their food.

The problem is that state by state GMO labeling laws make purchasing food harder to understand, not easier. And they make interstate commerce extremely difficult when every state has a different set of laws.

While farmers agree that consumers have a right to know what is in their food, we also agree that labeling should minimize confusion, not increase it. And we subscribe to the FDA's current thinking that

labels should be science-based. GMO labeling concerns are not.

IL Corn and the National Corn Growers Association is currently supporting the Safe & Accurate Food Labeling bill in Congress that would create a federal GMO-free certification. The program would be similar to the certified organic program run by the USDA and would give consumers certainty about the foods available for purchase that are GMO-free.

The bill would also make a current voluntary review process for new products mandatory and it would define the term "natural" to minimize labeling confusion.

This particular bill makes the USDA and the FDA partners in the GMO labeling and food safety solution. The FDA jurisdiction would preempt state by state labeling

laws.

Illinois farmers believe this particular take on labeling will benefit all Americans, as well as farmers and the food industry.

The Illinois congressional delegation indicated hearing from a number of constituents with pro-GMO labeling messages. If you feel so inclined, call your Congressman today to explain why a national GMO labeling law is the right solution.

The Right To... Mislead?

Anti-GMO activists have a motto—the right to know. However, that “right” doesn’t extend to their own legislation, which is often riddled with more loopholes, exemptions and carve-outs than you can count, including all restaurant food! In fact, under each failed state ballot initiative, about two-thirds of foods and beverages would have been exempted from labeling requirements, even when they contain or are made with GMOs. These laws are bound to mislead the average consumer. For example:

LABEL REQUIRED	NO LABEL REQUIRED
Food From A Grocery Store	Food From A Restaurant
Vegetable Soup	Vegetable Beef Soup
Vegetable/Cheese Lasagna	Meat Lasagna
Vegetarian Chili	Meat Chili
Imitation Bacon	Real Bacon
Soy Milk	Cow's Milk
Veggie Burgers Made With Soy	Cheeseburgers
Frozen Pizza	Delivery Pizza
Dog Food Made With Meat	Meat For Human Consumption

Consumers deserve a national, consistent labeling standard that ensures accurate labeling for all food. The Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act would establish that framework.

Safe & Accurate Food Labeling Act

SAFE AFFORDABLE FOOD

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CONSUMER FUEL CHOICE FOR IL

The Consumer Fuel Choice for IL bill, sponsored by IL Senator Andy Manar and IL Representative Jerry Costello, II, would transfer the IL state sales tax incentive for E10 to E15. This

will move ethanol in the state, create additional demand for your corn, and help improve corn prices.

In addition, the bill reduces the state sales tax incentive for E15 from a 20 percent incentive to a 10 percent incentive.

The savings create \$125 million in new state revenue, \$6 million in ag program funding restoration (including \$2 million back into high school agricultural educa-



tion programs), and no new taxes or mandates.

This bill is not a mandate. It only provides an incentive to sell E15 in IL. Anyone who does not believe E15 is the right fit for their vehicle or

small engine would still have other fuels available for purchase.

Does this sound like a good idea to you? We believe it is the best option for Illinois and are actively pursuing passage in 2015.

Please consider calling your state Senator or Representative today to advocate support for the Consumer Fuel Choice for IL bill!

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