

POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER

MAIZE MATTERS

APRIL 2023

**It's back! This is the first
edition of the newly
renovated PAC Newsletter.
This issue will cover
June 2022 -March 2023.**



IL Corn Plants Seeds on Hill

This March, IL Corn farmers advocated for membership by sharing the organization's top priorities with policy makers in Washington D.C.

On March 20- 23, farmer leaders talked with congressmen about the importance of the 2023 Farm Bill and the impact legislation has on farmers and consumers. Farmer leaders met in the offices of over 15 members of congress including Illinois's Senators and all members of the House Agricultural Committee.

IL Corn's Farm Bill priorities include: maintaining a robust crop insurance for Illinois farmers, increasing funds for Foreign Market Development (FMD) and Market Access Program (MAP), and supporting on-farm conservation practices. Leaders also shared the importance of low carbon, high octane fuel, trade, and lock and dam funding.

"IL Corn members belong to our association for representation in Washington D.C. and Springfield,"

(ABOVE) ICGA President Matt Rush (middle) looks up at the Capitol during a visit to D.C in March.

(left and right) Washington D.C.'s famous cherry blossoms, given as a gift from Japan in 1912, were in full bloom during the board's congressional meetings.

said IL Corn Grower Association President Matt Rush. "We delivered on that member benefit during our time at the Capitol in a big way."

During IL Corn's visit to Washington D.C., the Senate introduced the Next Generation Fuels Act to the 118th Congress.

The bipartisan bill was sponsored by Senators Charles Grassley (R-IA) and Amy Klobuchar (D-MN).

Illinois Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) cosponsored the bill along with Iowa Senator Joni Ernst (R-IA).

In the last congress, the Next Generation Fuels Act was introduced in the House by former Congresswoman Cheri Bustos.

However, the bill never made it to the house floor.



IL Corn Executive Director Rodney Weinzierl (far right) and IL Corn farmer leader Bill Leigh (middle left) are joined by representatives from the Michigan and Wisconsin Corn Growers

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IL Corn Growers Association Secretary Sarah Hastings said she was optimistic after meeting with numerous members from the Senate and House of Representatives. “I am always thankful for a chance to speak with our members of Congress about issues impacting my farm and those in Illinois,” said Hastings. “I think it makes such a difference when real farmers share our real priorities, and the way we impact everyone throughout the country.”

In addition to legislative meetings on the Hill, IL Corn also planted seeds at a Congressional Reception Wednesday night. The event was hosted by the Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin Corn Growers Associations. Twelve Illinois delegation members attended.

“All politics are local, so the saying goes,” said IL Corn Director of Public Policy Brad Stotler. “Opportunities to visit Congressional offices allow lawmakers and their staff to hear from our farmers how their important decisions impact agriculture. Whether it is farm bill, ethanol policy or investment in our inland waterway system, the relationships we build here will be important throughout the 2023 legislative session.”

IL Corn’s next fly-in will be during the busy month of July, before Congress breaks for its August recess.



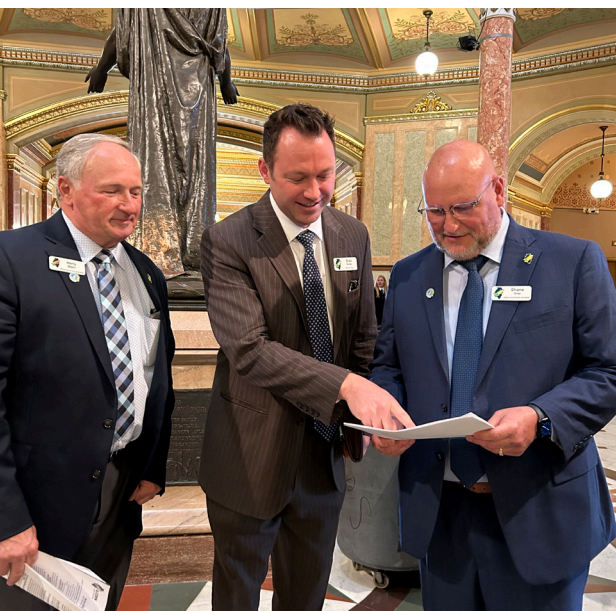
IL Corn Staff members (L-R) Ashley Deal, Lindsay Mitchell, and Dr. Laura Gentry stand outside the Capitol after a long day of meetings on the Hill.

STATE AG LEGISLATIVE DAY

In addition to meetings in Washington, D.C., IL Corn farmer leaders also advocated for membership at the state Capitol.

On March 29, IL Corn celebrated Agricultural Legislative Day with a visit to Springfield. Staff and seven board members connected with youth, industry leaders, and policy makers during a morning reception and press conference.

“Spending back-to-back weeks advocating for our farmers in Washington D.C. and Springfield created momentum for Illinois agriculture,” said Matt Rush, the president of IL Corn Growers Association. “It was encouraging to see many young, passionate adults at our state Capitol on Agricultural Legislative Day. It makes me excited for our industry’s next generation of leaders.”



Past ICGA President Marty Marr (L) looks over legislative notes with IL Corn Director of Public Policy Brad Stotler, and ICGA Director Shane Gray.

Governor J.B Pritzker and Secretary of Agriculture Jerry Costello spoke about agriculture’s impact on Illinois.

They were joined by members of the



House and Senate Agricultural Committees, and representatives from Illinois FFA, 4-H, the Illinois State Fair, Illinois Farm Bureau, and other groups.

Following the event, IL Corn farmers met with elected officials, encouraging them to support our members through legislation. Farmers specifically asked State legislators to support SB 1869, which extends and creates sales tax incentives for ethanol blended fuels.



ICGA President Matt Rush (L) stands with Senator Terri Bryant (R-58) and ICGA director Joe Murphy.

The bill, sponsored by Senator Patrick Joyce (D-40) hopes to create greater demand for higher ethanol blends in Illinois’s fuel marketplace.

Senate Bill 1869 is scheduled for a Subject Matter hearing in Senate Revenue Committee.

“Ag legislative day at the State Capitol is an awesome experience,” said IL Corn Public Policy Manager Russ Orrill. “It not only allows our farmers to speak on the current challenges facing Illinois’ agricultural community, but it also provides a valuable opportunity for lawmakers to witness firsthand the positive impacts that agriculture has on our state’s economy and way of life.”

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Over the next two months, Illinois's 103rd Assembly will have their final legislative push before the General Assembly adjourns May 19.

Get to Know: House Agriculture Committee Member, Eric Sorensen (D-17)

Born and raised in Rockford, Illinois, Sorensen currently resides in Moline where he serves the 17th congressional district. Before serving his first term in congress, Sorensen was a meteorologist in central and northwestern Illinois.

On the House Agricultural Committee, Sorensen serves on the Subcommittee for General Farm Commodities, Risk Management, and Credit as well as the Subcommittee on Conservation, Research, and Biotechnology.

He also serves on the Committee on Science, Space and Technology where he is the Ranking Member on the

Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics. A freshman member of Congress, Sorensen's 17th district was previously held by former Congresswomen Cheri Bustos.

Bustos is well known as a leader within the ethanol industry. She introduced the Next Generation Fuels Act to the previous Congress.

While in Washington D.C., IL Corn met with Sorensen and discussed the Farm Bill and the congressman's impact on the agricultural industry.

Sorensen also attended the congressional reception hosted by the Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin Corn Grower Associations.

IL PAC 101

A Political Action Committee (PAC) is an organization that raises money through like-minded individuals to influence elections or legislation.

IL Corn's PAC represents corn farmers in Illinois and influences

policy which directly impacts our members. IL Corn has both a state PAC, which benefits the Illinois General Assembly members, as well as a federal PAC, which is used to support our federal congressmen and women.

The IL Corn PAC is governed by a board of directors representing congressional districts throughout Illinois. It is their job to direct candidate funding, based off informed advisement, while keeping in mind ICGA's legislative priorities. These priorities are deemed most important by our members.

Our PAC finances come from direct member contributions as well as fundraising events, like our annual draw down raffle.

IL Corn is a bipartisan organization, supporting both Republican and Democrat candidates and elected officials according to the desires of our members.

Below is a list of current PAC Board members:

- Jim Robbins D1
- Stan Blunier D2
- (Vacant D11)
- Larry Hasheider D12
- George Obernagel, Vice-chairman, D12
- Mark Bunselmeyer, Treasurer, D13
- Wade Beasley D14
- Jim Reed D15
- Rob Elliott, Secretary, D15
- Bill Christ D16
- Donna Jeschke D16
- Steve Pigg, Chairman, D17
- Tom Mueller D17
- Ashley Deal, IL Corn, Assistant Treasurer

Thank you to our PAC Board members!

(congressional map on next page)



Representative Eric Sorensen stands with IL Corn leaders outside his office in Washington D.C. The congressman proudly held his folder, which explains 96 percent of farms in Illinois are family-owned and operated.

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CTA: Atrazine Comments to EPA

We asked, and Illinois corn farmers responded to the IL Corn Growers Association’s Call to Action (CTA) engaging with the Environmental Protection Agency’s regulations on atrazine.

Atrazine is a critical tool for farmers. The herbicide has allowed farms to increase conservation tillage, a key to carbon smart farming. Atrazine has been studied for more than 60 years and limits the output of labor, fuel, and machinery on American farming operations.

However, in September 2020, the EPA altered the atrazine level of concern from the science-based 15 parts per billion (ppb) to 3.4 parts per billion.

In June 2022, the Environmental Protection Agency released this

change in the Proposed Revisions to the Atrazine Interim Registration Review Decision and asked for public comment.

This drastic shift impacting operations throughout the United States, motivated many farmers and organizations to comment and advise the EPA to stand by the previous, research-backed atrazine standard.

IL Corn advocates submitted over 400 comments in favor of Atrazine from July to October 2022. These comments were submitted under two different docket numbers and included many personalized messages from farmers throughout Illinois.

After reviewing the comments, the EPA has promised to act on one of the major requests of ICGA and NCGA. The administration will hold a Science Advisory Panel in late August, where a panel will hear testimony and analyze scientific data before concluding on the future of atrazine use.

Thank you to every individual who responded to IL Corn’s CTA on this topic.

We appreciate your support and look forward to updating you with more information.

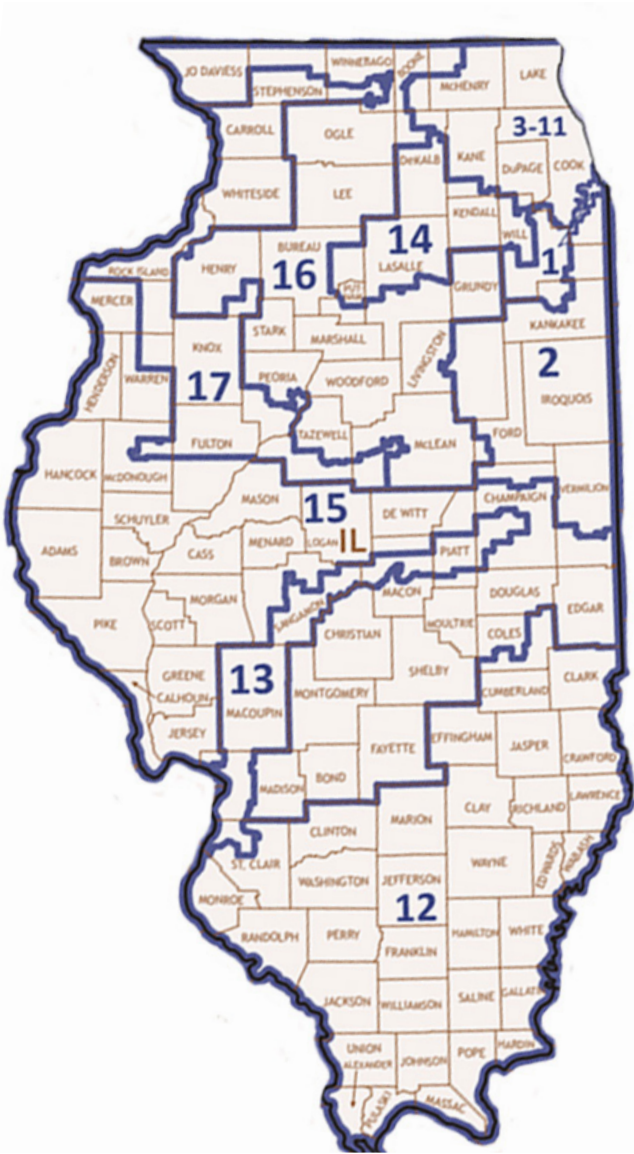
CONGRESSIONAL CALENDAR

U.S. House: In session

April 17-20
April 25-28
May 9-12
May 15-18
May 22-25
June 5-8
June 12-15
June 20-23

U.S. Senate: In session

April 17- 21
May 1-4
May 9-12
May 15-19
May 30-31
June 1-2
June 6- 9
June 12-16
June 20-23



(L) 18th US Congressional Map. IL Corn PAC Board districts are based off the US Congressional districts.

(R) 18th Congressional Calendar

Thank
you!



CONTACT US

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