



Political Papers

APRIL 2010

CONGRESSIONAL CALENDAR

April 5-April 11, 2010—
House Recess

May 31-June 5, 2010—
House and Senate Recess

July 4-10, 2010—House
and Senate Recess

August 9—September 12,
2010—House and Senate
Recess

GENERAL ASSEMBLY CALENDAR

May 7, 2010—General Assem-
bly Adjournment

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ICGA Board Climbs Capitol Hill

The Illinois Corn Growers Association Board of Directors spent four busy days in Washington, DC lobbying for your issues on March 20-24.

Following the board meeting on March 21, every subsequent day was focused on reaching friends or foes with our key message: that Illinois Corn

Farmers are growing food, feed, and fuel for our nation and the world in a sustainable way.

During the more than 80 meetings conducted in the four days,



Dan Cole, Secretary; Eric Kunzeman, Treasurer; Jim Reed, Vice-President; and Tim Lenz, President pose in front of the US Capitol after a long day of agency visits and Congressional calls.

ICGA leadership focused on several key issues.

One important issue the group focused on was international

indirect land use change and the concept that acres in Illinois can affect what is grown on acres around the world. Your leadership spoke to agencies and individuals regarding this concept, showing each that research shows this concept to be, at best, invalid and

undefined.

A second key issue was the need for funding allocations to improve

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Funding for Locks and Dams Possible

After years and countless hours of fighting for upgraded locks and dams on the Upper Mississippi and Illinois River system, this might just be the year for change.

The Inland Waterways User Board (IWUB), a group of industry professionals that govern how the Inland Waterway Trust Fund is spent, has this month proposed a plan that will both prioritize projects for the Army

Corp of Engineers and raise funds for the needed upgrades to match federal dollars.

Not only will this plan get lock and dam upgrades on the table sooner rather than later, it will offer needed construction jobs to the people of Illinois.



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“The National Corn Growers

Political Action Committee 101



Your association is now more active than ever thanks to your support and a ramped up Illinois Corn Grower Association Political Action Committee.

The ICGA PAC has been able to provide needed financial support to elected officials in key positions making decisions in your favor. The ICGA PAC has also be able to support candidates for federal office

that you support, making our effectiveness once those candidates are elected into office highly improved.

Thanks go to you, our membership, for making this association as successful as it is. And it can be more successful with your continued support.

Illinois corn farmers are facing a host of misinformation in Washington, DC. The Envi-

ronmental Protection Agency thinks that they know how you should grow your crops. Animal welfare activists threaten your largest market. Bureaucrats are standing behind their own agendas instead of sound science.

ICGA looks forward to continuing to support candidates that understand Illinois agriculture and listen to your needs.

Capitol Hill (cont.)

and upgrade the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Waterway transportation system. It appears that 2010 could finally be the year to see some movement in this area so Illinois Corn Growers Association Directors, along with our partners in this project the Waterways Council, Inc and the Carpenters Union, visited with key Congressional leaders hoping to garner their support.

ICGA is also already beginning research and preparations for the 2012 Farm Bill. During our Washington, DC visits, we spoke with USDA officials and others to begin informing key personnel what Illinois farmers need from future Farm Bills.

Perhaps the most exciting activity of the visit was that the Volumetric Ethanol Excise Tax Credit (VEETC) legislation was introduced just as our board lobbied members of Congress. This legislation would extend VEETC into the future instead of allowing it to



ICGA leadership visited with various USDA officials in the USDA offices on Monday, March 22 discussing issues like accuracy of crop reports, failures of crop insurance, and ideas for the 2012 Farm Bill.

sunset at the end of 2010, helping ethanol plants in Illinois remain operational through the nation's economic downturn. Due in part to our visits with the Illinois Congressional Delegation, nine of our 19 Congressmen have signed on to date (Costello (IL-12), Davis (IL-7), Foster (IL-14), Halvorson (IL-11), Hare (IL-17), Johnson (IL-15), Kirk (IL-10), and Schock (IL-18) including John Shimkus, IL-19 who is

an original sponsor of the bill.

Everything considered, the Washington, DC visit was a success.

"We never hear everything that we want to hear when we visit Washington, DC, but having access to people that make decisions that affect corn growers and at least having the opportunity to provide them with our data and our point of view always makes for a successful trip," said President Tim Lenz.

Key issues for ICGA in Washington, DC were international indirect land use change, extension of the Volumetric Ethanol Excise Tax Credit, funding for locks and dams, and preparation for the 2012 Farm Bill.

Locks and Dams (cont.)

Association voted to support the IWUB's "Capital Investment Strategy";" said IL Corn Growers Association

President Tim Lenz. "The reason we supported the plan, despite the cost, is that farmers will see almost immediate gains in efficiency to ship their product as well as increased export opportunities if our waterway transportation system can keep pace with other countries."

The fuel tax increase would amount to an additional 1/4 of a cent to export a bushel of grain.

If federal spending is approved in Congress to match the higher contribution from the Inland Waterways Trust Fund, rehabilitation of Lock 25 on the Mississippi would

start in 2011. That means Illinois farmers can finally realize those efficiency gains and Illinois' unemployed can finally get back to work.

At first glance, it seems that the stars might align this year, giving locks and dams the funding they need after authorization of the projects occurred in the Water Resources Development Act of 2007.

"Elected officials seem interested to talk with us about upgrading the river transportation system when we tell them that we are bringing money to the table too," said Lenz.

"Not many groups are asking for



projects and showing that the projects are so important to our economy that industry is willing to share the costs with the Federal Government so that's a bonus for us," he said.

Illinois State Issue Update

ICGA has been active in monitoring and advocating on the following bills:

Limiting Landowner Liability for Invited Recreational Guests - HB 5895 (Rep. Black)

In an effort to provide limited liability to landowners for inviting guests on your property for recreational purposes, Rep. Black introduced HB 5895. But as with previous bills, it has run into great opposition by the Illinois Trial Lawyers Association (ITLA). It is the belief of ITLA that if you invite someone on your property you should be totally liable for their presence on your property. ITLA has a very strong influence in the General Assembly.

Defining "Gasohol" - HB4652 (Rep. Bradley/Sen. Frerichs)

This bill ties the Illinois "gasohol" definition to the federal clean air act. If the USEPA acts this summer to allow higher blends of ethanol in a gallon of gas, Illinois will be ready to implement it.

Task Force on Farmer's Markets - HJR 57 (Rep. Black/Sen. Sullivan)

HJR 57 creates the Task Force on Farmers' Markets for the purpose of reviewing the implementation of Acts that define which products and practices are permitted and which products and practices are not permitted at farmers' markets and other outdoor food sale events.

ATV/UTV on Rural Roads - HB 4904 (Rep. Myers), HB 6094 (Rep. McAcasy/Sen. Wilhelmi), SB 2566 (Sen. Sullivan/Rep. Flider) & SB 3629 (Sen. Sullivan/Rep. Beiser)

These four bills would reinstate the agricultural exemption for use of ATVs/UTVs on rural roads. HB 6094 and SB 2566 are both in the second chamber and awaiting assignments to committees. HB 4904 was not moved out of the House Rules committee. A fourth bill, SB 3629, contains the ATV/UTV language along with other changes for golf carts in municipalities.

Updating the Illinois definition of "gasohol" is an ICGA priority. If the USEPA allows higher blends of ethanol this summer, Illinois will be ready to implement.

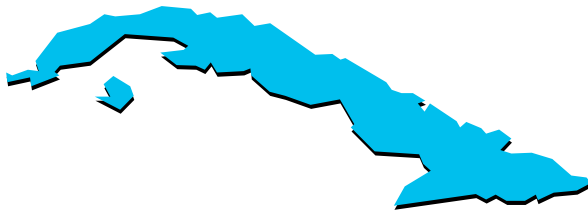
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Cuba an Important Market for IL Corn

Advocating for free trade and growing export markets are an important aspect of the work Illinois Corn Growers Association does for corn farmers. Cuba is a key market with potential for expanding opportunity for Illinois corn.



H.R. 4645 is a bill currently in the House Agriculture Committee that would allow increased trade and travel to Cuba. This bill is important to Illinois corn farmers because 100 percent of the corn exported to Cuba from the US comes from the Mississippi River Gulf and, because of its competitive

advantage with the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers, much of that corn comes from Illinois.

Outside of corn, USDA data indicates that the US captured all of the soybean imports to Cuba over the last five years and would presumably capture any increased soybean consumption. In addition, trend growth in pork indicates that pork exports to Cuba could increase this trade to 6,600 metric tons of pork by 2015.

Illinois Corn is actively working on members of Congress to both get this bill out of House Ag Committee and onto the House floor and ensure that this bill has a good chance of passage once it gets there.

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