
Summary of Legislative Activity of Interest to Iowa Corn Growers

Climate Change Bill Update (Federal)

Senators John Kerry (D-MA), Lindsey Graham (R-SC), and Joe Lieberman (Independent/Democrat CT) submitted a description of the latest version of the Climate Bill on Wednesday, April 28th to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for an economic analysis that could last approximately eight weeks. This report could be completed early enough to allow debate this summer. In addition, Senator George Voinovich (R-OH), sent a letter to Senate Majority Leader Reid requesting that a full economic analysis be conducted not only by the EPA from an environmental standpoint, but also a second opinion from the Energy Department's Energy Information Administration (EIA).

Atrazine (Federal)

On Tuesday, April 28th, farm groups, including corn growers' representatives, traveled to Washington, D.C. to voice support for atrazine before the third in a series of hearings being held by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to re-review atrazine. Atrazine has already been extensively studied by the EPA who earlier ruled that triazine herbicides, including atrazine, are safe to the general public. EPA has estimated that farming without atrazine would cost corn growers \$28 an acre in reduced yields and higher costs for less effective substitutes. The voice of the farm community was clear: atrazine is safe for the environment, it's effective, and essential for crop production.

President Obama Reaffirms Support for Corn-Based Biofuels (Federal)

On Wednesday, April 28th, President Obama stood next to a front end loader filled with corn at an ethanol plant in Macon, Missouri, to stress his administration's goal to more than triple America's biofuels production in the next twelve years. Missouri Corn Growers Association's CEO Gary Marshall was pleased that the president visited a corn-based ethanol plant in MO. "This symbolic visit to a corn-based Midwest ethanol plant could really drive a lot of the issues we're working on at the national level. Whether it's re-doing the tax credits for ethanol, whether it's E15 which we think we need to go to because we're maxed out on the blend wall, or even moving corn-based ethanol forward as an advance biofuel. This just kind of kicks off that entire effort for us," Gary said in an interview with Agwired's Chuck Zimmerman.

Estate Tax (Federal)

An informal Memorial Day deadline for the federal estate tax appears to be slipping. Lawmakers allowed the estate tax to expire late last year when senators could not

agree on how to handle the issue. If there is no action by December 31, the rate will revert to 55 percent and only the first \$1 million in inherited wealth will be exempt.

Farm Bill Hearings (Federal)

Today, Friday April 30th, on the Iowa Fairgrounds, the first legislative congressional hearing on the 2012 Farm Bill took place. The hearing was designed to hear farmers' perspectives on the existing Farm Bill and also hear suggestions for changes for the upcoming 2012 Farm Bill. Several members of Congress were in attendance, including 6 from the U.S. House Agriculture Committee and Congressman Latham representing the U.S. House Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee. Representing the House Agriculture Committee were Chairman Peterson (D-MN), Ranking Minority Member Lucas (R-OK), Representative Boswell (D-IA), Representative King (R-IA), Representative Herseth Sandlin (D-SD), and Representative Costa (D-CA). Panelists discussed the importance of a continued safety net and strong conservation programs. A transcript of this week's testimony will be available on the U.S. House Committee on Agriculture's website as early as next week.

Governor Culver Signs SF 2389 "Infrastructure and Capital Budget" (State)

On Monday, April 26th, Governor Culver signed into law SF 2389 "Infrastructure and Capital Budget". Among other allocations this bill provided \$6.0 million to the Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship for the Soil Conservation Cost Share Program, and \$2.5 million for the department's Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP).

Iowa Corn On the Hill is distributed each week to members of the Iowa Corn Growers Association who have provided e-mail addresses. If you have questions about this newsletter, please contact Mindy Larsen Poldberg at 515-225-9242 or mpoldberg@iowacorn.org.