



We Spoke Up

As most of you know Illinois SB3565, a bill drafted and introduced by Senator Don Harmon, 39th District of Illinois never made it out of committee. The proposed legislation would allow communities in Cook County with a population greater than 50,000 residents to institute “home rule” concerning the regulation and use of pesticides.

For those who never paid attention to Saturday morning cartoons the steps it takes for a bill to become a law (in Illinois):

Article IV of the Illinois Constitution governs the process of making laws. It states,

“The General Assembly shall enact laws only by bills. Bills may originate in either house, but may be amended or rejected by the other.” In general, a bill becomes law after passing both houses of the General Assembly with a majority vote and receiving the Governor’s signature of approval. A bill may start out in either the House or the Senate. The State law-making process uses committees, much like the Federal government. The process is almost the same, no matter where the bill originates. Bills, except bills for appropriations and for the codification, revision or rearrangement of laws, are confined to one subject.

Each bill must be read by title on three different days in each chamber before it can be passed. The first reading introduces the bill. The second reading allows for amendments. When a bill is called for its third reading, it is voted on. A bill passed by both houses must be sent to the Governor within 30 days. The Governor then has 60 calendar days to sign it, or to return it with his veto. If the Governor does nothing, the bill will automatically become a law after the 60-day period. If the Governor vetoes a bill that has been sent to him, the bill can still become law if the General Assembly overrides the veto by passing the bill again by a 3/5 vote in both houses.

EACH BILL MUST BE READ BY TITLE ON THREE DIFFERENT DAYS IN EACH CHAMBER BEFORE IT CAN BE PASSED

- Bill Drafted
- Bill Introduced
- Referred to Committee
- Committee Hearing
- 1st Reading – Introduces the bill
- 2nd Reading – Allows for amendments
- 3rd Reading – Voted upon
- If passes – moves to the other chamber to through same process
- If passes both – goes to Governor for signature or veto

Because of quick and intelligent action, SB3565 the bill was read on 2/14/14 and never read again – meaning it never made it out of committee. The Midwest and other green industry groups reached out to local leaders to inform them why this bill would not make a sound law for the people

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of Illinois. Our voices were heard and we impacted legislation or lack thereof. This was a highly reactive approach on our part. By getting involved, making phone calls, sending emails and visiting with local legislators on this issue, I was reminded how important it is for all of us to not wait until the next bill is introduced to take action. Reaching out and getting to know local lawmakers is easy to do, and can be done when time permits. It offers us the opportunity to help guide sound legislation and that will impact our lives and our occupations. Later this month I'll be heading out to Washington DC as part of the GCSAA Government Relations Committee to meet with federal legislators to build relationships and convey our message.

The GCSAA is ratcheting up their Government Relations program. They've developed a comprehensive website that will be used to educate members on issues impacting the golf course management profession and serve as a portal to engage all with advocacy efforts.

One such effort is the newly formed GCSAA Grassroots Ambassador program. The goal is to match a member of GCSAA with each Member of Congress, and to build strong relationships between them. The program will establish a network of committed volunteers to serve as the "go-to" people for lawmakers and their staff on golf course management issues. There is a job description that you will need to complete during the 2-year appointment and specific training that you will receive to give you the tools and resources to become a more effective advocate for our profession.

More can be found at the Government Relations section of the GCSAA website or please contact me and I can help you get involved. @

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