

SUFC Policy Workgroup Call Notes
6/7/13 (2pm)

Participating: Rebecca Turner, Maki Tazawa, Faith Campbell, Jen Hinrichs, Keith Cline, Gerry Gray, Jake Donnay, Carrie Gallagher, Rebecca Arvin, Danielle Dills, Jake Donnay, John Barnwell and Danielle/SAF, Nick Tobenkin

1. Appropriations Update

- Interior appropriations bill will be picked up by the house after the July 4 recess.
- It remains to be seen how sequestration will affect any appropriations but there is a good deal of talk about a continuing resolution.
- There are likely to be many versions of the appropriations bill but small likelihood of any being enacted.

ACTION ITEM: Holding pattern for immediate future.

2. Farm Bill Update:

- Urban Forestry is not listed separately in this bill which means the language in the 2008 version stands. To REMOVE or DEFUND the urban program, it would have to be clearly stated.
- The Urban Committee Forestry program was authorized by congress under a permanent authorization. The Senate version of the Farm Bill in 2012 stated that there would be a cap on spending for the urban program and it would be looked at every five years whether to continue it or not. The 2013 version that passed the Senate on June 10 removed the cap and sunset provisions. The program will stay without any further advocacy efforts at this time.
- The House will take up its version of the farm bill the week of June 17. The largest division between the two versions is in the nutrition (SNAP) provisions. There is concern that to make up the difference, conservation programs will be reduced.
- The differences between the House and Senate farm bills must be resolved by August to get a version to the President in September (when the current farm bill ends).
- There is no indication right now as to any problematic amendments, but we should still keep an eye out to any amendments that will repeal or remove programs.

[The Senate version had over 250 amendments filed, but only 16-20 went up for vote. Similar numbers are expected for the House, but there are not any expected amendments regarding to forestry.]

- The important period for our programs will be when they are trying to reconcile the bills between the House and Senate. It is a difficult time to advocate because we are unaware of what is going on within those meetings.

ACTION ITEM: Becky/Jen will send out side-by-side analysis again to group.

3. Matsui TREES Act

- We were trying to determine how to move this on the Senate side. Danielle contacted Matsui's office.

- We got word that Sheehan's office is putting out an energy efficiency bill this month, S.761. The House version is HR-1616. Perhaps the TREES Act would be a smart amendment to that because of how it advocates for energy efficiency through tree planting. We would have to find a champion to push the amendment forward.

- Sheehan and Boxer were identified as potential champions. It might be worthwhile to see if Ray might be willing to reach out to Boxer's office to see if she would work with Sheehan's office on S.761.

- The likelihood of any floor attention on the Senate floor is expected to be squeezed out by other pressing issues.

- Nick from APA has been tracking the bill. It has been passed in the Energy and Natural Resources committee.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Ø Nicky will forward his thoughts and background intel on Shaheen, S.761 and HR.1616/ to Becky, Jake and Cara

- Ø Nick, John and Jake/Cara will put together a letter to Boxer's office.

- Ø Nick and Cara will send out the spring follow-up thank you note to Matsui.

- Ø Jake and Cara will draft a set of talking points and a fact sheet to accompany SUFC members going to the Hill to use with potential sponsors/champions of the bill.

- Ø We have the APPA contact info. from Danielle and WG members will reach out to Association when appropriate.

4. Co-chair Partnership Between Gerry and Becky

- A formal announcement was made that Gerry and Becky will begin their partnership as co-chairs of the SUFC Steering Committee. This will make the leadership role more manageable, tap their respective strengths, and alleviate some of the workload Jen has regarding the policy working groups.

5. SUFC Annual Advocacy/Fly In Analysis

- SUFC will revisit our advocacy day and fly in to evaluate the most effective way to host the event and achieve greatest impact. The current model is at the outer limits of our WG capacity right now.

- This review will allow us to be innovative and be strategic re: resources, improving inclusiveness and follow-up.

- Danielle Dills has volunteered to lead this ad hoc committee and is waiting on approval from NACD leadership to move forward.

ACTION ITEM:

Ø Danielle will circle back to Jen and co-chairs with final decision and next steps.

Ø Becky/Danielle will put together a subcommittee for this by late June/early July.