

Letters from Readers

Help to save agriculture; back gaming expansion

The Henry County Soil and Water Conservation District would like all of you to support the gaming expansion, Senate Bill 744.

We, as a district, understand this is a very controversial bill, but we need your support.

There are many reasons to voice your support for SB744. Besides helping conservation programming this bill provides funding for other agricultural programs in Illinois. These would include:

1. University of Illinois Extension, including 4-H
2. County Fairs (Were you happy paying both a gate fee

and a grandstand fee this year?)

3. Our State Historical Sites

4. Forestry program
Many in downstate Illinois are counting on you to let the governor know how important these programs are to all of us.

Listed below are some of the reasons SB744 will help Conservation Funding.

► Illinois SWCDs fulfill a core function of state government which is protecting and conserving the state's soil, water, air, plant and wildlife resources.

► Provide annual dedicated funding for Soil and Water Conservation Districts which will be the first non-tax revenue source that has been identified that will allow the SWCDs to function as intended.

► Districts need a reli-

able, stable funding source that will allow for planning into the future to deliver program dollars to achieve the greatest return for the dollars spent. Money that will go to each SWCD from the gaming bill will allow the districts to administer programs worth more than \$135 million every year state wide. That is a return of at least \$16.50 for every \$1 invested.

Please call 217-782-0244 and let them know that you support SB744. No name, address or phone number is required to give this support.

Jerry Snodgrass, chairman,
Albert Hultingm vice chairman,
Doug Peterson,
secretary/treasurer,
Jim King, Kevin Schwartzkopf
directors,
Henry County
Soil and Water Protection
District Board

Letters to Viewpoints from our readers welcome

Letters must be 250 words or less and include the author's phone number and city.

Guest opinions may be up to 600 words, but require advance approval. Commentaries are most appropriate when the author has expertise regarding the topic.

Send to:

Viewpoints

The Dispatch/Argus

1720 5th Ave.

Moline IL 61265

Fax (309) 797-0317

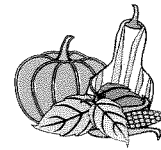
Email letters@gcorline.com.

We reserve the right to reject or edit any letters. Submissions significantly exceeding our word limits will be cut.

Writers are asked to limit their submissions to one a month.



Cass County Soil & Water Conservation District



652 S. Main Street, Virginia, IL 62691 (217) 452-3535 Ext. 3

SUPPORT OF SB744 NEEDED

Fall 2011

The gaming bill (SB744) as many of you have probably heard of by now is being used as a last resort effort to fund Soil & Water Conservation District's (SWCD's). SWCD's fulfill a core function of state government, which is protecting and conserving the state's soil, water, air, plant and wildlife resources. These services are in jeopardy!

Many of you are probably not necessarily in favor of a gaming bill but we have been told this could be our last chance for funding.

Some of the other groups or programs that could benefit from SB744 are: county fairs, CREP forestry assistance, parks and conservation fund for operations and grants, historic sites, cooperative extension, and CFAR.

SWCD's have seen a steady decline in funding levels since 2002 and have actively sought alternative revenue sources since that time. SWCD's need a stable funding source that will allow for the future delivery of program dollars to achieve the greatest return for the dollars spent. The approximate \$100,000 that will

go to each of the 98 SWCD's from the gaming bill will allow the districts to administer programs worth more than \$165 million every year. This represents a return of at least \$16.50 for every dollar that is expected to be generated for district use from the gaming bill.

If you would like to help support the district's with this bill, since general revenue funds can no longer support all programs in the state, all you need to do is simply call the governor's office at 217-782-0244 or 312-814-2121 and tell whomever answers that you wish to register your support for SB744. Without this funding, districts could close in the near future affecting landowners with all their conservation needs. Consolidation will probably not work either as legislation was once proposing because general revenue funds will not exist.

**JUST LIKE VOTING,
EVERYONE SHOULD GET A
VOICE IN WHAT THEY WANT!**



Inside this issue:

<i>Thank you contributors!</i>	2
<i>Partners for Conservation Signup</i>	2
<i>Logan Hollow Fish Farm</i>	2
<i>Ag Conservation Practices work</i>	3
<i>Calendar of Events</i>	4

Special Points of Interest:

- *Support the SWCD's by making a phone call*
- *Thank you Friends of Conservation*
- *Spot Light on Logan Hollow Fish Farm*
- *NRCS News Release on Ag Conservation*
- *Fish Sale Order Form Enclosed*

