

CCI ACTION

CCI NEWSLETTER SPRING 2015



"I almost feel I can get more done with CCI Action, than I could as an elected legislator," said Vern Tigges of Adel. CCI Action citizen lobbyists [pictured] are at the Statehouse regularly working relentlessly on behalf of the people.

THEY HAVE CORPORATE LOBBYISTS. WE HAVE YOU!

CCI ACTION MEMBERS ARE A MUCH NEEDED "PEOPLE'S ADVOCATE" AT THE IOWA STATEHOUSE

Since the 2015 legislative session began in January, CCI Action staff and a growing team of CCI Action citizen lobbyists have been at the Statehouse weekly, pushing ahead on critically important issues! They lobby for good bills and fight to stop the bad ones, and let us know when our calls or emails can have the biggest impact.

Some of the hot topics at the Statehouse this session were a manure application law that would decrease the amount of runoff entering Iowa's waterways, payroll debit card regulations, a racial profiling bill, and payday lending regulation.

CCI Action held press conferences, attended subcommittee meetings to share personal testimonies, and met with legislators to make sure that the people's voice was heard, not just the voices of corporate lobbyists.

Not all the action was taking place at the Capitol—over 550 members have taken action from home by sending more than 1,300 emails to legislators to weigh in on key bills. CCI Action would not have the presence at the Capitol it has without members like you. Thank you!

PEOPLE AND PLANET BEFORE PROFITS INJECTING OUR VISION INTO THE DEBATE

When Bruce Rastetter - Iowa's political kingmaker and ag and ethanol baron - announced in February that he was hosting an Ag forum, CCI moved quickly to counter his vision. Rastetter brought 11 GOP presidential hopefuls to Iowa to promote his vision of corporate agriculture. CCI, along with several ally groups such as FarmAid, The Oakland Institute, and Food and Water Watch, brought people together to inject our "people and planet first" message into the national media coverage of the event.

Over 130 joined us for a powerful demonstration in front of Rastetter's event [photo right] and a teach-in where folks from across the country shared their vision of food and ag justice and what it will take to make that vision a reality. Our message was reported in coverage from several national news outlets.



"Your system doesn't work for eaters, farmers, or the land; it only works for big business," Frank James of Dakota Rural Action told the crowd at the speakout. To see more pictures and press round up visit iowacci.org

BECOME A CCI SUSTAINER

A big thank you to the 240 CCI Sustainers who provide the financial support to help us put people first month after month after month. We couldn't do it without you!

In honor of our 40th anniversary, we've set a goal to grow this important group of supporters by 40!

HERE ARE THREE REASONS TO BECOME A CCI SUSTAINER TODAY:

- 1 It's safe, secure, and easier on your budget by spreading your gift out over the year.
- 2 You don't have to worry about remembering to renew your annual membership.
- 3 CCI Sustainers provide the on-going, reliable funding that makes our work possible.

WANT TO BE A CCI SUSTAINER?

Fill out the envelope enclosed in the newsletter and send it in with your first month's pledge!

HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT THE LEGACY YOU WANT TO LEAVE?

Contact Donor Relations Specialist Sharon Zanders-Ackiss at sharon@iowacci.org to discuss planned giving options today!



Members pack a room at the Statehouse to meet with Rep. Bruce Hunter, the bill's sponsor, to discuss measures to eliminate racial profiling in Iowa.

WORKING TO END RACIAL PROFILING IN IOWA MEMBERS COLLECT STORIES TO PUSH FOR NEEDED CHANGE

Iowa is one of 20 states in the US with no law against racial profiling. In order to combat this pervasive problem, CCI Action members met with legislators and allies to help introduce a bill in the Iowa legislature to make racial profiling illegal and establish a citizen review board. This bill did not make it past the first bill funnel date, but having it introduced was an important first step. "We need to start talking about racism publicly," member Lori Young of Des Moines told the crowd at our rally and lobby day in January.

To connect with more justice fighters on this issue, CCI hosted a three week call-in radio show series on KJMC, Des Moines' urban radio station. Our show, which covered different legislative and racial justice topics with guests each week, reached hundreds of people and helped us begin collecting stories of racial profiling and mistreatment by the police in Des Moines. These will help us push for needed policy change.

PUSHING FOR A LIVING WAGE IN IOWA "WE CAN'T SURVIVE ON \$7.25!"

The state legislature failed to raise Iowa's minimum wage this year. That's why members are taking the fight for \$15/hour to the streets and to fast food companies like McDonald's that can pay a living wage on their own.

Due to rising public pressure, cities, states (including four red states on a ballot vote) and several large retailers (even Walmart) across the country are taking action to raise their minimum wage. It's time for Iowa to do the same.



After a press conference at the Statehouse, members went to a Des Moines McDonald's to promote a minimum wage increase. Member Kaija Carter of Des Moines [pictured above] spoke at the speak out portion that was warmly received by McDonald's customers, employees, and passersby.

"IOWA IS BEHIND THE REST OF THE COUNTRY —WE NEED A LIVING WAGE NOW." - Cora Chen of Iowa City

THEY DUMP IT. YOU DRINK IT. WE WON'T STOP UNTIL THEY CLEAN IT UP!

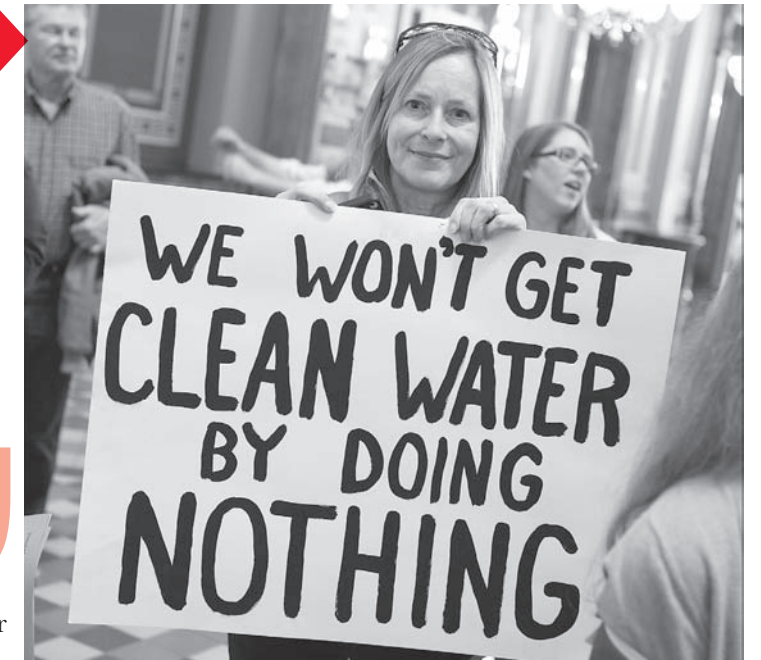
CCI'S CLEAN WATER FIGHT CONTINUES

Because of your hard work and support, we've made great strides toward our overarching goal of cracking down on factory farm polluters and cleaning up our water.

Des Moines Water Works' Director Bill Stowe said it beautifully:

CCI AND ITS RELIABLE ENERGY AND VIGILANCE ARE SO IMPORTANT TO IMPROVED PUBLIC POLICY ON ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES... YOUR HARD WORK IS FOUNDATIONAL TO ANY GAINS WE WIN.

It's fitting that the biggest recent news in the Clean Water Fight is that the Des Moines Water Works, which serves 500,000 customers, voted to sue three Northwest Iowa counties (Buena Vista, Calhoun & Sac) for high nitrate pollution affecting Des Moines' water supply. While the industry is digging in to fight back, a majority of Iowans support this action. A Des Moines Register poll found that 63% of Iowans support this bold move, while only 23% disagreed (14% were unsure).



"Voluntary enforcement of clean water laws is frequently the answer to clean up Iowa's polluted waterways, but the fact of the matter is it just doesn't work. Iowans have made it clear that clean water is a priority"—Cherie Mortice, CCI Board Member Presidnet from Des Moines.

LEARN MORE FROM IOWA CCI FARMING & ENVIRONMENT ORGANIZER CARRIE FISHER



Q: How does Des Moines Water Works' (DMWW) clean water lawsuit connect to CCI's Clean Water Fight to regulate factory farms?

A: The two efforts recognize that voluntary compliance doesn't work and that we need bold action to clean up our water. Both are asking that corporate ag operate under the umbrella of the Clean Water Act with permits and regulation.

The goal of the DMWW lawsuit is to name tile-lined drainage districts as point-source polluters which would require Clean Water Act (CWA) operating permits. We believe that factory farms are also point-source polluters requiring CWA operating permits. These permits would mean that polluters must adhere to a tougher set of standards or get shut down.

Both efforts recognize that corporate ag has wielded its power at the regulatory and legislative levels to pass costs on to Iowans for far too long—it's time to end their free ride!

Q: There are a lot of misleading messages being circulated by corporate ag supporters about this lawsuit. Can you set the record straight?

A: Here are the most frequent mistruths we've been hearing:

1. "The DMWW is looking to make money off of the rural communities." While there are potentially some financial damages that DMWW would collect, the point of this lawsuit is to go after the source of nitrate pollution—rather than throw money at the clean up.
2. "The DMWW is suing individual farmers." Not true. This suit is directed at the county Boards of Supervisors, the local governing authorities of 10 drainage districts that are discharging record amounts of pollutants into the Raccoon River, not individual farmers or supervisors.
3. "The DMWW puts nitrates back into the water." This is true; federal law requires them to put the nitrates filtered out of drinking water back into the river. BUT, the overlying issue is that our public utility shouldn't have to remove such dangerously high levels of nitrates in the first place!



We talk. We act. We get it done.



IOWA CITIZENS FOR COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

ACTION FUND

PRSRT STD
US POSTAGE

PAID

PERMIT NO. 1633
DES MOINES, IA

2001 Forest Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50311
ph. 515/282-0484 fx. 515/283-0031
www.iowacci.org www.cciaction.org

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST FOR 40 YEARS!

2015 marks our 40th birthday as a people-power organization that tackles tough issues and get things done. CCI was created in 1975 with the belief that ordinary people can be a powerful force for justice. CCI's founders combined humility and vision with a determination to put people first on a broad range of issues. That's who we were then. It's who we are now.

We want to use our 40th year to help launch the next 40 in a big way - to build a bigger, stronger organization with more impact - and to celebrate!

- This summer, we'll be out across the state for a variety of speaker events and social meet-ups. Let us know if you'd like to help with something in your area (we'll bring the birthday cake).
- **Save the Dates - October 2-3!** We're planning a 40th celebration event this fall with big-name progressive doers and thinkers, focused on a People and Planet First agenda as well as the Iowa caucuses. *This will be in lieu of our annual July convention.*



40th Flashback Photo: Brenda LaBlanc (still a member), pictured here with her husband Bob in 1977, was a key leader in the fight against redlining. Of the fight, Brenda said, "When poor people went to D.C., they didn't ask for a handout. They asked for the right to go to a bank, get a loan like everyone else, and pay it back."

STAY CONNECTED SIGN UP FOR E-MAIL

If you aren't on our email list you are missing out on weekly updates and key times when your call or email can have the biggest impact. Sign up today by emailing your address to iowacci@iowacci.org!

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!

We give you a peek behind the scenes and opportunities to help out and share our message. It's a fun and powerful way to stay in touch!

www.facebook.com/cciaction | www.facebook.com/iowacci

FOLLOW US ON TWITTER

@iowacci @CCIaction

JOIN OUR TWITTER TEAM

140 characters don't seem game-changing, but when we have a team of voices engaging this platform we can inform, and inspire, a much bigger audience on our issues.

Over two dozen members are currently a part of CCI's Twitter Team and we're looking for more! We make it easy by sending you a quick weekly reminder email with some suggested tweets on current or hot issues.

To join the team or learn more contact Online Organizer Emily Harmon at emily@iowacci.org.