Special Issue: State and Federal Policy Advocacy
23 June 2025

Editors Note: Healthy Champaign County is a non-partisan organization, as such HCC does not take positions on the partisan political issues of the day that impact our work. Nonetheless, we are aware that folks participating in our programs and activities do have individual and organizational interests in play as state and federal legislative processes play out. We do encourage folks, as citizens, to express themselves and share stories about the needs and impact of investments in active living and food security programs in Champaign County with our elected officials..

To that end, we have gathered a couple of resources that we hope will enable you to give voice to your point of view on policy and investment questions of the day.

Each of us has the ability to influence national, state, and local officials more than any lobbyist or outside group. Why? Because you have the home field advantage--you vote for them! For that reason, the best use of your time is to contact your officials, those who represent you. RW

The **League of Women Voters of Champaign County** has an excellent resource guide with essential information and guides to assist novice and more experienced citizens to reach out to elected officials. They also have a directory of our elected state and federal officials-names, local and DC office phone numbers, and member websites. You will also find sample scripts for letters and phone calls.

No one is telling you what side to take on any particular issue–the idea is to be sure the elected officials know what you would like to see happen. Compliment their work or express reservations about their work on issues of concern to you and your family.

Learn more about the League of Women Voters of Champaign County here:

The **Organic Farming Research Foundation** (OFRF) has created something new for people like you who care about organic agriculture—whether you're working in the field or the lab or simply want to see a better food system take root.

Communicating with Legislators is a free, self-paced email course from OFRF designed to help you turn your story into impact. In just four short lessons, you'll learn how to connect with policymakers, share what matters, and support policies that strengthen organic farming and research.

Here's how it works: In just four short lessons, you will:

→ Understand how Congress makes decisions that affect agriculture.
→ Craft a compelling story that highlights your experience.
→ Engage directly with lawmakers through calls, emails, and letters.
→ Take simple, meaningful action to support organic agriculture.

You don't need a background in advocacy. You just need a story—and the willingness to share it. Learn more here.

Policy Meets Community: Advancing Health Equity Locally. The unpredictable landscape at the federal level demonstrates the importance of engaging in policy work to dismantle inequities and improve health. ChangeLab Solitions argues that by focusing on relationship building between policymakers and community leaders we can advance local, community-driven policy solutions that support better health and living opportunities. Read more here.

The Farm Bill and the Big Beautiful Bill: Congress is one step closer to enacting the biggest ever cut to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) spending. It's a big program that currently serves a lot of people. SNAP benefits help nearly 42 million people buy groceries each month. The average monthly benefit is $187 per person, or just over $6 per day.

What's new: The Senate Agriculture Committee has released its piece of the massive legislative package that is working its way through Congress (you may have heard President Donald Trump call it his "big beautiful bill").

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Future HCC Meetings and Events

Membership Gathering: NO JULY MEETING. Next meeting is August 6th, 12:00 – 1:00 pm. Martens Center, 1515 N. Market St, Champaign. *(Membership gatherings are typically the first Wednesday of the month.)*

Board Meeting: June 25th, 8:30 – 9:30 am. Community Foundation of East Central Illinois, 307 W. University Ave., Champaign. *(Board meetings are typically the last Wednesday of the month.)*

Newsletter Publication Schedule: We aspire to publish this newsletter on the 3rd Wednesday of every month. Submissions for inclusion must be received by the 2nd Wednesday. Send submissions to HealthyChampaignCounty2016@gmail.com

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This information has been provided by **Healthy Champaign County** (HCC), a coalition of organizations and community members working to ensure opportunities for active living and an accessible, sustainable, and healthy food environment for our neighbors in Champaign County.

Learn more about Healthy Champaign County

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