



Washington Update 2/11/2011

CIRB news



CIRB Annual meeting huge success!

Many thanks to all who attended a tremendously successful CIRB meeting – with nearly 90 participants, evaluation sheets indicate this may have been CIRB’s strongest program to date. Speakers provided outstanding presentations and those are available on the [CIRB website](#).

CIRB changes name to Crop Insurance and Reinsurance Bureau

Reflecting the changing dynamic of the CIRB membership, the Board of Directors voted unanimously to change the name of the organization to better reflect the increasing participation of the reinsurance community. The acronym of CIRB will remain the same, but the organization is replacing the word “Research” with “Reinsurance”. The press release announcing the change can be found [here](#).

Aldeman passes gavel to new CIRB Chair

After holding the position the last 3 years, CIRB Chairman Jim Aldeman with American Farm Bureau Insurance Services stepped down as CIRB Chairman. The organization saw many changes during Aldeman’s tenure, including the move of the CIRB offices from Kansas City to Washington, DC, as well as a major rewrite of the SRA. In recognizing Aldeman’s work, Sam Scheef, the incoming Chair, thanked Jim for guiding CIRB through these major changes and noted that Jim always ensured there was full discussion when dealing with the many challenges facing the industry. Many thanks to Jim for his commitment to the organization and the industry.

ARMtech’s Sam Scheef assumes the reins, new EC and Board elected

During the CIRB Business meeting, members elected Sam Scheef, President of ARMtech as the new Chairman. The following individuals will serve on the CIRB Board – asterisks indicate members of the Executive Committee.

Sam Scheef* - Chairman
ARMtech Insurance Services, Inc.

Greg Mills* – Vice Chairman
ADM Crop Risk Services

Sheri Bane* – Treasurer
Country Financial

Jim Aldeman* – Immediate Past Chairman
American Farm Bureau Insurance Services

Ron Rutledge*
Farmers Mutual Hail Insurance Company of Iowa

Jim Brost*
BMS Intermediaries

John Reinman*
Guy Carpenter & Company

Michael Zielin*
Partner Re

Joe Kaiser
Ag Max Crop Insurance

Bill Fischer
James River Insurance Company

Bill Totsch
Totsch Enterprises, Inc.

Awards presented to Rutledge, Bleiberg during annual meeting

During the CIRB Business Meeting, outgoing Chairman Jim Aldeman recognized two individuals for their service to the industry. Steve Rutledge, long time member of the CIRB Executive Committee and past Chairman, was recognized for his service to the industry and CIRB. Rutledge leaves the CIRB EC and will be replaced by Ron Rutledge. This year's Chairman's award was given to Paul Bleiberg, who has served as Federal Affairs Director to CIRB for the last two years. Paul recently returned to public service and will be missed by CIRB members.

CIRB and industry lose a good friend

CIRB is sad to report the loss of Oscar Deardorff with Farmers Mutual Hail. A commentary on Oscar's contribution to CIRB and the industry is provided below by Paul Horel, Past President of CIRB. For more information on arrangements for Oscar's funeral please contact the CIRB office. For a link to Oscar's obituary, click [here](#).

The crop insurance industry has lost a dear friend in the passing of Oscar Deardorff. Oscar was truly one of the "good guys" - a kind soul, a gentleman, but most of all a devoted family man. He was a positive advocate for crop insurance and spent a great deal of time working with CIRB on its efforts to maintain a positive image for crop insurance. He was adept in relating to members of Congress and their staffs, worked hard as CIRB governmental affairs chairman and was instrumental in helping us fashion a style of representation that its members would be proud of. When I first became president of CIRB in 1993, Oscar had just taken over for his dad, O.L. on the CIRB Executive Committee representing Wheat Growers Mutual. When Wheat Growers was purchased by Farmers Mutual Hail, Oscar became the point man for FMH's governmental relations efforts overseeing their PAC, organizing PAC fundraisers for the company and participating on many CIRB Washington trips. He was always a smiling and cheerful presence - one of those rare individuals who seemed to have no enemies. He was easy to like and he will be missed greatly by all of us who knew him.

Many of you know that the past year had been extremely challenging for Oscar. He lost both of his parents and at the same time was in a life and death struggle of his own. However, through all of the personal loss he remained upbeat and cheerful. I last saw him right after Christmas and was struck by his good humor and optimistic attitude. He serves as an example for all of us in how to handle adversity and triumph over it. Oscar leaves behind his loving wife Angie, two adult children and a young stepson who will miss their wonderful Dad. They remain in our thoughts and prayers.

Congressional News



Senate Agriculture Committee announces first hearing....The Senate Ag Committee will conduct its first hearing under new Chair Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) and new ranking member Pat Roberts (R-KS). The hearing – Agriculture: Growing America’s Economy – will occur Thursday, February 17th at 2:30 pm.

House Agriculture Committee pending hearing schedule....The Committee has announced several hearings including a hearing on the state of the farm economy. For a complete list of pending hearings, click [here](#).

House Agriculture Committee proposes Oversight plan for the 112th CongressOn February 10th the House Agriculture Committee reviewed their plan of work for the 112th Congress. The draft plan includes a section on Federal Crop Insurance and Risk Management which includes a comprehensive review of the program. The entire work plan may be viewed by clicking [here](#).

Industry news



Farmers Mutual Hail has announced release of their Biotech Yield Assurance Program for High-Yielding genetics... For more information, click [here](#).

LA Times criticizes crop insurance; NCIS offers strong response....In their Sunday paper, the LA Times offered a critique of the Federal Crop Insurance program by pointing out certain instances of fraud and abuse. Keith Collins, on behalf of NCIS, offered a strong rebuttal. The LA Times article can be found [here](#) and the response letters are attached.

Questions/Comments? Contact the CIRB office:

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