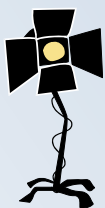




Chapter Corner

For more information about SBCA Chapters and how to become more involved, contact Anna L. Stamm (608/310-6719 or astamm@qualtim.com) or Danielle Bothun (608/310-6735 or dbothun@qualtim.com). Contributions to Chapter Corner, including pictures, are encouraged. Submissions may be edited for grammar, length and clarity.



Chapter Spotlight

Making a Difference – The Iowa Chapter's Legislative Breakfast

by Sean D. Shields & Anna L. Stamm

In February, component manufacturers from across the state of Iowa converged in Des Moines to participate in the Iowa Truss Manufacturer Association's (ITMA) Annual Legislative Breakfast at the Iowa Capitol building. "Visiting our lawmakers and talking to them about our businesses and key issues is one of the most important things we do as a chapter," said Rick Parrino of Plum Building Systems in West Des Moines.

This year, chapter members joined with several lumber dealers and home builders from the Iowa Lumber and Home Builder Associations to present a significant and united front on several key issues. "Unfortunately, the current leadership of the Iowa Legislature is determined to eliminate our state's Right to Work status," explained Ray Noonan, Jr. of Cascade Mfg Co in Cascade. Just ten days prior to the ITMA breakfast, major legislation that would weaken existing Right to Work statutes was narrowly defeated by two votes in the Senate. Due to the close vote, it is likely a similar bill will come up for a vote again soon. Noonan added, "That's why we need to be here to let lawmakers know how damaging this legislation would be to manufacturers like us."

Iowa Chapter members also spoke with their lawmakers about their concerns with other current issues under debate: prevailing wage legislation that could significantly increase the cost of housing



Pictured left to right: Tom Lambert, Ray Noonan, Rick Parrino, Mike Farr, Dave Mitchell, Todd Gilligan, Al Esch, Matt Miller

construction, an employee verification measure that would place an unfair burden on employers, and several bills aimed at increasing property taxes or adding impact fees that would make owning a home more difficult for the average Iowan. "Education is the key," said Al Esch of Lumber Specialties in Dyersville. "If these lawmakers don't get our perspective, they may vote for something without knowing there is a significant downside to that idea."

Most importantly, ITMA members are quick to point out that an event such as the Legislative Breakfast is incredibly easy and affordable for any chapter to arrange. Begun a few years ago, it has become a great opportunity for chapter members to meet with their legislators in a forum that provides good communication on real issues.

If your chapter would like to start a tradition like the Iowa Legislative Breakfast, just let us know. Developing legislative relationships can produce lasting, positive results for your chapter. SBCA staff can help you get started, and ITMA would be happy to help you make a difference in your state, too. **SBC**

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