



April 26, 2019

Inside this issue

## This Week at the Statehouse

Legislative Update - Week 16

***There are only 2 weeks left in the legislative session!***

### **Issue: Budget**

This week the House received the budget for consideration of whether to concur or non-concur with the differences contained within the Senate's version of the budget which was passed last week. One significant difference being that the Senate version contains \$25 million in the Department of Agriculture's budget for Farm Aid relief from the two hurricanes this past Fall. The differences between the two versions of the budget will be settled in a conference committee and then sent to the Governor for his approval. The Governor has the option to approve the budget and/or veto parts in which he does not agree. If there are vetoes, the budget will be returned to the General Assembly for their consideration of accepting or rejecting the vetoes. GR staff will continue to monitor the budget closely.

### **Issue: Cell-based "meat"**

The Senate Agriculture Committee met this week and gave a favorable report on [H. 4245](#) - a bill that would make it illegal to represent or label any cell-cultured protein as "meat" in South Carolina. John Fogle, a cattleman in Richland County, testified that this truth-in-labeling effort would protect our cattle and poultry producers. The full Senate will consider this bill next.

*342/Labeling 1. The correct nomenclature for imitation products used as substitutes for traditional foods and fibers is an integral part of consumer protection.*

### **Issue: Santee Cooper**

The Senate began debating [S. 678](#) - a joint resolution which would direct the Department of Administration to conduct a competitive bidding process for the sale of Santee Cooper. The Senate deliberated for hours each legislative day. Current debate is focused on the need to direct the Department of Administration to review offers for the sale of Santee Cooper, for firms to manage Santee Cooper, and for Santee Cooper to reform, but there is yet to be a clear path that will be adopted by the Senate. The Senate is expected to continue debating this issue next week.

***(S-GP) 1. Utilities - We support prudent decisions that have the least negative impact on utility rates, the state's economic stability and our citizens' quality of life.***

### **Issue: CDL Truck Drivers**

The House Education and Public Works Motor Vehicles subcommittee began hearing testimony on [H. 4336](#) -- a bill that creates a rebuttable presumption that a driver is qualified to be hired and entrusted to drive a commercial motor vehicle if the person has a commercial driver license issued by a state in accordance with the minimum federal standards for the issuance of commercial motor vehicle driver licenses, if the person's license is not suspended, revoked, or cancelled and if the person is not disqualified from driving a commercial motor vehicle. This bill seeks to help ease abuse of negligence (hiring and entrustment) claims against employers in truck-involved lawsuits. So far the subcommittee has only heard testimony from a plaintiff's lawyer opposed to the bill, but they are expected to hold another meeting where they will receive additional testimony.

[Top](#)

### **New Bills of Interest**

Sine Die Resolutions was Introduced

[S. 785](#) -- Senators Peeler, Leatherman, Setzler and Massey: A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION TO PROVIDE THAT, PURSUANT TO SECTION 9, ARTICLE III OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THIS STATE, 1895, WHEN THE RESPECTIVE HOUSES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADJOURN ON THURSDAY, MAY 9, 2019, NOT LATER THAN 5:00 P.M., EACH HOUSE SHALL STAND ADJOURNED TO MEET IN STATEWIDE SESSION AT 12:00 NOON ON MONDAY, MAY 20, 2019, AND CONTINUE IN STATEWIDE SESSION, IF NECESSARY, UNTIL NOT LATER THAN 5:00 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 22, 2019, FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN SPECIFIED MATTERS; TO PROVIDE THAT WHEN THE RESPECTIVE HOUSES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY RECEDE ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 22, 2019, NOT LATER THAN 5:00 P.M., EACH HOUSE SHALL STAND IN RECESS SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE FOR THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AT TIMES THEY CONSIDER APPROPRIATE FOR THEIR RESPECTIVE BODIES TO MEET FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN SPECIFIED MATTERS; AND TO PROVIDE THAT WHEN THE RESPECTIVE HOUSES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADJOURN NOT LATER THAN TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2020, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY SHALL STAND ADJOURNED SINE DIE.

[Top](#)

## Congressional Report

### National News

Members of Congress are scheduled to return to Washington, DC, on April 29<sup>th</sup>. Discussion of two issues of main concern in the agriculture community should continue, federal disaster relief and labor.

As pressure continues to increase, the House and the Senate need to reach a compromise on the scope of a federal disaster relief package to move it forward. On labor, the agriculture industry is becoming more unified on what needs to be done, but discussion continues on how this can be addressed in light of increased focus on immigration.