



April 4, 2019

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This Week at the Statehouse

Legislative Update - Week 13

Issue: Disaster Aid

The Senate took up the budget in full committee this week. As part of their deliberations, the Senators adopted a proviso that would provide \$25 million in direct farm aid relief following the two historic hurricanes that occurred this fall. Farmers will have to sign an affidavit stating they will return any state money if federal assistance is received. The program would be similar to that which was created following the 2015 floods.

(S-A) 20. Disaster Fund - SCFB recommends the establishment of a fund by the SC General Assembly, to be administered by the SCDA that could assist SC

farmers when they are severely damaged by regional natural disasters (drought, flood, hurricane, etc.).

Issue: Cell-based "meat"

The House of Representatives unanimously passed [H. 4245](#) - a bill that would make it illegal to represent or label any cell-cultured protein as "meat" in South Carolina. On the floor the bill was amended to include fish and crustaceans to definition of "meat" and to exclude plant-based meat alternatives as being subject to this bill. We would like to thank Rep. Randy Ligon for his leadership in getting this important piece of legislation passed.

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: Conservation Easement Protection

The House Judiciary Special Laws subcommittee held another hearing on [H. 3090](#) - a bill that seeks to protect property with conservation easements on them from being violated by a utility company seeking to use eminent domain on the property for a project. Jeff Wilson and JEB Wilson, both of Cotton Hills Farm, testified in favor of this bill and how it would help future landowners protect their property. Ultimately the subcommittee gave a non-favorable report on the bill. Failed by 2-3 votes. Representative Jeff Jefferson and Representative Max Hyde voted for the bill and we thank them for their support. Representatives Jeff Bradley, Neal Collins, and Pat Henegan did not vote for the bill.

(S-A) 9. Development Rights Program - We support the continued protection of the existence of farmland.

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New Bills of Interest

Introductions of Interest

[H. 4381](#) ([Word](#) version) -- Rep. Cobb-Hunter: A BILL TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING ARTICLE 8 TO CHAPTER 23, TITLE 58 SO AS TO ENACT THE "COMMERCIAL DRIVER LICENSE HOLDER EMPLOYMENT PROTECTION ACT"; TO PROVIDE THAT THE SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF A FEDERALLY SANCTIONED COMMERCIAL DRIVER LICENSE EXAMINATION AND

THE ISSUANCE OF A VALID COMMERCIAL DRIVER LICENSE BY THIS STATE OR ANOTHER STATE SHALL CONSTITUTE PRIMA FACIE EVIDENCE OF BASIC QUALIFICATIONS TO DRIVE COMMERCIAL MOTOR VEHICLES; AND TO PROVIDE THAT A VIOLATION OF A REGULATION ENACTED UNDER THE MOTOR VEHICLE TRAFFIC AND SAFETY STATUTES AND REGULATIONS OF THIS STATE, OR OF ANOTHER STATE, OR THE FEDERAL MOTOR CARRIER SAFETY REGULATIONS, OR A CONVICTION OF A MOVING VIOLATION, SHALL NOT CONSTITUTE PER SE WILFUL, WANTON, OR RECKLESS CONDUCT, OR GROSS NEGLIGENCE.

[H. 4409 \(Word version\)](#) -- Rep. Kirby: A HOUSE RESOLUTION TO MEMORIALIZE SOUTH CAROLINA FARMERS FOR THEIR IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE STATE AND TO ENCOURAGE STATE AND FEDERAL LEADERS TO EXTEND EMERGENCY FUNDING TO FINANCIALLY ASSIST FARMERS WHO HAVE SUFFERED THE SEVERE ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF NATURAL DISASTERS.

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Congressional Report

National News

On April 1st, the US Senate held two votes concerning a financial disaster relief for catastrophic weather events. In January, the House passed a disaster funding bill (H.R. 268). There have been several proposed Senate Amendments to the bill. The first Senate vote was to invoke cloture (a kind of test vote) on the most recent amendment. That vote failed. They next voted on the House bill and that vote failed as well. A new Senate amendment was introduced on April 2nd. Negotiations continue.

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