



March 28, 2019

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Disaster Relief (Priority Issue)

National News

Tuesday evening the U. S. Senate took a procedural step to begin debating the Senate Substitute Bill H.R. 268. The Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief 2019. The bill provides a total of \$5.2 billion for the U.S. Department of Agriculture which includes \$3 billion for the Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program (WHIP). If passed by the Senate, the bill will go back to the House for consideration. The House has already indicated concern with the level of funding for Puerto Rico. If the House does not approve the Senate bill, the next step would likely be a conference committee to resolve any concerns.

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This Week at the Statehouse

Legislative Update - Week 12

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The Women of Farm Bureau joined us at the State House on Tuesday where they lobbied legislators about the importance of passing S. 107 and other issues impacting agriculture.



Priority Issue: Dams Safety Program: [S. 107](#) - the dam safety program bill - was recommitted to the Senate Finance Committee while maintaining its position on the Senate Calendar. Senators on Senate Finance wanted to review the impact of the refundable tax credit further. This refundable tax credit is an important public/private cost share to protect the citizens of South Carolina by helping owners maintain their dams. It is important to contact your Senator to tell them to support S. 107 and to allow it to receive debate on the floor because:

- S. 107 protects the citizens of South Carolina by focusing resources on the dams that pose the most risk by prioritizing the highest hazard dams first.
- S. 107 addresses the high financial burden dam owners face by the reclassification of their dam's hazard level with a one-time refundable tax credit. This will help dam owners make the required repairs and modifications to their dams to protect people and downstream development.

(SN - GP) Dams and Reservoir. South Carolina Farm Bureau supports reasonable standards concerning the construction, inspection, maintenance, and repair of all high risk pond dams.

Issue: Cell-based "Meat"

The full House Agriculture Committee met 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. The bill will be placed next on the House Calendar for consideration.

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. Testimony from other interested parties raising various concerns resulted in a vote to adjourn debate on the bill. SC Farm Bureau will continue to engage with various stakeholders and House members in the hopes of giving this bill another hearing.

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

Issue: Deer Tag System

With unanimous support in the Senate [H. 3750](#) passed this week. With a big game license, hunters will now receive two antlerless deer tags that can be used at any time with the option of purchasing four more additional antlerless deer tags. If a hunter purchases the four additional antlerless deer tags, then SCDNR will provide two additional antlerless deer tags to be used in game zones 3 & 4 free of charge to the purchaser which will be handled administratively by SCDNR. This bill seeks to simplify the deer tag system while still providing ample opportunities to harvest does in South Carolina. This bill will become law once signed by the Governor and should be effective in time for the 2019 hunting season.

(S-A) 1. Deer and Wildlife Issues - When South Carolina farmers' viability is threatened due to wildlife damage, they should be allowed to deal with the wildlife like any pest that threatens a crop. Understanding that the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is charged by the State of South Carolina to manage certain species of wildlife, SC Farm Bureau will work with DNR and other appropriate agencies to make sure that the farmer's livelihood is protected and our game animals are managed properly. We support a reasonable limit on antlered bucks and a deer tagging program for all deer that will enhance the management of the deer herd in South Carolina. The farmers should continue to use depredation tags to control deer herds as well as work with DNR in educating hunters to harvest the proper number of does. We also support funding for DNR to help educate landowners and farmers in dealing with wildlife issues on their property. If the DNR cannot control the wildlife

damage and the farmer's livelihood is put in jeopardy by wildlife managed and owned by the state, then the state should create an indemnity bond to compensate farmers for the burden of feeding the state's wildlife. Further, maximum effort should be made to deal with damage from non-game species as well.

The Department of Natural Resources should evaluate and localize our state's deer population zone by zone and work to reduce the total population in our state where the herd is at controllable levels and it is again viable to grow crops profitably.

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New Bills of Interest

Introductions of Interest

[H. 4327](#) -- Reps. R. Williams, Jefferson, Ott, Magnuson, Chumley and Burns: A BILL TO AMEND SECTION 6-9-65, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO THE INAPPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN BUILDING CODES ON FARM STRUCTURES, SO AS TO REVISE THE DEFINITION OF "FARM STRUCTURE" FOR PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION.

[H. 4334](#) ([Word](#) version) -- Reps. Pope, Clemmons, Stringer, Daning, Bailey, Bennett, Taylor, Kirby, Brown, Chellis, Hayes, Jefferson, Jordan and Norrell: A BILL TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING CHAPTER 5 TO TITLE 12 SO AS TO ENACT THE "SOUTH CAROLINA INCOME TAX ACT FOR INDIVIDUALS, TRUSTS, AND ESTATES", TO PROVIDE, BEGINNING WITH TAXABLE YEAR 2021, A SINGLE OR "FLAT" RATE INCOME TAX RATE OF 4.85 PERCENT, PHASING DOWN OVER FIVE YEARS TO A RATE OF 4.5 PERCENT, TO CHANGE THE STATE'S INDIVIDUAL INCOME TAX BASE FROM FEDERAL TAXABLE INCOME TO FEDERAL ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME, TO PROVIDE FOR MODIFICATIONS TO FEDERAL ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME TO ARRIVE AT SOUTH CAROLINA TAXABLE INCOME, TO PROVIDE THAT THESE MODIFICATIONS INCLUDE A SOUTH CAROLINA STANDARD DEDUCTION, SOUTH CAROLINA PERSONAL EXEMPTION, SOUTH CAROLINA DEPENDENT EXEMPTION, AND OTHER ADJUSTMENTS TO FEDERAL ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME, BOTH INCREASES AND DECREASES, TO ALLOW A CREDIT AGAINST A TAXPAYER'S INCOME TAX LIABILITY UNDER THIS NEW CHAPTER TO OFFSET DOUBLE TAXATION WHEN THE TAXPAYER'S INCOME IS SUBJECT TO INCOME TAX IN THIS STATE AND ANOTHER STATE OR JURISDICTION, AND TO ALLOW OTHER TRANSITIONAL CREDITS FOR CREDITS ACCRUED AND ALLOWED UNDER FORMER LAW THAT ARE IN CARRYFORWARD STATUS AFTER 2020.

