



January 31, 2020

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This Week at the Statehouse

Week Three Legislative Update

H. 4209 - SC Farm Aid Fund: The House Agriculture Committee gave a favorable report to H. 4209 - the SC Farm Aid Fund bill. This bill would create in statute a structure for delivering farm aid in event of a catastrophic weather event devastating agriculture. President Ott testified on behalf of the bill explaining why it's time for SC to support its #1 industry by creating a standing state structure for disaster relief because we are weary of going through a political process every time we have these natural disasters. John Irwin, an upstate farmer, explained the devastation the drought and high temperatures this past spring and summer had on his grazing land. Keith Allen, from the Pee Dee, talked about the losses he faced from the hurricane this past year and how long the federal process has taken and that some farmers still haven't seen federal relief 18 months after the hurricane. Bryant Sansbury, of ArborOne, testified to the financial strain farmers are under after almost yearly disasters since 2015 and how important some certainty would be for helping farmers get the financing they need to put a crop in. Overall, the bill received immense support by members of the House Ag Committee and only positive testimony in favor of the bill. The next step is for the House to consider the bill. Please contact your legislator asking them to support H. 4209!

Budget Process: The Senate Finance Committee began having hearings for the budget. SC Farm Bureau delivered a letter from Charles Wingard, Water Committee chair, asking them that while they consider allocating money across multiple state agencies for water management, that they consider the idea of one state agency being in charge of water resources management.

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Congressional Report

National News

President Trump signed the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) implementing legislation on January 29, 2020. Mexico has already approved the USMCA. The Canadian Parliament has returned to session and is expected to ratify USMCA by April 2020. The USMCA will go into force once all three parties have approved the agreement, met required obligations, and completed necessary notifications.

Glyphosate:

EPA has concluded its regulatory review of glyphosate, issuing an interim decision, concluding that there are no risks of concern to human health when glyphosate is used according to the label. EPA reaffirmed that glyphosate is not a carcinogen. To reduce glyphosate resistance, EPA is requiring additional mitigation measures to help farmers better target pesticide applications to the intended pest.