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## **This Week at the Statehouse**

### **Legislative Update - Week 9**

**House Budget:** The House passed its budget this Wednesday, Included in it were the following items:

- Forestry Commission
  - o \$1 million Firefighting Equipment
- SC Department of Agriculture:
  - o \$1.1 million for hemp programming
  - o \$630,000 for hemp testing lab equipment

- o \$850,00 for Consumer Protection Inspectors
- Clemson PSA
- o \$1,127,250 for Statewide Comprehensive Extension Program Support
- o \$843,800 for Critical Fruit and Vegetable Research
- o \$2 million for REC Grad student housing
- o \$2 million for the Pee Dee REC greenhouses
- o \$990,000 for Sandhill REC building repairs
- SC Department of Natural Resources
- o \$1.5 million for Pee Dee River Basin State Water Planning
- Creation of the Natural Disaster Resiliency Reserve Fund that includes financial assistance for verifiable losses of agricultural commodities due to a natural disaster. This will be funded in part from the \$25 million allocated to SC Dept. of Agriculture last year for Farm Aid Relief for a total allocation of \$50 million.

**H. 4431 Business License Tax Reform:** The Senate Finance Sales and Income Tax Subcommittee met Thursday and considered H. 4431 - the SC Business License Tax Reform bill. This bill would standardize business license applications forms, renewal dates, appeals procedures, and class schedules. It also creates a central online payment portal to make it easier to comply with municipalities who use a business license tax. Specific to addressing the needs of agriculture, it clarifies that delivery of wholesale goods falls under the wholesale exemption of business license taxes. The subcommittee gave the bill a favorable report and it will go to the full committee next.

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## New Bills of Interest

### Introductions of Interest

[S. 1156](#) TO AMEND CHAPTER 4, TITLE 47 OF THE 1976 CODE, RELATING TO THE STATE LIVESTOCK-POULTRY HEALTH COMMISSION, BY ADDING SECTION [47-4-65](#), TO PROVIDE THAT A LIVE MEMBER OF THE FAMILY SUIDAE (PIG) TRANSPORTED ON A PUBLIC ROAD OR WATERWAY IN THIS STATE MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN OFFICIAL FORM OF IDENTIFICATION THAT IS APPROVED BY

THE STATE VETERINARIAN FOR THIS PURPOSE, AND TO PROVIDE THAT IT IS UNLAWFUL FOR A PERSON TO MISUSE OR ALTER A PERMIT, TAG, OR OFFICIAL FORM OF IDENTIFICATION; TO AMEND SECTION [50-16-25](#) OF THE 1976 CODE, RELATING TO THE UNLAWFUL RELEASE OF PIGS AND PERMIT EXCEPTIONS, TO PROVIDE THAT IT IS UNLAWFUL TO POSSESS, BUY, SELL, OFFER FOR SALE, TRANSFER, OR TRANSPORT A PIG TAKEN FROM THE WILD UNLESS CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS ARE MET, AND TO PROVIDE THAT IT IS UNLAWFUL TO RELEASE A PIG INTO THE WILD; AND TO REPEAL SECTION [50-9-655](#) OF THE 1976 CODE, RELATING TO A PIG TRANSPORT AND RELEASE PERMIT AND A PIG ENCLOSURE PERMIT.

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## **Congressional Report**

### **National News**

The House will be in session today and is expected to vote on a massive emergency relief package for those hard hit by the coronavirus pandemic. Federal relief efforts so far are focused mainly on food programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and the National School Lunch Program. There continue to be questions about any possible federal response for farm losses due to the virus. The Senate has cancelled their planned recess next week in order to address the relief package.