



Legislative Update - Week 13

South Carolina State Legislative Weekly Update - April 9, 2021

The General Assembly returned to the Capitol this week for their thirteenth week of the legislative session to continue their work for the state. Five weeks remaining in this annual session.

Cross-Over Week

Both the House and Senate worked feverishly this past week as Cross-over week loomed large. The General Assembly identified key legislation across the spectrum of topics to be sent for consideration to the adjacent body.

"Crossover" deadline requires bills to move from one legislative chamber to the other to have a realistic chance of passage during this session. After the crossover deadline, it is more difficult for a bill to be passed. For example, for a House bill to be considered by the Senate because it requires two-thirds vote even to be considered.

Warehouse Guaranty Fund

The Warehouse Guaranty Fund, [Senate Bill 698](#), passed the House unanimously and will now be sent to Governor McMaster for his signature. The bill authorizes

the use of certain funds in the Warehouse Receipts Guaranty Fund. These funds are derived from interest and investment revenue that will be used to pay cotton producer claims for losses until the balance is depleted to three million dollars or all cotton producer loss claims are paid in full.

Illegal Transportation of Feral Hogs

The **Feral Hog Transportation Bill, House Bill 3539**, made its way to the Senate floor for debate this week. SC Farm Bureau Government Relations team is deeply engaged with the committee, and other members of the Senate, working to push this crucial legislation.

Feral hogs are responsible for \$115 million in damage statewide each year and have been a growing problem for farmers. The Feral Hog Transport Bill gives law enforcement the tools needed to identify and prosecute individuals illegally transporting feral hogs. While it is currently illegal in South Carolina to transport feral hogs, it is very difficult to prove hogs are wild. This legislation would require individuals to obtain proper identification of the animals to prove their origin. An amendment was adopted that created additional documents that can be used for identification of hogs during transportation. More information on this priority issue can be found [here](#).

Asian Longhorned Beetle Regulation

Asian Longhorned Beetle Regulation passed the House this week. The regulations ***define the quarantine area and process for containing and eradicating the Asian Longhorned Beetle***. Outreach and education efforts to inform the public about quarantines have already ensued and will continue. Additionally, any person, business, or entity regularly engaged in the possible movement of regulated articles, such as nurseries, landscapers, and arborists, will be contacted by the ALB program and entered into a compliance agreement which will indicate their understanding of the new regulation and provide them with direct contact to program officials.

Spotlight on Agriculture and Forestry

Spotlight on Agriculture and Forestry event was a resounding success this week. Agriculture is one of the top industries in our state, and is an important area of focus for the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce. This annual event is

a partnership between the SC Chamber, the SC Farm Bureau, and the Forestry Association of South Carolina. Representatives of SC Agribusiness - from vegetable producers to canners to foresters - came together in this premier event for their community. SC Farm Bureau President Harry Ott, SC Commissioner of Agriculture Hugh Weathers, new Chamber CEO, Bob Morgan, and others provided updates and comments.

FEMA and South Carolina to Open Community Vaccination Center at Columbia Place Mall April 14

The White House Coronavirus Task Force **announced** a federally-supported Community Vaccination Center will open April 14 at Columbia Place Mall in Richland County. The site, coordinated by the South Carolina Emergency Management Division, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control and Richland County Emergency Services, will be supported by FEMA with vaccine supplies along with logistics and planning staff.

Beginning April 14, this site is expected to deliver up to 7,000 doses of vaccine per week for eight weeks in addition to the regular vaccine allocations to providers in the state. These additional vaccine doses, supplied by FEMA, are possible due to an increase in production and availability.

Application Period Opens for ORS' Rural Broadband Grant Program

The South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff (ORS) **opened the vendor application component of the rural broadband grant program**, South Carolina's plan to increase broadband internet availability.

The **South Carolina Broadband Map** shows the availability of broadband service to every residential and business site in the state. Broadband data is provided by the majority of broadband providers in South Carolina. Based on broadband data provided, users can input their address to show the availability of broadband at their location. This includes download speeds, the connection type, and the providers offering service to their address. The map does not reveal the provider, if any, that a consumer may currently have service with at the particular address.

National News

Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) REOPENS: USDA has reopened the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2 (CFAP 2). Eligible cattle and row crop producers may receive additional payments and USDA will begin the processing of payments for certain applications filed as part of CFAP Additional Assistance. Sign up will be open for at least another 60 days.

Please go to your local FSA office or visit <https://www.farmers.gov/pandemic-assistance/cfap> for more information.