



February 4, 2021

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This Week at the Statehouse

Week Four Legislative Update

SC State Legislative Weekly Update - February 5, 2021

****** Watch for upcoming Action Alerts ******

**Farm Bureau members' communications increase our effectiveness
when we speak with one voice.**

Together we can make a difference.

General Assembly Weekly Highlights

The General Assembly returned to the Capitol this week for their fourth week of the legislative session to continue their work for the state.

- South Carolina **COVID-19 Liability Safe Harbor** bill ([Senate Bill 147](#)) that provides liability protections for healthcare providers and businesses that follow public health guidance in response to the Coronavirus public health emergency passed out of Senate Judiciary Subcommittee with amendments. The bill will now head to full committee for debate.
- A Joint Resolution to make appropriations to the state's response to the Covid-19 response, including vaccinations for our state, was passed favorably with amendments by the Senate Finance Subcommittee. This resolution has already passed the House. The bill will move to the full committee for debate and if passed favorably, will be placed on the Senate calendar for debate on the Senate floor.
- South Carolina Farm Bureau President Harry Ott requested funding from House Ways and Means to assist with the invasive feral hog problem in South Carolina. Since the early 2000s, feral hogs have expanded into all 46 counties of our state. Annually, the economic impact of wild pigs in SC is extensive, causing an estimated \$115 million in damage.
- The Senate confirmed Dr. Edward Simmer as the new Director of South Carolina DHEC.

Upcoming Legislative Week

- House Ways and Means subcommittee meetings will continue with their eye on full committee budget deliberations scheduled to occur the week of February 15. South Carolina's Board of Economic Advisors expect to provide a statewide fiscal update on February 15 that we will be eyeing intensely.
- Legislators are scheduled to return to the Capitol on Tuesday, February 9th.

SC Farm Bureau Government Relations will continue to monitor, develop strategy and provide timely updated information on action items when available.

New Bills of Interest

New Bills Introduced this Week

Clemson University State Crop Pest Commission has submitted new regulations related to the [Asian Longhorned Beetle Quarantine \(ALB\)](#). An Asian Longhorned Beetle quarantine is necessary in South Carolina to aid eradication efforts, prevent additional pest spread and save the many more yet to be affected trees in the state. These new regulations will define the quarantine area and process for containing and eradicating the Asian Longhorned Beetle. There is currently an ALB Emergency Quarantine regulated area in and adjacent to Ravenel, Meggett and Johns Island in Charleston county which can be found [here](#).

Congressional Report

National News

This week, farmers in SC-07 and SC-01 had the opportunity to speak with Rep. Rice and Rep. Mace about issues impacting agriculture in the state of South Carolina. Be on the look for additional opportunities to engage with the SC Delegation!

SC Farm Bureau Government Relations

Our Commitment to Our Grassroots Members

Our Government Relations team serves as the link between our members and government officials at the local, state and national level. We work with local officials, the state Legislature, the Governor's office, departments, agencies, congressional delegation and staff to promote Farm Bureau policy as set by our grassroots **members**.

With one united voice, GR staff and our members will continue to advocate for agriculture.

Gary Spires, Director

Chalmers Mikell, Assistant Director

Cassidy Murphy, National Affairs Coordinator

Rick Caldwell, Policy Specialist and State Legislative Coordinator

Beverly Sease, Executive Assistant