

# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

February 19, 2021

## South Carolina State Legislative Weekly Update - February 19, 2021



### General Assembly Weekly Highlights

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

South Carolina's **COVID-19 Liability Safe Harbor** bill (Senate Bill 147 which can be found [here](#)) that provides liability protections for healthcare providers and businesses that follow public health guidance in response to the Coronavirus public health emergency was debated this week. It will continue to be debated next week in the

Senate.

[House Bill 3707](#) which provides funding, up to \$100,000,000, for South Carolina's COVID-19 Vaccination Response was passed by the General Assembly and ratified into law this week.

[Senate Bill 506](#) is a bill to amend requirements for home-based food productions. Specifically, the bill expands the types of foods that may be sold to include all non-potentially hazardous foods. It also expands the locations that these foods can be sold directly including retail stores, grocery stores, online and mail order. Senate Ag subcommittee members voted the bill favorably to full committee for consideration.

### **Illegal Transportation of Feral Hogs**

The Feral Hog Transportation Bill, [House Bill 3539](#), was voted favorably out of the House Ag committee this week. 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](#).

## **Congressional Report**

### **National News**

After weeks of waiting, the Senate has scheduled a vote on Tom Vilsack's nomination for Secretary of Agriculture on Feb. 23, 2021.

In early February, the Senate Agriculture Committee unanimously approved President Joe Biden's pick to lead USDA.

We want to give a special thank you to those members who volunteered to serve on the American Farm Bureau Federation's Issue Advisory Committees. This year those committees met via Zoom. Those representing South Carolina are:

- Michael Lalich, Charleston County
- Drake Yon, Saluda County

- Landrum Weathers, Jr., Orangeburg County
- Woody Green, Sumter County
- Charles Wingard, Lexington County

## **SC Farm Bureau Government Relations**

**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