

South Carolina Farm Bureau

Legislative Report Week 6 February 17, 2023



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Weekly Highlights

Full Senate Addresses Illegal Transportation of Hogs

The full Senate took up Senate [bill 449](#) this week related to the illegal transportation of hogs. Under current law, the transportation of swine from the wild is prohibited. As originally drafted, S. 449 attempts to extend the original sunset provision in the current law by two years to 2026.

After passage by the full Senate Ag Committee last week, our GR team worked diligently with Senate leadership to modify the original language and remove the sunset provision from the bill entirely.

The Senate voted unanimously to adopt the amendment and passed the bill from the Senate. The bill now heads to the House for action.

State of the Department of Transportation

DOT Secretary Christy Hall provided a "State of the DOT" this week to **Chairman Larry Grooms** (Senate District 37 - Berkeley and Charleston Counties) and the full Senate Transportation Committee. During this update, Secretary Hall provided updates on infrastructure developments throughout the state. There has been a dramatic financial commitment to road work in South Carolina with an increase from \$1 billion to \$4.4 billion for updates. This has resulted in targeting improving road conditions to include: \$50 million on the deadliest rural roads across the state, paving almost 850 miles in new projects, replacing 465 structurally deficient bridges with an additional 75 currently under construction and an aggressive interstate program that focuses on pinch points that deal with freight and congestion.

New Introductions

Working Agricultural Lands Preservation Act – H.3951

House Agricultural **First Vice Chairman Patrick Haddon** (House District 19 - Greenville County) introduced [House bill 3951](#) this week. The bill establishes the “South Carolina Working Farmland Protection Program” to provide permanent protection to strategically significant working farmland properties whose continued availability for agricultural production is essential to the long-term future of the economic sector. H. 3951 also creates a fund for qualifying projects under this program. The bill was referred to the House Ag Committee.

Solar, Agricultural, Farmland, and Environmental Act

Representative Russell Ott (House District 93 - Calhoun, Lexington and Orangeburg Counties) introduced [House bill 3989](#) this week that creates a framework for solar energy production on land currently used in agricultural production. The bill also establishes the “Agricultural and Farmland Viability Protection Fund” to educate impacted communities about easements and funding sources that may be used to conserve agricultural land. The bill was referred to the House Labor, Commerce and Industry Committee.

Identifying Funding Source for South Carolina Hog Management Program – H.3963

Representative Roger Nutt (House District 34 - Spartanburg County) introduced [House bill 3963](#) this week that allows the utilization of revenue from the sale of statewide buck tags for the implementation of the state Hog Management Program. The bill was referred to the House Ag Committee.

Official South Carolina Poultry Festival – H.3960

House Agricultural **Subcommittee Chairman Cal Forrest** (House District 39 - Lexington and Saluda Counties) introduced [House bill 3960](#) this week that designates the annual South Carolina Poultry Festival held in Lexington as the official State Poultry Festival.

Looking Ahead to Next Week

The House Agriculture Committee will begin hearings next week on “The Security from Trespass and Protecting Food Safety Act of 2023” and the “Working Agricultural Lands Preservation Act”. Both of these pieces of legislation are focused on agricultural protection. The SC Farm Bureau GR team will continue to provide timely updates to our members and necessary guidance to our partners at the State House as these bills progress.

SC Wild Hog Management Workshop



SC Farm Bureau sponsored the Wild Hog Management Workshop hosted by Clemson Extension at the Anderson County Extension Office this week. Members of our GR team were in attendance and spoke on the benefits of being a Farm Bureau member as well as the current legislation in the State House, specifically on S. 449 - the illegal transportation of hogs, and SCFB’s support of the funding that Clemson PSA is seeking related to problematic wildlife. It was a great turnout and attendees were able to listen to speakers discuss the geology, biology, history, and tactics regarding wild hogs in SC. To finish up the workshop, demonstrations were given on multiple types of wild hog traps.

Farmer of the Week



This week, **James Shuler** of Ted Shuler & Sons Farm in Santee joined our team at the State House as our *SCFB Farmer of the Week*.

James is a partner and third generation farmer at Ted Shuler & Sons Farm in Santee where they specialize in corn, soybeans, cotton and peanuts. He also serves as Vice President of the Orangeburg County Farm Bureau.

James is an outstanding young representative of agriculture in South Carolina and we are proud to call him our *Farmer of the Week*.

