



CAPITOL

comments

“The Voice of Agriculture”

February 11, 2011

Week 6

This Week at the Capitol

The deadline to pass bills off the House and Senate floors was Thursday. Inclement weather came through Jackson starting Wednesday afternoon and early Thursday morning. The House and Senate continued to work despite the weather.

The Senate passed several bills this week including animal cruelty, a statewide smoking ban in any state-owned facility, and a charter school law. The House passed several bills including the allowing drivers license renewed every 8 years, a carbon dioxide sequestration bill, and a bill allowing law enforcement officers to check a database for insurance coverage.

The House and Senate will hold joint meetings on redistricting starting tonight through Monday. There is a meeting in Oxford tonight, Jackson tomorrow, the coast on Sunday, and Itta Bena on Monday.

Legislative Outlook

Agritourism

S.B. 2695 Provides certain exemptions for people who engage in agritourism. **STATUS:** S.B. 2695 the motion to reconsider was tabled and the bill will be transmitted to the House. **Farm Bureau policy supports this bill.**

Farm Families

S.B. 2449 Creates a distinctive vehicle tag for the Farm Families of Mississippi. **STATUS:** S.B. 2449 has been referred to the House Ways and Means Committee. **Farm Bureau policy supports this bill.**

Rice Promotion Board

H.B. 349 Extends the repealer on the Mississippi Rice Promotion Board. **STATUS:** H.B. 349 has been referred to the Senate Agriculture Committee. **Farm Bureau policy supports this bill.**

Emerging Crops

H.B. 1148 Authorizes additional loans for retrofitting agricultural enterprises. **STATUS:** H.B. 1148 passed the House Floor with 117 in favor and 1 against. The bill will now be transmitted to the Senate. **Farm Bureau policy supports this bill.**

Cemeteries

S.B. 2199 Allows access in and out of private property to visit cemeteries. **STATUS:** S.B. 2199 the bill failed with 24 votes against and 18 votes in favor. **Farm Bureau policy opposes this bill.**

2011 MFBF Legislative Priorities

Production Agriculture—Much of Mississippi's economy is derived from farming or farm-related activities. Agriculture is Mississippi's largest industry worth \$6.9 billion dollars a year. In addition, agriculture makes up 34% of the workforce in Mississippi.

Taxation—The taxes farmers pay should be used to aid the citizens of Mississippi, but taxation must not be allowed to increase to a point that economic development is hindered.

Environment—In order to further conservation efforts in agriculture, attention should be focused toward economic approaches to land management.

Energy—The depletion of fossil fuels and the increasing energy prices have caused an emphasis to be placed on renewable fuels. Farmers have the resources through general farm practices to generate energy.

Legislative Outlook (Continued)

Trespass

S.B. 2705 Revises the trespass laws for trespassing on property and crop land. **STATUS:** S.B. 2705 passed the Senate with a vote of 45 in favor and 6 against. The bill has been transmitted to the House. **Farm Bureau policy supports this bill.**

Bills of Interest

Groundwater Study

H.B. 1067 Directs Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality to do a groundwater report by January 1, 2012. **STATUS:** H.B. 1067 passed the House with 119 in favor. The bill has been referred to the Senate Environmental and Water Resource Committee.

Livestock Burial

H.B. 983 Allows counties to bury dead livestock when there is an emergency situation. **STATUS:** H.B. 983 passed the House with 108 in favor and 8 against. The bill has been transmitted to the Senate.

Transportation

S.B. 2192 Requires safety lights on a load of timber products projecting a certain distance beyond the end of the trailer. **STATUS:** S.B. 2192 has been received in the House and referred to the House Transportation Committee.

Immigration

S.B. 2179 Creates the Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhood Act of 2011 which deals with illegal immigration. **STATUS:** S.B. 2179 the Senate invited conference on the bill. The Senate conferees are: Sen. Fillingane, Sen. Dickerson, and Sen. Watson.

PUBLIC POLICY UPDATES BY EMAIL

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2011 Legislative Calendar

February 22 — Women's Day at Capitol

February 23 — Deadline for revenue and appropriation bills to pass off the floor

March 1 — Deadline for Committees to pass bills out and to the floor

March 3 — Ag Day at the Capitol

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