



CAPITOL

comments

“The Voice of Agriculture”

February 19, 2010

Week 7

This Week at the Capitol

This week the House and Senate took up appropriations bills that dealt with all the state agencies and special funds. The current financial situation is still unknown, as revenue continues to decline. These bills will be the vehicles that the House and Senate will use to write the actual budgets in the coming weeks and are not likely to be the final version.

The Senate and House were also able to reach a compromise on restoring the budget cuts that the governor made. The bill passed by a slim vote in the Senate 26 to 22. Before the vote was taken, the governor said he would veto the bill if it came to his desk.

The House took up and passed a bill to help the Sweet Potato industry this week. The bill passed with overwhelming support for the industry and is now headed to the Senate for consideration.

Legislative Outlook

Catfish

H.B. 606 Extends the repealer on the Mississippi Catfish Marketing Law.

STATUS: H.B. 606 has been signed by the Governor and is now law.

Farm Bureau policy supports this bill.

Sweet Potatoes

H.B. 1681 Authorizes a guarantee loan program administered through MDA for sweet potato farmers. **STATUS:** H.B. 1681 passed the House with a vote of 115 in favor and 4 against. **Farm Bureau policy supports this bill.**

Boll Weevil

S.B. 2836 Revises the Boll Weevil Eradication Program to a post eradication, statewide program and a simple majority vote. **STATUS:** S.B. 2836 has been referred to the House Agriculture Committee. **Farm Bureau policy supports this bill.**

Cotton Warehouse Tax

S.B. 2636 Diverts the cotton warehouse tax to the Boll Weevil Management Board. **STATUS:** S.B. 2636 has been referred to the House Ways and Means Committee. **Farm Bureau policy supports this bill.**

Livestock

H.B. 430 Authorizes the board of supervisors to bury dead livestock and poultry in emergency situations. **STATUS:** H.B. 430 has been referred to the Senate County Affairs Committee. **Farm Bureau policy supports this bill.**

2010 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 \$5.5 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

MSU Funding

S.B. 3122 MSU Agriculture and Forestry Experiment Station appropriation for the FY 2011 with an additional reduction of 2.2% over the cuts already made by the governor. **STATUS:** S.B. 3122 has been passed out of Senate Appropriations and is on the Senate Calendar.

MSU Funding

S.B. 3123 MSU Cooperative Extension Service appropriation for the FY 2011 with an additional reduction of 2.2% over the cuts already made by the governor. **STATUS:** S.B. 3122 has been passed out of Senate Appropriations and is on the Senate Calendar.

MSU Funding

S.B. 3124 MSU Forrest and Wildlife Research appropriation for the FY 2011 with an additional reduction of 2.2% over the cuts already made by the governor. **STATUS:** S.B. 3122 has been passed out of Senate Appropriations and is on the Senate Calendar.

MSU Funding

S.B. 3122 MSU College of Veterinary Medicine appropriation for the FY 2011 with an additional reduction of 2.2% over the cuts already made by the governor. **STATUS:** S.B. 3122 has been passed out of Senate Appropriations and is on the Senate Calendar.

Bills of Interest

LLC Fee

H.B. 683 Allows the Secretary of State to charge a registration fee for LLCs and use the money for election equipment in the counties. **STATUS:** H.B. 683 has been double referred to the Senate Elections Committee and Senate Judiciary A Committee.

Net Metering

H.B.963 Creates a study committee for the House and Senate to look at Net Metering. **STATUS:** H.B. 963 has been referred to the Senate Public Utilities.

PUBLIC POLICY UPDATES BY EMAIL

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2010 Legislative Calendar

February 23 — Women's Day at Capitol

February 24 — Deadline for first floor action on Appropriations and Revenue bills

March 2 — Deadline for committees to report on general bills

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