

Legislative Report - Week 8

March 6, 2023



Week in Review

- **Weekly Session Highlights**
- **Farmers of the Week**
- **SCFB Youth Leadership Reunion**

Last Week's Highlights

Working Agricultural Lands Preservation Act Heard in Full House Ag Committee

The full House Agricultural Committee met on House bill 3951 last week. This bill establishes the “South Carolina Working Farmland Protection Program” to provide permanent protection to strategically significant working farmland properties whose continued availability as productive agricultural use is essential to the long-term future of the economic sector and creates a fund for qualifying projects under this program. The bill was amended and received a favorable vote of 12-2. It will now be sent to the full House floor for further action.

Government Restructuring – S.399

Senate Finance **Chairman Harvey Peeler** (Senate District 14 - Cherokee, Spartanburg, Union and York) and **Senate President Thomas Alexander** (Senate District 1 - Oconee and Pickens) introduced Senate bill 399 that focuses on DHEC reform, restructuring and increasing government efficiency while creating separate health and environmental state agencies, and importantly placing all statewide water regulation into one agency. The full Senate Medical Affairs Committee briefly discussed the bill last week, during which **Chairman Danny Verdin** (Senate District - Laurens and Greenville Counties) and co-sponsor Sen. Peeler stated that additional work needed to be completed on the bill to ensure no unintended consequences occur from the major restructuring.

The bill received overwhelming support last year from the Senate and SCFB GR Team will continue to work with Senate leaders on passing the crucial legislation.

Agricultural Regulations

Senate Medical Affairs also met on SC DHEC regulations related to the clarification of no discharge permits for animal facilities. This continues to be a priority for SC Farm Bureau and GR staff will continue to advocate for the agricultural sector.

SCFB National Legislative Committee Conduct D.C. Meetings

The National Legislative Committee (NLC) was in Washington last week to meet with the SC Congressional Delegation and staffers of the Senate and House Agriculture committees. The members of the NLC spent time educating and advocating for our priorities in the upcoming Farm Bill, such as needing an increase in the reference prices used for PLC to be closer to actual cost of production. Additionally, members of the NLC were able to explain how the new Department of Labor H2A rule, published last week as a final rule, is not workable and will ultimately hurt farmers.



J.E.B. Wilson, SCFB President Harry Ott, Charles Wingard, Landy Weathers, Keith Allen and Chris Talley.

New Bill Introductions

Foreign Land Ownership

Several bills related to foreign land ownership have been introduced and will be heard in the coming weeks. The SCFB GR Team will keep you up to date on discussions as they progress.

Farmers of the Week: The Dixon Family (Horry)



The Dixon Family (L-R) - Markel, Sarah, Warren, Corey, and Kellie.

The Dixon family has been farming the same property in coastal Horry County for over 200 years. That's 6 generations of Dixons producing sweet potatoes, tobacco, soybeans and corn on what is now 800 acres of productive agricultural land. We were honored to have Warren Dixon, his wife Sarah, son Corey, his wife Kellie, and their son Markel, who all operate the farm together, join us at the State House last week.

This amazing family is a leading example of the hard-working farm families we have in our state that dedicate their lives to agriculture.

We were proud to call them the *South Carolina Farm Bureau Farmers of the Week*.



The Dixon Family pictured with an honorary House resolution presented by Rep. Jeff Johnson (Horry) and Rep. Kevin Hardee (Horry).



Rep. Gilda Cobb Hunter (Orangeburg) and the Dixons.



Senate Ag Committee Chairman Wes Climer (York), Sen. Mike Reichenbach (Florence), Sen. Kent Williams (Marion), Warren, Corey, Kellie, Markel, Sarah, and Sen. Luke Rankin (Horry).



With Lt. Governor Pamela Evette.

Youth Leadership Conference Alumni Reunion at State House

Last week, 19 students from the 2022 class of the South Carolina Farm Bureau Youth Leadership Conference visited us. Last June, the students spent four days at the Governor's School for Agriculture learning more about the Farm Bureau Federation and agriculture across our state. Participants enjoy educational workshops, building relationships, and most importantly, learning how they can be grassroots leaders for SCFB.

Here are our future agribusiness leaders:

Aiken County

Abby Callis

Calhoun County

Jay Plummer

Kaylee Zeigler

Cherokee County

Morrison Franks

Chester County

Victoria Chambers

Navia Minter

Dorchester County

Lauren Creel

Rebekah Johnston

Dawson Bell

Hannah Jeffers

Lexington County

Cameron Miller

Newberry County

Elizabeth Montes Torres

Pickens County

Jackson Keith

Union County

JoLee Cathcart

Williamsburg County

Mackenzie Lawrimore

York County

Richard Sandstrom

Georgetown County

McClary Lawrimore

Mack Capps

Laurens County

Matt Burns





Youth Group with Rep. Haddon (Greenville)



Cameron Miller with Rep. Jay Kilmartin (Lexington)



Abby Callis with Rep. Bart Blackwell (Aiken)



Jay Plummer with Rep. Russell Ott (Calhoun)