Eight weeks of the 2021 Legislative session are completed, with four days remaining. Monday is the last day for a bill or resolution to pass both bodies. Yesterday was the last day for “smoke out” (have the floor deliver a bill that lost in committee). That was used several times in both bodies this past Wednesday and Thursday.

Tuesday and Wednesday of this coming week will be used for conference committees (compromise on differences by which a bill passed each side) and finish up the spending bills and the budget. The final budget bill for the fiscal year starting July 1, 2021, will be debated and adopted on Thursday.

Here are some bills of interest for your discussions over the weekend.

**SENATE FLOOR**

**Senate Resolution of Disapproval 901**, a resolution to nullify the Governor’s executive order to combine the SD Department of Agriculture and DENR. 901 was passed by the Senate Ag committee 4 to 3 and will be decided by the full Senate. Delegates at the 103rd SDFB annual meeting passed a resolution in favor of the merger and SDFB testified against 901 in the Ag Committee. If 901 passes the Senate, the merger will not happen. Resolution of Disapproval only need to be passed by one body of the Legislature.

**HB 1140**, is an act to clarify the conditions when a conservation officer can enter private land. This bill was brought by the Governor, easily passed the House, but was defeated 7 to 0 in Senate Judiciary. The full Senate “smoked” 1140 to the Senate floor and it will be considered on Monday.

**HB 1153**, is an act to appropriate $7.5M to upgrade the dairy research and extension buildings at SDSU. Fundraising will match the $7.5M. Dairy is one of agriculture’s fastest growing segments in the state. HB 1140 is intended to keep the SDSU program up to date with that expansion in dairy production and processing.

**HB 1210**, would appropriate $20M for a bioprocessing center in the research park in Brookings. The Bio Center will research new and expanded uses of ag production. This will be a joint venture with the engineering school at SDSM&T. The study was completed last year, and the green light given for this next step.

**HB 1259**, is an act to provide $3M each year for 3 years for small structures (bridges and culverts) on township and county secondary roads. The first year, a study will be completed to identify and analyze all structures of this type across the state. The funding the second and third years will provide dollars with local match for local governments to address the highest priorities.
SB 34, an act to appropriate $75M for the expansion of broadband in the state. Federal and private monies will match the general fund dollars for a $200M effort to connect the 135,000 citizens in South Dakota who do not have adequate broadband at this time.

SB 93, an act to appropriate $20M to the S.D. Railroad Fund to be used to upgrade the Pierre to Rapid City line. SB 93 passed the Senate 34 to 0 and will be considered on the House floor.

SB 99, an act to appropriate $12M for the Dakota Exposition Complex, DEX, on the state fairgrounds. Monies will be added from the insurance – when the beef complex burned down last fall – and private donations, to fund this $20M project.

SB 191, an act to provide $600,000 for a study of renovation and expansion of the Meat Lab on the SDSU campus. The present facilities are 40 years old and need to be upgraded to meet the needs of research for our small meat processors and to teach and train students interested in a career in meat processing.

SB 192, an act to appropriate $3.5M for replacement of buildings and facilities at the Cottonwood Research Station, which were destroyed in 2020 by a windstorm.

Other bills of interest

SB 171, an act to provide $50M of general funds to be doubled or tripled by donations to create the Freedom scholarship. This would be a perpetual fund to offer scholarships based on the need of the student.

SB 123, an act to allow comment on the AG’s explanation of ballot measures passed the House 65 to 3 and will go to conference committee to resolve the differences.

SB 70, an act to clean up the statute dealing with assessment of property, passed the House 62 to 4 and was sent to the Governor.

HJR 5003, a bill providing for a vote on a Constitutional Amendment in the June 2022 primary requiring future ballot measures that have a fiscal impact of $10M or more over 5 years, would require a 60 percent approval by the voters. 5003 will go to conference committee to reconcile the different versions.

HB 1110, a bill to prevent abortions for the reason of Down’s Syndrome, passed the Senate 35 to 0 and was sent to the Governor.

HB 1085, a bill to clarify the conditions for land to be classified as agricultural, was passed by the House 68 to 1 and sent to the Governor.
If you have any questions or comments, please contact me.

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Helpful Links:

View the SDFB bill-tracker list here:
https://www.sdfbf.org/Policy-Advocacy/State-Legislative

View the details on any bill by clicking this link and typing in the bill number:
https://sdlegislature.gov/Session/Bills/44

Find contact information for the Legislators here:
https://sdlegislature.gov/Legislators/Contacts/44