Legislative Update – Week 4

The fourth week of the legislative session is five working days instead of the customary 4-day week. As of Thursday afternoon, there are 283 House bills and 194 Senate bills for a total of 477. That is 121 additional bills in the past week. Most of us are glad that we are almost to the finish line.

SB 87 – The SDFB Healthcare benefits bill passed the Senate on Wednesday 19 to 15. This a giant step forward in our effort to provide an additional choice for Farm Bureau members as well as some additional competition in the individual market for families, couples and single people.

Here are the 19 Senators that need to hear a big Thank You from each of you for voting in favor of SB 87: Jim Bolin, Bryan Breitling, Gary Cammack, Jessica Castleberry, Mary Duvall, Brock Greenfield, Joshua Klumb, Ryan Maher, Al Novstrup, Michael Rohl, Lee Schoenbeck, Jim Stalzer, Wayne Steinhauer, Maggie Sutton, Marsha Symens, Erin Tobin, David Wheeler, John Wiik.

SB 87 is scheduled for hearing in the House Ag Committee on Tuesday February 9th at 7:45 a.m. in Room 414. Your Representative needs to hear from each of you this weekend encouraging them to vote yes on SB 87. Please ask your friends and neighbors to make that contact also.

A list of Cracker Barrels for this weekend is below and we encourage you to attend one in your district to urge your Representatives to support SB 87.

SDFB Health Plan FAQs

Other SDFB Priorities

HB 1042 is a bill to improve the buffer program by increasing the property tax reduction and lengthening the contract to 10 years. Representative Richard Vasgaard added an amendment to allow earlier mowing on center pivot irrigated land. The bill passed the House Ag committee 13 to 0 and passed the House 69 to 0 and was sent to the Senate.

HB 1046, a bill to provide some liability protection for business and other entities involving the pandemic passed the Senate Judiciary committee 5 to 0 and was sent to the full Senate.

HB 1053, a bill to assess an annual $50 fee on electric vehicles, since those vehicles do not pay the gas tax to use the highways, passed the House 51 to 18 and was sent to the Senate.

HB 1085, a bill to redefine the criteria for classifying land as agricultural for tax purposes has caused some controversy. There were a number of examples given where landowners are using all kinds of schemes and devious methods to obtain the ag classification. SDFB’s interest is that true ag land should fit the classification; and land for speculation or view sheds or other non-ag purposes should not. HB 1085 lost 34 to 35 and a motion to reconsider that vote was made.
SB 99, is a bill to provide $12M state dollars to be combined with $4M insurance payments and $4M in donations to build the DEX, which will replace the Beef Complex that burned down on the State Fairgrounds last October. The bill passed the Senate Ag committee 6 to 0 and was sent to Appropriations.

Upcoming Cracker barrels

District 21
Feb 6 at 1 p.m.
Former Winner Middle School Gym

District 10 & 25
February 6 at 9:00 a.m. CT
Tailgators Grill & Bar – 1013 N. Splitrock Blvd, Brandon

District 6, 9, 13
February 6 – (two times and locations)
10:00 a.m. CT – The HUB – 2001 N. Career Ave., Sioux Falls
1:30 p.m. CT – Tea City Hall

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