This week Thursday was Crossover Day, which is when all bills must be out of the committee in the house of origin. The House floor had 35 bills to act upon on the final day in the body of origin. Action began at 1:30 p.m. and the last bill was finished at 11:55 p.m.

The big news for SDFB this week was the defeat of HB 1219, a bill to create a compact for the interstate shipment of meat. The Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS), the USDA agency in charge of meat inspection, informed South Dakota that if they joined a compact for this purpose, there would be several consequences:

1. We would lose almost $1M in federal funds that pays half of our annual state meat inspection program;
2. We would no longer have the S.D. meat inspection program considered equal to federal inspection; and
3. The 34 businesses using the state inspection program would have to upgrade to federal inspection, at considerable expense for many which may result in having to downsize to custom processing and “not for sale” meat or close their doors.

Despite those damaging consequences, 30 Representatives voted to pass the compact bill. Thanks to the many contacts from Farm Bureau leaders and lots of help from S.D. State Veterinarian Dr. Oedekoven, SD Cattlemen’s, and SD Pork Producers, we had 37 Representatives who voted NO. The only other state that is considering the compact is Montana.

Also, a big thank you to Representatives Blare, Chase and Vasgaard for their hard work and leadership in defeating this bill and the terrible consequences that would have followed.

**Ag Land Classification**

HB 1085, a bill to clear up the statute regarding what criteria allows land to obtain an ag classification, passed the Senate Tax committee 5 to 2 and was sent to the Senate floor. It will be acted on next week. We ask you to contact your Senator and ask them to vote YES on 1085.

**Other SD Farm Bureau Priorities**

HB 1040, a bill to make grants available to small meat processors who expand or upgrade their equipment and facilities, was tabled at the Governor’s request. The program in the amount of $5M will be funded with some of the pandemic monies the state has received from the federal government.

HB 1053, a bill charging an annual fee of $50 for electric vehicles, passed the Senate 29 to 6 and was sent to the Governor.

HB 1110, a bill to prevent abortion of down’s syndrome fetuses, passed the House 68 to 0 and was sent to Senate Health and Human Services Committee.
HB 1112, a bill to extend the shooting safety zone to 900 feet around occupied dwellings, livestock, schools and churches passed the Ag Committee 11 to 2, but lost on the House floor on a vote of 27 to 40.

HB 1140, the open fields bill to define the authority of conservation officers was sent to Senate Judiciary and will have a hearing on March 2. HB 1140 will not pass that committee and will have to be smoked out from the Senate floor to be considered.

HB 1153, a bill to provide $7.5M in general funds to be matched by an equal amount from donations and fundraising, for the purpose of remodeling and expanding the dairy research building on the SDSU campus, passed the House 53 to 15 and was sent to the Senate.

HB 1202, a bill to require the SD Department of Ag to require liability insurance by commercial applicators was sent to the 41st day by the House Ag committee.

HB 1215, a bill to require meat sellers in South Dakota to include the country of origin label was also sent to the 41st day.

HB 1210, a bill to require the SD Department of Ag to require liability insurance by commercial applicators was sent to the 41st day by the House Ag committee.

SB 34, a bill to provide $75M for expansion of broadband in the state is scheduled for a hearing next week in Appropriations.

SB 99, a bill to provide $12M of general fund money for the DEX on the state fairgrounds was approved 12 to 6 by Appropriations and sent to the Senate.

SB 123, a bill to allow group and public input into the Attorney General's explanation of an initiated measure, passed House Local Government and was sent to the House floor.

SB 171, a bill to allocate $50M of general fund monies, which will be matched by private donation, to be endowed for need-based college scholarships, passed the Senate 32 to 1 and was sent to the House.

SB 191, a bill to provide $600,000 for a study and plan to upgrade, remodel and expand the SDSU Meat Lab, passed Appropriations 10 to 8 and was sent to the Senate floor.
AG and DENR Merger
SRD 901, a resolution to disapprove of the Governor’s proposal to merge the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources into one state department, the Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources, was filed and available in the LRC system on Thursday.

Attorney General
HR 7001, a resolution calling for the impeachment of Attorney General Jason Ravnsborg was filed and the Speaker announced that a special committee would be appointed to address this issue by Veto Day on March 29.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact me.

Michael Held
SDFB Lobbyist
605-350-0739
mheld@sdfbf.org

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