



AUSTIN NEWSLETTER

Texas Farm Bureau's Weekly Newsletter for the 86th Legislature

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Every Friday, this newsletter will keep you up to speed on some of the legislation important to Texas Farm Bureau members that Austin staff are following.

Please do not hesitate to contact the appropriate staff with any questions.

Texas Farm Bureau Leader Day in Austin

As part of the grassroots action plan on eminent domain reform, the TFB state board of directors approved having a statewide "Leader Day" to make a final push for eminent domain reform. We are organizing this Leader Day for Wednesday, May 15, and Thursday, May 16.

Our grassroots efforts of having Texas Farm Bureau members at the Capitol every week was successful in helping the eminent domain reform bill, SB 421, get voted out of the Texas Senate. With the passage of this bill out of the Senate, our efforts are now focused on getting the bill through the Texas House. This will be our last big push to pass this critical legislation. Leader Day will be held on the week prior to the House deadline to vote on Senate bills. It will be a critical time in the success or failure of this legislation.

All CFB presidents are invited to attend this Leader Day. If the CFB president cannot attend, then another board member may come in their place. We encourage anyone attending to share vehicles, or if possible, ride with a member of the TFB field staff. TFB will cover hotel rooms and travel expenses for one person per county. Breakfast will be provided. All other meal expenses are on your own.

Information regarding hotel reservations and registration were mailed to the County Farm Bureau presidents.

Here is a tentative schedule for this 2019 TFB Leader Day:

Wednesday, May 15

4 p.m. - Arrive at the hotel and check-in
5 p.m. - Legislative briefing on SB 421
6 p.m. - Dinner on your own

Thursday, May 16

7 a.m. - Check-out of hotel and travel to the Capitol
8 a.m.-12 p.m. - Meetings at the Capitol
12 p.m. - Lunch on your own
1 p.m. - Depart Austin

We need your help to get SB 421 across the finish line! Opponents of the bill will make every effort to stall and kill it, and you can be sure they will make their presence known. We need your help to finish the job.

Annexation

[**HB 347**](#), by Rep. Phil King (R-Weatherford), was passed by the House on April 9 with a 133-14 vote. This bill allows all property owners the right to vote on whether a city can annex them and eliminates the need to petition for a vote by removing the distinction between counties. HB 347 was originally reported on in the ninth issue of the *Austin Newsletter*.

TFB supports HB 347. (TFB Policy: Cities 171, lines 4-12)

Industrial Hemp

[**HB 1325**](#) by Rep. Tracy King (D-Uvalde), was passed from the House Agriculture and Livestock Committee on April 9. HB 1325 relates to the production and regulation of hemp and products made from hemp; requires authorization to produce hemp; and authorizes penalties and fees. An overview on the committee hearing was given in the thirteenth issue of the *Austin Newsletter*.

TFB supports HB 1325. (TFB Policy: Agriculture Commodities 109, lines 23-25)

State Flood Planning

[**HB 13**](#) and [**HJR 4**](#), by Rep. Dade Phelan (R-Nederland), were both unanimously passed from the House on April 11. Due to recent events, the impacts of flooding in Texas has become a bigger issue as the state's population grows and spreads across the state. HB 13 seeks to solve this problem by creating a flood infrastructure fund by

appropriating \$3.26 billion from the rainy day fund.

HJR 4 is the constitutional amendment that creates the flood infrastructure fund to assist in financing drainage, flood mitigation and flood control projects.

TFB supports HB 13 and HJR 4. (TFB Policy: Surface Water 154, lines 130-137)

Surface Restoration from Pipelines

HB 4423, by Rep. Erin Zwiener (D-Driftwood), requires a pipeline operator to promptly restore land disturbed by the installation of a pipeline to its former condition and usefulness. If the pipeline operator fails or refuses to perform the restoration, the Railroad Commission would have the authority to conduct the restoration with funds from the Dedicated Oil and Gas Regulation and Cleanup Account.

This legislation requires pipeline operators to file an additional bond, letter of credit or cash deposit of \$1,000 for each mile of pipeline. Land used for agricultural purposes or land set aside for the preservation of wildlife must be restored to its former condition after the installation, maintenance or operation of the pipeline is complete. The Texas Commission of Environmental Quality would also be required to collaborate with the Railroad Commission to protect water quality and ensure that soil composition remains consistent throughout the restoration process.

HB 4423 was heard in the House Energy Resources Committee on April 8.

TFB supports HB 4423. (TFB Policy: Real Property Rights 150, lines 6-9)



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If you would like immediate updates on the action in Austin, follow the Austin Legislative Staff on Twitter.

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