



# AUSTIN NEWSLETTER

Texas Farm Bureau's Weekly Newsletter for the 87th Legislature

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April 23, 2021 | Regular Session, Issue 15 | 87th Regular Session

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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.

## Legislative Update

### Farm Bureau Health Plans

**HB 3924** and **SB 1973**: Relating to the operation of and coverage by a nonprofit agricultural organization.

[Dr. Oliverson, Tom \(R\)](#)

[Sen. Springer, Drew \(R\)](#)

On April 13, HB 3924 was reported favorably from the House Committee on Insurance. On April 22, the Committee Report was filed with the Committee Coordinator.

On April 1, SB 1973 was referred to the Senate Committee on Business & Commerce. On April 6, the bill was considered in committee and left pending.

These bills allow Texas Farm Bureau to use our statewide infrastructure and resources to provide health plans to our members without the burdensome insurance regulations that drive up the cost of health insurance. These health plans are not insurance, which makes them more flexible and affordable.

These non-insurance health plans are a proven reliable approach to health coverage. Other state Farm Bureaus—such as Tennessee, South Dakota, Indiana, and Kansas—offer these plans to their members. Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation first started offering these plans in 1993, and it has been very successful for the organization and members.

**[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE FAQ ON HB 3924/SB 1973](#)**

TFB **supports** HB 3924 and SB 1973.

## **Feral Hog Control**

On April 22, two amendments—which allow the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) and Texas A&M AgriLife to evaluate the efficacy of the warfarin-based Kaput feral hog toxicant—passed the second reading in the House.

Having access to all means of controlling feral hogs is a priority set by the Texas Farm Bureau board of directors. The proposed program in these amendments will facilitate landowners having access to this toxicant, if the program proves successful.

The original amendments proposed funding this program by using \$500,000 of the Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation Fund. Amendments were adopted to take this funding from other sources to prevent affecting the funding of the boll weevil eradication program.

Since both of these amendments create similar programs, the SB 1 Conference Committee will have to reconcile the differences and adopt a single program to determine the efficacy of Kaput.

[House floor amendment #102 by Stucky \(page 178\) ADOPTED as amended](#)

[House floor amendment #108 by Bell of Montgomery \(page 204\) ADOPTED as amended](#)

(TFB 2021 Policy: Feral Hogs 114, Page 11, Lines 9-10 and 14-15 and 22-24.)

**Thank you to all the members and county leaders who responded to the Action Alert on this issue!**

## **Eminent Domain**

**HB 2041** and **SB 721**: Relating to the disclosure of appraisal reports in connection with the use of eminent domain authority.

[Rep. Leman, Ben \(R\)](#)

[Sen. Schwertner, Charles \(R\)](#)

**Passed by Senate, on to House:** On April 20, SB 721 was unanimously voted from the Senate. It was received by the House on April 21.

Click [here](#) to read our summary of HB 2041 and SB 721 in Issue 14 of the *Austin Newsletter*.

TFB **supports** HB 2041 and SB 721. HB 2041 and SB 721. (TFB 2021 Policy: Eminent Domain 151, Page 61, Lines 30-33.)

**HB 2042** and **SB 723**: Relating to certain requirements in connection with the acquisition of real property for public use by an entity with eminent domain authority.

[Rep. Leman, Ben \(R\)](#)

[Sen. Schwertner, Charles \(R\)](#)

On April 20, SB 723 was passed out of the Senate with 29 votes *for* and 2 votes *against*. Click [here](#) to see the record vote for final passage.

Click [here](#) to read our summary of HB 2042 and SB 723 in Issue 7 of the *Austin Newsletter*.

TFB **supports** HB 2042 and SB 723. (TFB 2021 Policy: Eminent Domain 151, Page 61, Lines 30-33).

## Water

**SB 601** and **HB 3096**: Relating to the disclosure of appraisal reports in connection with the use of eminent domain authority.

[Sen. Perry, Charles \(R\)](#)

[Rep. Dustin Burrows \(R\)](#)

On April 22, SB 601 was voted favorably from the House Committee on Natural Resources.

Click [here](#) to read our summary of SB 601 on Issue 5 of the *Austin Newsletter*.

TFB **supports** SB 601 and HB 3096. (TFB 2021 Policy: Water Management 155, Page 78, Lines 146 – 147.)

**HB 3619** and **SB 946**: Relating to the criteria considered by groundwater conservation districts before granting or denying a permit.

[Rep. Bowers, Rhetta \(D\)](#)

[Sen. Eckhardt, Sarah \(D\)](#)

On April 20, HB 3619 was passed by the House with 107 votes *for* and 38 votes *against*. Click [here](#) to see the record vote for the third reading.

Click [here](#) to read our summary of HB 3619 and SB 946 in Issue 10 of the *Austin Newsletter*.

TFB **opposes** HB 3619 and SB 946. (TFB 2021 Policy: Groundwater 153, Page 68, Lines 53-56).

## Property Taxes

**HB 2043** and **SB 725**: Relating to the disclosure of appraisal reports in connection with the use of eminent domain authority.

[Rep. Leman, Ben \(R\)](#)

[Sen. Schwertner, Charles \(R\)](#)

SB 725 was received in the House on April 15. It was referred to the House Committee on Land and Resource Management on April 19.

Click [here](#) to read our summary of HB 2043 and SB 725 in Issue 7 of the *Austin Newsletter*.

TFB **supports** HB 2043 and SB 725. (TFB 2021 Policy: Real Property Rights 150, Page 56, Lines 32-35. Property Taxes 142, Page 37, Lines 65-68).

## Truth in Labeling

**HB 316** and **SB 883**: Relating to the disclosure of appraisal reports in connection with the use of eminent domain authority.

[Rep. Buckley, Brad \(R\)](#)

[Sen. Springer, Drew \(R\)](#)

On Thursday, April 15, the Committee Substitute for HB 316 was voted favorably from the House Committee on Public Health.

Click [here](#) to read our summary of HB 316 in Issue 2 of the *Austin Newsletter*.

TFB **supports** HB 316. (TFB 2021 Policy: Dairy 113, Page 10, Line 9, Livestock 120, Page 15, Lines 45-57 and 177-181, Marketing 132, Page 23, Lines 69-74.)

**SB 1145**: Relating to marketing and labeling requirements for certain food products, including imitation meat and egg food products.

[Sen. Perry, Charles \(R\)](#)

**Passed by Senate, on to House:** On April 19, SB 1145 was passed out of the Senate with 28 votes *for* and 3 votes *against*. Click [here](#) to see the record vote for final passage.

## Summary

The engrossed version of SB 1145 proposes marketing and labeling requirements for imitation meat and egg food products.

The producers are in violation if the food's labels, brands, images, depictions, or graphics misrepresent the food in the package.

The producer does not violate this section if the food product's label bears, in prominent and sizeable typeface:

- the word "imitation" immediately followed by the name of the product imitated,
- the phrase *this product does not contain animal protein*, or
- the words *meatless*, *meat free*, *plant based*, *egg free*, *synthetic* or another substantially similar qualifying term or disclaimer.

Enforcement of these standards will be the responsibility of the Texas Department of State Health Services.

TFB **supports** SB 1145. (TFB 2021 Policy: Dairy 113, Page 10, Line 9, Livestock 120, Page 15, Lines 45-57 and 177-181, Marketing 132, Page 23, Lines 69-74.)

## Rural Connectivity

**HB 5** and **SB 5**: Relating to the expansion of broadband services to certain areas.

[Rep. Ashby, Trent \(R\)](#)

[Sen. Nichols, Robert \(R\)](#)

On April 21, HB 5 was heard and voted out of the Senate Committee on Transportation.

Click [here](#) to read our summary of HB 5 in Issue 9 of the *Austin Newsletter*.

Click [here](#) to read our summary of SB 5 in Issue 8 of the *Austin Newsletter*.

TFB **supports** HB 5 and SB 5. (TFB 2021 Policy: Rural Living Section 183, Pages 116-117, Lines 47-54.)

## Sunset Review

Texas Department of Agriculture, Prescribed Burning Board, and Texas Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation

**HB 1835** and **SB 703**: Relating to the continuation and functions of the Department of Agriculture, the Prescribed Burning Board, and the Texas Boll Weevil Eradication

Foundation and the abolishment of the Early Childhood Health and Nutrition Interagency Council.

[Rep. Canales, Terry \(D\)](#)

[Sen. Buckingham, Dawn \(R\)](#)

**Passed by Senate, on to House:** On April 19, SB 703 was unanimously passed by the Senate. On April 21, it was referred to the House Committee on Agriculture and Livestock.

Click [here](#) to read our summary of HB 1835 and SB 703 in Issue 14 of the *Austin Newsletter*.

TFB **supports** HB 1835 and SB 703. (TFB 2021 Policy: Texas Department of Agriculture 106, Page 4, Lines 1-6 and 30-32.)

## Sunset Review

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

**SB 700** and **HB 1615:** Relating to the continuation and functions of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

[Sen. Buckingham, Dawn \(R\)](#)

[Rep. Cyrier, John \(R\)](#)

**Passed by Senate, on to House:** On April 19, SB 700 was unanimously passed by the Senate.

Click [here](#) to read our summary of HB 1615 and SB 700 in Issue 14 of the *Austin Newsletter*.

TFB **supports** HB 1615 and SB 700. (TFB 2021 Policy: Wildlife 130, Page 19, Lines 6-8.)

## Livestock

**HB 1958** and **SB 1342:** Relating to the regulation of livestock export-import processing facilities.

[Rep. Gonzales, Mary \(D\)](#)

[Sen. Springer, Drew \(R\)](#)

**Passed by House, on to Senate:** HB 1958 was passed from the local calendar on Thursday, April 16, with 145 votes *for* and 0 votes *against*.

Click [here](#) to read our summary of HB 1958 in Issue 7 of the *Austin Newsletter*.

TFB **supports** HB 1958 and SB 1342. (TFB 2021 Policy: Texas Animal Health Commission 107, Pages 5 & 6, Lines 14-18 / Livestock 120, Page 16, Lines 138-139.)

## Commodities

**HB 2089** and **SB 731**: Relating to the detection and mitigation of plant pests and diseases.

[Sen. Perry, Charles \(R\)](#)

[Rep. Burrows, Dustin \(R\)](#)

On Monday, April 19, HB 2089 was heard in the Senate Committee on Water, Agriculture, & Rural Affairs. It was passed out of the committee and recommended for the Local & Uncontested Calendar.

Click [here](#) to read our summary of HB 2089 and SB 731 in Issue 8 of the *Austin Newsletter*.

TFB **supports** HB 2089 and SB 731. (TFB 2021 Policy: Wheat and Feed Grains 129, Page 19, Lines 9-12 / Animal Species Generally 148, Page 55, Lines 13-15 & 31-34 / Fruits and Vegetables 116, Page 12, Lines 4-7 / Pecans 123, Page 18, Lines 6-7 / Plant Diseases and Insects 136, Page 29, Lines 6-8 & 31 & 39-44.)

## Rural Veterinarian Incentive Program

**HB 1259** and **SB 1447**: Relating to the rural veterinarian incentive program.

[Rep. Darby, Drew \(R\)](#)

[Sen. Seliger, Kel \(R\)](#)

On April 16, HB 1259 passed the House with 121 votes *for* and 24 votes *against*.

Click [here](#) for the record vote on final passage out of the House.

### Summary

HB 1259 and SB 1447 would amend the administration of the rural veterinarian incentive program and expand program eligibility to all Texas veterinary medicine schools. The bills also broaden eligibility criteria so that more veterinary medicine students intending to serve rural areas of Texas may apply. The bills will allow for a broader financial support base for the rural Texas veterinarian incentive program.

TFB **supports** HB 1259 and SB 1447. (TFB 2021 Policy: Livestock 120, Page 16, Lines 102-103.)

## Rural Development

**HB 570** and **SB 1710**: Relating to small business recovery funds and insurance tax credits for certain investments in those funds.

[Rep. Paddie, Chris \(R\)](#)

[Sen. Springer, Drew \(R\)](#)

On April 15, the Committee Substitute for HB 570 was voted favorably from the House Committee on International Relations and Economic Development.

The committee substitute removes the provision which allows extra tax credits for rural investments. Instead, it mandates that at least 75% of the growth investments must be made in small, rural businesses.

Click [here](#) to read our original summary of HB 570 and SB 1710 in Issue 10 of the *Austin Newsletter*.

TFB **supports** HB 570 and SB 1710. (TFB 2021 Policy: Rural Living 183, Page 117, Line 56).

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## Texas Farm Bureau State Legislative Team

**Billy Howe**, Associate Director of Government Affairs

*Issue Areas: Natural Resources, Environmental Regulations, Ethics & Elections, and Appropriations*

Email: [bhowe@txfb.org](mailto:bhowe@txfb.org)

Austin Office Phone: [512-472-8288](tel:512-472-8288)

Waco Office Phone: [254-751-2208](tel:254-751-2208)

**Charlie Leal**, State Legislative Director

*Issue Areas: Tort, Utility Regulation, Rural Affairs, Transportation Infrastructure, and Appropriations*

Email: [cleal@txfb.org](mailto:cleal@txfb.org)

Austin Office Phone: [512-472-8288](tel:512-472-8288)

**Joy Davis**, Associate Legislative Director

*Issue Areas: Eminent Domain, Agriculture, Taxes, Trucking Regulations, Labor, and Appropriations*



Email: [jdavis@txfb.org](mailto:jdavis@txfb.org)  
Austin Office Phone: [512-472-8288](tel:512-472-8288)

**Harold Stone**, Associate Legislative Director  
*Issue Areas: Wildlife, Land Use Regulation, Criminal Justice, Energy Regulation, and Appropriations*  
Email: [hstone@txfb.org](mailto:hstone@txfb.org)  
Austin Office Phone: [512-472-8288](tel:512-472-8288)

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Billy Howe: [@TFBGovAff\\_Billy](https://twitter.com/TFBGovAff_Billy)

Charlie Leal: [@TFB\\_Charlie](https://twitter.com/TFB_Charlie)

Joy Davis: [@TFB\\_Joy](https://twitter.com/TFB_Joy)

Harold Stone: [@TFB\\_Harold](https://twitter.com/TFB_Harold)

## **Contact Us**

<b>State Office</b>	<b>Austin Office</b>
P.O. Box 2689	600 W. 12th St.
Waco, TX 76702	Austin, TX 78701
<a href="tel:254-772-3030">254-772-3030</a>	<a href="tel:512-472-8288">512-472-8288</a>