



AUSTIN NEWSLETTER

Texas Farm Bureau's Weekly Newsletter for the 88th 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.

Update on Previously Reported Bills

HB 9 and **HJR 125**: Relating to the development and funding of broadband and telecommunications services.

[Ashby, Trent \(R\)](#), SP: [Huffman, Joan \(R\)](#)

Summary:

HB 9 would create the Texas Broadband Infrastructure Fund to provide \$5 billion in state funding to ensure expansion of broadband throughout rural Texas. The fund would be administered by the Comptroller's Broadband Development Office, along with the Public Utility Commission.

Update:

HB 9 and HJR 125 were passed by the Senate with amendments. The House objects to some of the amendments, so the bills are going to a conference committee to work out the differences.

TFB **supports** HB 9 and HJR 125. (TFB Policy: Utilities Section 148, Page 53, Lines 50-53; Rural Living 183, Page 119, Lines 46-53)

HB 73: Relating to limitation of certain liability of owners, lessees, and occupants of land in connection with livestock and agricultural land.

[Murr, Andrew \(R\)](#), SP: [Springer, Drew \(R\)](#)

Summary:

HB 73 adds protections so that a landowner is not liable for any accident that involves their livestock due to the actions of a trespasser entering their property without consent or permission.

Update:

HB 73 passed the Senate with a 31-0 vote. The bill is now heading to the governor for his signature.

TFB **supports** HB 73. (TFB 2023 Policy: Livestock, Pages 15, Lines 43-44; Real Property Rights, Page 59-60, Lines 62-64, 90-92.)

HB 2308: Relating to nuisance actions and other actions against agricultural operations.

[Ashby, Trent \(R\)](#) SP: [Perry, Charles](#)

Summary:

This bill was summarized in [a previous edition of the Austin Newsletter](#).

Update:

HB 2308 was signed into law by Governor Abbott and will be effective starting Sept, 1, 2023.

TFB **supports** HB 2308. (TFB 2023 Policy: Real Property Rights Section 150, Page 59, Lines 29-31; Real Property Rights Section 150, Page 60, Lines 107-108; Real Property Rights Section 150, Page 61, Lines 153-154.)

HB 3257: Relating to the confidentiality of certain biosecurity and other sensitive information shared with the Texas Animal Health Commission.

[Kacal, Kyle \(R\)](#); SP: [Kolkhorst, Lois \(R\)](#)

Summary:

It allows animal industries to voluntarily work with Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) to develop secure food supply plans in advance of a FAD. Those plans would be on file with TAHC, and the bill would maintain producer confidentiality if any activist group made an information request of the agency.

Update:

HB 3257 passed the Senate with a 31-0 vote. The bill is now heading to the governor for his signature.

TFB **supports** HB 3257. (TFB Policy: Texas Animal Health Commission Section 107, Page 5, Lines 4-11)

[SB 28](#) & [SJR 75](#): Relating to financial assistance provided and programs administered by the Texas Water Development Board.

[Perry, Charles \(R\)](#) SP: [King, Tracy \(D\)](#)

Summary:

SB 28 creates the new water supply for Texas fund. This is a special fund in the state treasury to be used for "finance projects...that will lead to the acquisition or creation of seven million acre-feet of new water supplies by 12/31/33." Low interest loans may be provided to political subdivisions and wholesale water suppliers developing these projects. The fund specifically addresses helping rural water systems, desalination of brackish groundwater and sea water, and reusing wastewater from oil and gas production.

SJR 75 is the constitutional amendment for SB 28. It provides the constitutional authority to appropriate the funds necessary to create the new water supply for Texas fund.

Update:

SB 28 and SJR 75 were voted out of the House with amendments. The Senate objects to some of the amendments, so the bills are going to a conference committee to work out the differences.

TFB **supports** SB 28 and SJR 75. (TFB Policy: Water Management Section 155, Page 79, Lines 46-48; Water Management Section 155, Page 80, Lines 136-138)

[SB 1133](#): Relating to a program to compensate landowners for property damage caused by certain criminal activities.

[Blanco, Cesar \(R\)](#); SP: [King, Tracy \(D\)](#)

Summary:

SB 1133 creates a grant program for landowners whose property has been damaged due to illegal border crossings.

Update:

SB 1133 was passed by the House by a 144-0 vote. It has been sent to the governor for his signature.

TFB **supports** SB 1133. (TFB Policy: Real Property Rights Section 150; Line 65-67; Punishment Section 186; Line 15; Punishment Section 186; Lines 22-26.)

HB 2443: Relating to the authority of certain persons to petition a groundwater conservation district to change certain rules.

[Harris, Cody \(R\)](#); SP: [Perry, Charles \(R\)](#)

Summary:

HB 2443 amends the requirements for citizens to petition a water district to change their rules. Within 90 days of granting or denying the petitioners' request, the water district must provide an explanation of their decision.

Update:

HB 2443 was passed by the Senate by a unanimous vote. It has been sent to the governor for his signature.

TFB **supports** HB 2443. (TFB Policy: (TFB 2023 Policy: Real Property Rights Section 150, Page 58, Lines 2-5; Groundwater Section 153, Page 70, Lines 57-59.)

SB 1710: Relating to the universal service fund.

[Perry, Charles \(R\)](#); [Burrows, Dustin \(R\)](#)

Summary:

SB 1710 reinstates the needs test for the TUSF, which was established during the 83rd Legislative Session. The bill will ensure that support distributed from the Texas Universal Service Fund will be utilized for areas of the state that demonstrate a need for continued support.

Update:

SB 1710 was passed by both the Senate and the House of Representatives. It has been sent to the governor for his signature.

TFB **supports** SB 1710. (TFB Policy: Utilities Section 148, Page 53, Lines 50-53, Rural Living 183, Page 119, Lines 46-53)

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