



# AUSTIN NEWSLETTER

Texas Farm Bureau's Weekly Newsletter for the 89th Legislature

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March 28, 2025 | Regular Session, Issue 11 | 89th 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.

## **Water**

**SB 7:** Relating to the oversight and financing of certain water infrastructure matters under the jurisdiction of the Texas Water Development Board.

[Perry, Charles](#)

### **Summary:**

SB 7 is aimed at improving Texas' water infrastructure and ensuring long-term water security. The bill creates the Office of Water Supply Conveyance Coordination to help different agencies work together on water projects, reducing the need for eminent domain and making it easier to transport water.

The bill also establishes the New Water Supply for Texas Fund, which will provide financial support for projects like desalination, aquifer storage, and water pipeline construction.

This legislation will ensure long-term water security by supporting drought resilience efforts and fixing failing water systems that many rural areas rely on.

### **Current Status:**

SB 7 was heard in Senate Water, Agriculture and Rural Affairs on March 24. Texas Farm Bureau testified in support of the bill.

SB 7 was voted favorably out of Senate Water, Agriculture, and Rural Affairs.

### **TFB supports SB 7.**

TFB 2025 Policy: Surface Water Section 155: Page 78, Lines 17-21, Page 79, Lines 23-27, Page 80, Lines 126-130, Page 81, Lines 175-183

Water Management Section 156: Page 83, Lines 23-29, Page 84, Lines 39-40, Page 84, Lines 56-59, Page 84, Lines 71-76, Page 85, Lines 110-111, Page 85, Lines 139-141, Page 86, Lines 180-182.

**HB 3619:** Relating to the rights and liabilities of the owner of the surface estate of the tract of land on which a well to be plugged or re-plugged by the Railroad Commission of Texas is located.

[Dean, Jay](#)

**Summary:**

HB 3619 clarifies the rights and liabilities of surface estate owners by mandating the Texas Railroad Commission to restore the surface of land to its original condition after plugging or replugging a well.

The bill also protects the right for a landowner to have access to their property unless necessary for public health. The legislation recognizes that neither the Texas Railroad Commission nor a landowner are liable for well plugging damages that occur while acting in good faith.

**TFB supports HB 3619.**

TFB 2025 Policy: Water Quality Section 157, Page 86, Lines 2-8 & 23-35.

**HB 3911:** Relating to the plugging or replugging of certain inactive wells subject to the jurisdiction of the Railroad Commission of Texas.

[Darby, Drew](#)

**Summary:**

HB 3911 emphasizes the importance of addressing inactive wells to reduce risks associated with groundwater contamination and environmental safety concerns. The legislation will encourage more operators to participate in addressing the backlog of orphaned wells by providing clarity on liability concerns when they operate and comply with state regulations. HB 3911 also provides clear guidelines on the contractual obligations of well pluggers.

**TFB supports HB 3911.**

TFB 2025 Policy: Water Quality Section 157, Page 87, Lines 2-8, 23-25, & 29-31

## Rural Affairs

**HB 2669**: Relating to the establishment of a reporting and education program for the dangers of balloons to livestock.

[Guerra, Bobby](#)

### **Summary:**

Balloon releases pose a significant, yet often overlooked, threat to livestock. Balloons often land in fencing and pastures where livestock graze. The livestock then mistake the balloon for food, which can lead to tragic outcomes such as choking, blockage, and death.

HB 2669 offers two practical solutions, the first being an educational effort to help the public better understand the unintended consequences of releasing balloons. Second, it sets up a system for ranchers to voluntarily report these incidents to Texas A&M AgriLife. AgriLife will then generate an annual report based on those findings.

### **Status:**

HB 2669 was heard in the Committee on House Agriculture & Livestock on March 25. Texas Farm Bureau testified in support of the bill.

### **TFB supports HB 2669.**

TFB 2025 Policy: Environmental Issues Section 150: Page 60, lines 30-33.

## Update on Previously Mentioned Bills

**SB 17**: Relating to the purchase of or acquisition of title to real property by certain aliens or foreign entities.

[Kolkhorst, Lois](#)

### **Summary:**

SB 17 would prohibit the purchase or acquisition of agricultural land by certain foreign individuals or entities. The bill applies to foreign individuals or entities from countries identified by the U.S. Director of National Intelligence as a country that poses a risk to the national security of the United States based on the three most recent Annual Threat Assessments of the U.S. Intelligence Community.

### **Update:**

SB 17 passed the Senate with a 24-7 vote. It will now go to the House of Representatives.

**TFB supports SB 17.**

TFB 2025 Policy: Real Property Rights Section 151, Page 65, Lines 142-147; Real Property Rights Section 151, Page 67, Lines 261-263

**SB 767**: Relating to creating a database of the firefighting equipment in the state available for use in responding to wildfires.

[Sparks, Kevin](#)

**Summary:**

SB 767 creates a database of the state's firefighting equipment that is available for use in response to wildfires.

**Update:**

SB 767 passed the senate with a 31-0 vote. It will now go to the House of Representatives.

**TFB supports SB 767.**

TFB 2025 Policy: Rural Living Section 184, Page 125, Lines 31-39

**HB 1399 / HJR 99**: Relating to an exemption from ad valorem taxation of tangible property consisting of animal feed held by the owner of the property for sale at retail.

[Harris, Cody](#)

**Summary:**

HB 1399 is the enabling legislation for HJR 99, which abolishes the inventory tax for feed retailers. Despite feed for livestock being sales tax exempt, it is still taxed through an inventory tax.

**Update:**

HB 1399 was heard in the Committee on House Ways & Means on March 17. Texas Farm Bureau registered in support of the bill.

HB 1399 and HJR 99 passed the Committee on House Ways & Means with a 10-0 vote. Both bills will now wait to be heard on the House Floor.

**TFB supports HB 1399 and HJR 99.**

TFB 2025 Policy: Other Taxes Section 145, Page 52, Lines 120-121.

**HB 147:** Relating to the establishment of an electronic registry of livestock marks and brands

[Guillen, Ryan](#)

**Summary:**

HB 147 establishes an electronic registry for livestock brands in Texas. This bill allows farmers and ranchers to electronically record their livestock marks or brands with their county clerk.

**Update:**

HB 147 was voted out of the Committee on House Agriculture & Livestock on March 20 with a 6-0 vote. The bill now waits to be heard on the House Floor.

**TFB supports HB 147.**

TFB 2025 Policy: Livestock section 120, Page 18, Lines 133-167.

**HB 1964:** Relating to equitable relief from the enforcement of certain governmental requirements that affect agricultural operations.

[Spiller, David](#)

**Summary:**

HB 1964 would implement attorney fee provisions in the Right to Farm and Ranch statute. There are certain cities that are ignoring the statutory and constitutional protections for the Right to Farm and Ranch legislation that passed last session.

Some cities are proceeding as if nothing has changed. The bill would allow farmers and ranchers to recover their legal fees when they are required to sue a city under Chapter 251 of the Agriculture Code.

**Update:**

HB 1964 was heard in the Committee on House Agriculture & Livestock on March 25. Texas Farm Bureau testified in support of HB 1964.

**TFB supports HB 1964.**

TFB 2025 Policy: Real Property Rights Section 151, Page 63, Lines 30-33

**HB 2118:** Relating to the issuance of oversize or overweight permits for vehicles transporting agricultural commodities during or preceding a disaster.

[Cain, Briscoe](#)

**Summary:**

HB 2118 establishes provisions for the operation of certain vehicles during state emergencies/disasters.

The bill would create a special permit allowing oversized/overweight vehicles carrying agricultural commodities to operate under certain conditions during declared emergencies or disasters.

**Update:**

HB 2118 was heard in the Committee on House Agriculture & Livestock on March 25. Texas Farm Bureau registered in support of HB 2118.

**TFB supports HB 2118.**

TFB 2025 Policy: Truck Transportation Section 165, Page 104, Lines 89-90

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