

# Missouri Farm Bureau

## *The Capitol Connection*

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**State Issues** – Contact Leslie Holloway - *Director, State & Local Governmental Affairs* – (573) 893-1409, [lholloway@mofb.com](mailto:lholloway@mofb.com)

### **Floor Action**

Having been approved by both chambers, the following “truly agreed and finally passed” bills move to the governor’s desk:

- **HCS/HB 382 (Cox)**, to modify laws pertaining to mortgage brokers;
- **HB 747 (Witte)**, to specify that the crime of sexual contact with a prisoner or offender applies only to prisoners or offenders who are confined in a jail, prison or correctional facility;
- **HB 751 (Schad)**, to modify laws pertaining to the Missouri Propane Education and Research Council; and
- **SCS/SB 355 (Dempsey)**, to allow motor vehicle dealers, boat dealers, and powersport dealers to charge administrative fees associated with the sale or lease of certain vehicles and vessels under certain conditions.

The Senate gave final approval to several bills including the following:

- **SS/SCS/SB 167 (Rupp)**, to require health insurance carriers to cover the diagnosis and treatment of autism spectrum disorders under certain conditions;
- **SS#2/SCS/SB 363 (Griesheimer)**, to authorize the Missouri Department of Revenue to appoint motor vehicle dealers to serve as agents for the purpose of collecting and remitting motor vehicle sales tax;
- **SCS/HCS/HBs 93 & 216 (Thomson/Guest)**, to allow tractor parades with oversight by the Missouri Highway Patrol;
- **SCS/HB 111 (Day)**, to allow unclaimed remains of veterans to be collected by veterans’ services organizations for the purpose of interment in a veterans’ cemetery under certain circumstances;
- **SS/HB 259 (Tilley)**, to modify prompt pay laws pertaining to health insurance claims;
- **SS/SCS/HB 395 (Nance)**, to modify fire safety standards and other laws pertaining to long-term care facilities;
- **SS/HCS/HB 661 (Ruzicka)**, to extend authorization for the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to collect scrap tire fees and water pollution control permit fees, extend public notification requirements for the impaired waters list, and authorize DNR to enter into agreements for the administration of energy-related activities, such as energy efficiency programs, energy studies, and energy resource analyses; and
- **SCS/HCS/HB 667 (Kenny Jones)**, to remove the 12-month grace period that newly elected sheriffs are allowed in order to become a licensed peace officer.

The House gave final approval to several bills including the following:

- **HCS/HBs 64 & 545 (Lipke/Jason Smith)**, to revise the state individual income tax rate schedule, increase the exemption for dependents, and increase the state income tax deduction limit for federal income tax liability;
- **HCS/HB 228 (Parson)**, to require initiative petition signature gatherers to be Missouri residents, prohibit payment for signature gatherers on a per signature basis, and establish a process whereby voters can petition to vote on whether to lower the tax rate of any taxing authority in their district of residence;
- **HCS/HB 384 (Lipke)**, to strengthen criminal laws pertaining to exploitation of the elderly, possession of marijuana, endangering the welfare of a child, stealing or receiving a stolen firearm or explosive weapon, and failing to register as a sexual offender, among other provisions;
- **HCS/HB 390 (Nolte)**, to prohibit the enrollment of unlawfully present aliens in public institutions of higher education;
- **HCS/HB 426 (Sutherland)**, to regulate the ownership, possession, transportation and breeding of large carnivores;
- **HCS/HBs 568 & 534 (Dixon/Koenig)**, to require the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) to make voter registration application forms available from its local offices and resident hunting and fishing permit vendors;
- **HCS/HBs 620 & 671 (Hoskins)**, to modify laws pertaining to licensed bingo;
- **HCS/HB 657 (Cooper)**, to apply the infraction of abandoning a boat dock to all waters of the state and to require 911 addresses to be displayed on boat docks at the Lake of the Ozarks;
- **HCS/HBs 915 & 923 (Hobbs)**, to increase the amount of the surety bond required by the Missouri Department of Agriculture for grain dealers and subject any grain dealer who acts outside the scope of his or her license or classification to a Class A misdemeanor;
- **HCS/HB 958 (Joe Smith)**, to modify tax laws including creating a tax credit program for milk, beef and pork producers as well as other tax credit programs, classifying certain watercraft as residential property for property tax purposes, exempting fuel used to operate school buses from the motor fuel tax, prohibiting the use of global positioning systems to monitor mileage for purposes of charging a mileage tax, and authorizing certain hospital districts with voter approval to abolish hospital district property tax and impose up to 1% retail sales tax; and
- **HCS/HBs 978 & 1028 (Pratt/Schoeller)**, to modify environmental laws including prohibiting utilities from selling or installing home generators unless no other providers serve the area, specifying that water systems that serve benevolent or charitable organizations and draw less than 15,000 gallons per month are exempt from well construction regulations but subject to domestic well regulations, and creating an incentive program for solar water heating systems and tax credit programs for storm shelter construction and homes built to “green” build standards.

### **County Planning and Zoning**

The House Ways and Means Committee, chaired by **Representative Mike Sutherland**, heard testimony on **SS #2/SCS/SB 5 (Griesheimer)**, to modify state law pertaining to county planning and zoning. Proponents testifying in support of the bill were the Missouri Association of Counties/County Commissioners Association of Missouri represented by **Callaway County Commissioner “Doc” Kritzer**, the American Planning Association, and the American Institute of Architects. Opponents testifying against the bill were MFB and a Franklin County resident who expressed concerns regarding potential costs to the county and increased regulations.

### **Other Hearings**

The Senate Agriculture, Food Production, and Outdoor Resources Committee, chaired by **Senator Dan Clemens**, heard testimony on two bills:

- **HCS/HB 250 (Larry Wilson)**, to grant access to public land for the purpose of riding horses or mules if such land has been previously designated for such purpose, except under certain conditions related to safety, maintenance work, or the missions of DNR or MDC; and
- **HCS/HB 658 & 706 (Dugger/Dan Brown)**, to create a milk production tax credit.

Proponents testifying in support of **HCS/HB 250** were MFB and Show Me Missouri Back Country Horsemen represented by former state representative and trailride enthusiast **Kenny Legan**. No opponents testified.

The Missouri Dairy Association and dairy producers, including Greene County FB leader **Charlie Buckner** and Stone County FB leader **Rick Squibb**, attended in support of **HCS/HB 658 & 706**. The Missouri Corn Growers Association and Missouri Soybean Association testified as proponents. MFB testified on an informational basis noting that the MFB Dairy Advisory Committee voted unanimously in support of the bill when they met in February. No opponents testified.

The House Transportation Committee, chaired by **Representative Bob Dixon**, voted do pass on **HCS/SCR 5 (Stouffer)**, supported by MFB, a concurrent resolution calling on Missouri's Congressional delegation to actively oppose authorization and funding for the Missouri River study proposed by upstream states to justify shifting additional water to them to the detriment of congressionally authorized downstream uses.

The House Financial Institutions Committee, chaired by **Representative Mike Cunningham**, heard testimony and voted unanimously do pass on **SCS/SB 542 (Pearce)**, to expand the Linked Deposit Program administered by the State Treasurer, including expanding eligibility for low-interest loans to farmers and ranchers. Proponents testifying in favor of the bill were MFB, State Treasurer's office, Missouri Bankers Association, Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, Farm Credit System, and Missouri Municipal League. No opponents testified.

**National Issues** — Contact Garrett Hawkins - *Director, National Legislative Programs* – (573) 893-1408, [ghawkins@mofb.com](mailto:ghawkins@mofb.com)

#### **FDA sets compliance date for enhanced feed ban rule**

After a brief extended comment period, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced this week the enhanced feed ban rule will be effective April 27<sup>th</sup> with a compliance date of October 26<sup>th</sup>. Under the enhanced rule, certain tissues considered at a high risk for carrying the BSE agent will be banned from all animal feed, including pet food. Current feed rules, which have been in place since 1997, only prohibit the inclusion of these high-risk mammalian proteins in ruminant feed. Such materials include brains and spinal cords from cattle 30 months and older and the entire carcass of a BSE-positive cow.

Farm Bureau has raised concerns about the impacts of the enhanced rule on producers, noting many have seen sharp increases in the fees from deadstock haulers, if a rendering service is even available to take the animals. Missouri's last rendering facility stopped accepting carcasses earlier in the year.

#### **EPA says greenhouse gases endanger public health and welfare**

In an unsurprising move, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has issued a proposed finding that current and projected concentrations of greenhouse gases (e.g. carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, etc.) in the atmosphere endanger public health and welfare. The Agency, as a part of the finding, also said new on-road motor vehicles and engines "cause and contribute" to greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere.

The proposed endangerment finding is the next step toward regulation of greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act. Such regulation, if finalized after the formal comment period, could have serious implications for production agriculture, especially those raising livestock, because costly permits are required under Title V of the Act (i.e. the "de facto cow tax").

MFB will submit comments in opposition to the proposed finding. Members are urged to send letters to EPA as well by one of the following methods:

E-mail: [GHG-Endangerment-Docket@epa.gov](mailto:GHG-Endangerment-Docket@epa.gov)

Fax: (202) 566-1741

Mail: Environmental Protection Agency

EPA Docket Center (EPA/DC)  
Mailcode 6102T  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20460

Please specify Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2008-0508 in your letter or email. Stay tuned in the weeks ahead for further guidance. If you need information, please contact MFB Legislative Programs.

### **AFBF President Stallman testifies on the federal crop insurance program**

The House Agriculture Subcommittee on General Farm Commodities and Risk Management held a hearing earlier this week to review the effectiveness of the crop insurance program. In his testimony, AFBF President Stallman said reforms enacted in 2000 have been positive, but changes are still needed. He cited duplicate procedures, efficiency and integration with other federal agricultural programs as areas for improvement. This was the first of several hearings expected to be held on this issue.

### **AFBF: Regulatory oversight of commodity exchanges should remain under the CFTC**

AFBF and a number of agricultural organizations and entities, including the Kansas City Board of Trade and Minneapolis Grain Exchange, sent letters to leaders of the House and Senate Agriculture Committees, the House Financial Services Committee, and the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee expressing concern about the potential merger of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission with other financial regulators. The concept has been floated as part of Congressional efforts to address the current financial crisis. The organizations wrote, *"It is imperative that regulatory oversight of commodity exchanges is done by a regulator that understands the needs of agriculture and is responsive to policy direction by the Agriculture Committees...The best way to ensure this outcome is to be certain CFTC does not get swept up in an effort to overhaul the regulation of the financial sector. The old adage of not attempting to fix things that are not broken clearly applies here."*

### **News from the Missouri Congressional delegation...**

**Representatives Clay, Carnahan and Emerson** recently held a listening post in St. Louis to gather healthcare reform ideas from insurers, prescription drug providers, patient advocates and others.

**Senator Bond and Congressman Blunt** are among the members of Congress talking about the impacts of a cap and trade system and regulation of greenhouse gases by the EPA. In response to EPA's proposed endangerment finding, Senator Bond said it will "do more to endanger families, farmers and workers with new energy taxes and lost jobs than it does to protect the environment." An editorial from Rep. Blunt on cap and trade was featured in the *Kansas City Star* on April 20<sup>th</sup>.

