

South Carolina Farm Bureau

Legislative Report Week 3 - January 27, 2023



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Governor McMaster's Sixth *State of the State* Address

Governor Henry McMaster delivered his annual *State of the State* address before the General Assembly this week where he provided a glimpse into his priorities for the coming year. They include: judicial selection reform, additional economic investments, fast tracking the state's planned income tax cuts, increased infrastructure spending, teacher pay increases and boosting appropriations to the state Conservation Bank to preserve our most precious land. Members of the General Assembly listened intently as their work for the legislative year will either incorporate, or omit, the inclusion of the Governor's top aspirations.

House Ways & Means Subcommittees Continue to Meet

State agencies testified in front of their respective Ways and Means Budget Subcommittees this week. During these testimonies, the agencies provided a glimpse into their priorities and needs for the future. Below are a few examples of these budget requests related to agriculture:

South Carolina Conservation Bank

- \$25 million non-recurring funds to award competitive grants to qualified governmental and non-profit entities to purchase interests in land for conservation purposes.

South Carolina Governor's School for Agriculture at John de la Howe

- \$2.0 million in recurring funds to support renovations to the dairy barn, additional staff houses, wilderness area camp sites, LS Brice, and Shiflet building;
- \$2.1 million in capital funds to renovations to De La Howe Hall;
- \$1.3 million in capital funds to build a new agricultural mechanic shop.

House Ag Subcommittee Meets

A House Ag Subcommittee met this week to take up H. 3312 which creates the Child Food and Nutrition Services Study Committee. [First Vice Chair Patrick Haddon](#) (House District 19 - Greenville County) is the primary sponsor of this bill that previously passed the House last year. The bill directs the study committee to evaluate and provide recommendations to the General Assembly on transferring the South Carolina Farm to School Program, the Emergency Food Assistance Program, the Commodity Supplemental Food Program, and other various food and dairy safety programs from the Department of Education to the Department of Agriculture. The bill received unanimous approval by the subcommittee and will be heard at the full House Ag Committee soon.

New Bill Introductions

Senate Agriculture [Chairman Wes Climer](#) (Senate District 15 - York) filed **Senate bill 449** this week. The bill extends the sunset clause on the Illegal Transportation of Feral Hogs for two (2) years. The bill was referred to the Senate Ag Committee.

[Representative Phillip Lowe](#) (House District 60 – Florence) and others introduced the “SC Conservation Enhancement Act”, **H.3786**. This legislation aims to create a recurring revenue stream for the state Conservation Bank via deed recording fees, as well as adding additional members to the Board. The bill was referred to the House Ways & Means Committee.

Honor Bestowed Upon Senator Setzler



The South Carolina Senate introduced and adopted a Senate Resolution this week that recognizes and honors [Senator Nikki Setzler](#) (District 26 - Aiken, Calhoun, Lexington & Saluda) for his service to the people of South Carolina and for becoming the longest serving state senator currently holding office in the nation. North Dakota's Senator Ray Holmberg resigned on June 1, 2022 making Senator Setzler the country's longest-serving incumbent state senator. Senator Setzler has served in the SC General Assembly since 1977. Congratulations to the senator and thank you for your lifetime of service!

Farmers of the Week



This week, we welcomed **Ty and Tracy Woodard** of *Woodard Farms* and *Covered in Cotton* of Darlington County.

Ty and Tracy are from a long-standing farm family based in the Pee Dee whose story has spread far and wide. Woodard Farms, who focuses on row crops, cotton and cattle, is also home base to Covered in Cotton, their family-owned manufacturing business of 100% cotton throws, towels, aprons and more, utilizing the cotton grown on their 3rd generation farm.

Ty and Tracy established their business in 2017 after their son, Tobin, developed a life-threatening illness that changed the course of their life just a few years before. After spending weeks in the hospital, the simple gift of a blanket became a calling to share their blessings and love of agriculture with their community and state.

Today, with three healthy children, their business is thriving, and they continue to share gratitude: for every 10 baby blankets sold, the Woodards donate one to a children's hospital and for every 10 throw blankets sold, one is donated to a local family ministry.

Congratulations to Ty and Tracy and thank you for your commitment to South Carolina agriculture.



