



February 14, 2014

## **Legislative Report No. 7**

### ***2014 Kentucky General Assembly***

Today marks the twenty-eighth legislative day of the 2014 session of the Kentucky General Assembly. To date there have been a total of 280 Senate bills and resolutions and 503 House bills and resolutions introduced. Next week will mark the halfway point for this session.

With the halfway point of this session occurring next week here is an update on the status of our 2014 State Priority Issues.

#### **Agriculture Programs and Services**

We are working to find additional revenue for the agricultural development fund for FY 16. Currently in FY 16 the county agricultural development funds would be \$6 million, which would be over a 50% reduction.

We are also seeking to increase the funding for our Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost-Share program. Currently this program will receive \$3 million in FY 15 and \$1 million in FY 16.

Construction for a new Breathitt Veterinary Center is in the current budget and we are working to maintain this funding throughout the budget process.

#### **Highways, Roads and Bridges**

The continuation of the 22.2% allocation of the state gasoline tax revenue for rural roads is maintained. Governor Beshear's budget does recommend to restore the 1.5 cents tax that was lost on January 1, 2014 due to the wholesale price of gas dropping.

[Senate Bill 131](#) has been filed which would increase the floor price for gas from \$1.78 to \$2.51 per gallon.

#### **Taxation**

No bill has been filed on tax reform, however in Governor Beshear's plan he did not attempt to freeze the state real property tax rate or remove agricultures current sales and use tax exemption. However, he did recommend that production items associated with equine farms and vaccines

utilized in the production of food animals also be exempt from the sales and use tax.

### **Wildlife Management**

We are continuing to work on language that will alleviate the continued crop and livestock losses caused by wildlife. We are very close to having a bill draft ready to be filed. We are attempting to make it easier and more efficient for the farmer to reduce the wildlife on their farm.

### **Eminent Domain**

We understand there will be a hearing next week in the House Judiciary Committee regarding eminent domain. If this hearing does indeed take place we will update you next week.

**Below are a few specific bills we are following:**

#### **[SB 44: P. Hornback, D. Parrett, D. Givens - AN ACT relating to motor vehicle weight tolerance.](#)**

This bill would provide a weight tolerance of 10% for commercial vehicles that are engaged in the transportation of agricultural products. This bill has passed the Senate and was received in the House on February 5. The bill was assigned to the House Transportation Committee.

#### **KFB Policy:**

*"We support the 10% weight exemption on farm trucks and trucks servicing farms hauling agriculture products, similar to the same benefits currently given to the transportation of primary forest products."*

#### **Action Request:**

**If your Representative is a member of the House Transportation Committee please contact them and ask them to SUPPORT SB 44.**

For a list of committee members please [click here](#).

#### **[HB 173: S. Westrom, J. Adams, J. Crenshaw, D. Graham, J. Greer, J. Jenkins, M. Marzian, D. Owens, D. Watkins - AN ACT prohibiting smoking in public places and places of employment.](#)**

This bill would prohibit indoor smoking in businesses, places of employment, and other listed public places and would exempt private residences, unless used for child care or adult day care. It would also permit local governments to adopt stricter regulations by ordinance and provide for enforcement by all peace officers and designated health department and local government employees. This bill has passed the House Health and Welfare Committee and now heads to the full House for their consideration.

#### **KFB Policy:**

*"We believe business owners should have the exclusive right to prohibit tobacco use in their private business. We are adamantly opposed to any*

*level of government or agency mandating that businesses prohibit tobacco use."*

**Action Request:**

**Please contact your Representative and ask them to OPPOSE HB 173.**

Kentucky Farm Bureau, along with other Kentucky commodity organizations, will be celebrating the week of February 16–22 as Food Check-Out Week recognizing Kentucky agriculture. **Wednesday, February 19, 2014 has been designated as Food Check-Out Day** and both the House and Senate will pass a resolution honoring Kentucky farmers. In addition, Kentucky Farm Bureau and Kentucky commodity organizations will provide each member of the General Assembly with a basket of Kentucky-grown commodities.

**REMINDER**

**The Kentucky Farm Bureau Legislative Drive-In will be held Tuesday, March 4, 2014 in the auditorium at the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, located at 200 Mero Street, in Frankfort beginning at 9:00 a.m.** We encourage you to bring a car load to visit your senators and representatives. Please call them in advance to schedule a visit at 502.564.8100. This is a great opportunity to show your legislators your appreciation for their votes as well as discussing issues affecting agriculture that are still pending this session.

**HOW TO CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATORS**

During the week, you may reach your representative and senator in Frankfort by calling 502.564.8100.

If you do not desire to talk to your state legislator immediately or you just want to leave a message, you may dial toll-free 800.372.7181. An answering service will take your message for your representative or senator. The legislative calendar information line is 800.633.9650, the bill status line is 866.840.2835, and the Governor's office number is 502.564.2611

**YOUR LOBBYISTS**

The following are registered to lobby for Kentucky Farm Bureau for the 2014 session: Jeff Harper, Public Affairs Director, extension 5104; Bryan Alvey extension 7218; Tony Sholar, extension 5121, Beth Wisman, extension 5105, and David S. Beck, extension 5101. If you would like to call your lobbyists during the evening, call 502-352-4280 at the Frankfort headquarters or call 502.495.5000 and key in their extensions.

If you would like to contact one of your lobbyists during the day, please call Sara Stivers at 502.495.5121 and she will put you in touch with one of them.

The Legislative Report and KFB's Priority Issues are also on KFB's website at [kyfb.com](http://kyfb.com) and the [KFB app](#).