



February 17, 2017

Legislative Report No. 4

2017 Kentucky General Assembly

Friday marked the fourteenth legislative day of the 2017 session of the Kentucky General Assembly. There have been a total of 389 Senate bills and resolutions and 654 House bills and resolutions introduced. Last Thursday marked the last day to introduce bills in the Senate and last Friday was the last day to introduce bills in the House.

The Kentucky General Assembly will not convene today, Monday, February 20, in observance of President's Day. They will reconvene tomorrow which will mark the halfway point of the 2017 session.

The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources (KDFWR) Wildlife Committee recommended seventeen female black bear takes for the 2017 season, which would be a decrease from twenty in the 2016 season.

In response to this recommendation KFB President Mark Haney sent a letter to officials with KDFWR asking them to reconsider. In his letter, President Haney requested that due to the significant increase in property and crop damage caused by the growing black bear population in Eastern Kentucky, that the female black bear takes be increased back to the 2016 season level of twenty.

The KDFWR Commission is scheduled to act on the 2017 black bear season dates and number of takes at their next meeting on March 17.

Some bills of interest which we are following:

[SB 83: T. Buford - AN ACT relating to fish and wildlife.](#)

This bill would allow the Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources to undertake measures if deer and elk pose a significant risk to human safety from automobile accidents and identify permissive measures for the department to implement including special hunts and issuance of more tags. This bill was assigned to the Senate Natural Resources and Energy Committee.

2017 State Priority Issue:

"Seek effective wildlife management that will reduce the wildlife population in an effort to alleviate continued crop and livestock losses, automobile accidents, human injuries, and loss of life."

HB 292: J. Miller - AN ACT relating to the distribution of fuel tax revenues.

This bill would change the law regarding allocation of a portion of fuel tax revenue to the rural secondary and county road aid funds, to change the revenue-sharing formula on the portion of fuel tax revenue which exceeds \$825 million. This bill has been assigned to the House Appropriations and Revenue Committee.

2017 State Priority Issue:

"Support the rural and secondary and county road aid programs and continuation of the 22.2% allocation of the state gasoline tax revenue for rural roads."

HB 174: R. Heath, M. Castlen, M. Dossett, D. Hale, M. Hart, K. King, S. Miles, S. Rudy, D. Schamore, W. Stone, W. Thomas, J. Tipton, T. Turner - AN ACT relating to overweight vehicles.

This bill would extend a 10 percent weight tolerance for vehicles engaged exclusively in the transportation of feed for livestock or poultry and permit a vehicle registered under KRS 186.050(3) transporting certain meats, agricultural crop products, or livestock to exceed the gross weight provisions by a weight tolerance of 10 percent. This bill passed the House 81-13 and the Senate 35-0 and has been delivered to the Governor.

KFB Policy:

"We support the 10% weight exemption on farm trucks and trucks servicing farms hauling agriculture products."

SB 1: M. Wilson, D. Givens, R. Alvarado, D. Carroll, C. Embry Jr., R. Girdler, S. Meredith, D. Thayer, M. Wise - AN ACT relating to public education and declaring an emergency.

This bill would replace common core standards in KY public schools. The bill would require school districts to develop and implement a personnel evaluation system based on a statewide framework for teaching and prohibit the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) from imposing reporting requirements related to the system on local districts. It would also require evaluations annually for teachers who have not attained continuing service status and every three years for teachers with continuing service status, principals, and assistant principals and prohibit evaluation results from being included in school accountability. The bill would allow a foreign language course, career and technical education course, or a computer technology or programming course to meet the arts and humanities requirement for high school graduation. The bill would also delete program reviews, audits from

the statewide assessment system, revise the statewide assessment requirements and prohibit the statewide assessment from including any standards not included in the board-approved standards and include progress toward English proficiency, quality of school climate and safety, high school graduation rates, and postsecondary readiness in the accountability system. This bill passed the Senate on Friday by a vote of 35-0 and now heads to the House for their consideration.

KFB Policy:

"We support changes to the testing system that reflect the yearly education improvement of the child while also evaluating the school."

SB 38: C. Embry Jr. - AN ACT relating to timber theft.

This bill would specify that a person, regardless of state of mind or whether the person believes to be authorized or not, is liable for three times the stumpage value of the timber and three times the cost of any damages to property when he or she takes the timber of another without legal right or color of title. This bill passed the Senate Agriculture Committee and passed the full Senate 35-0 and now heads to the House for consideration.

SB 50: D. Thayer, R. Alvarado, P. Hornback - AN ACT relating to the school calendar.

This bill would establish a school district calendar committee and determine its membership and allow local district control of inclusion of a variable student instructional year in a school calendar. It would also require notice to be given to the media for school board meetings regarding the school calendar and provide that districts adopting a school calendar with the first student attendance day no earlier than the Monday closest to August 26 may use a variable student instructional year. This bill passed the Senate 33-1 and has been assigned to House Education Committee.

KFB Policy:

"We recognize that boards of education have the responsibility for developing the school calendar. We urge county Farm Bureau boards to work with local boards of education in developing the school calendar."

"We believe that since locally elected Boards of Education are accountable for the effectiveness of local schools, our schools should be operated within the general policy provisions and district goals adopted by local boards."

HB 200: D. Osborne - AN ACT relating to orders of restitution and forfeiture following a criminal conviction of cruelty to animals in the second degree.

This bill would amend KRS 525.130, relating to cruelty to animals in the second degree, to allow a court to order an offender to pay restitution for the upkeep of a horse involved in the offense and terminate the offender's interest in the horse involved in the offense. This bill was introduced Friday and has yet to be assigned to a committee.

SB 249: J. Carpenter - AN ACT relating to the Energy and Environment Cabinet.

This bill would remove the Environmental Quality Commission and the Kentucky Mining Board from under the Energy and Environment Cabinet. This bill also changes the requirements to qualify for the Director of the Division of Conservation by removing the graduate of a recognized agricultural college and the minimum five year requirement in professional agricultural activities. It also deletes the requirement of the Soil and Water Conservation Commission "approval" of the director and amends it to the word "advice". This bill was introduced into the Senate on Thursday and has yet to be assigned to a committee.

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.

For the 2017 regular session calendar [click here](#).

For a complete list of committee assignments [click here](#).

YOUR LOBBYISTS

Those who are registered to lobby for Kentucky Farm Bureau for the 2017 session are: Jeff Harper, Public Affairs Director, extension 5104; Bryan Alvey, extension 7218; Tony Sholar, extension 5121; 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 and the KFB app.