

April 29, 2011

Week 8

Although budget negotiations were delayed when the Senate and House could not agree on allocations, the process now seems to have regained momentum. Many people are now hopeful that the legislative session will end on time.

Immigration remains a contentious issue. This week a disgruntled member of the Tea Party filed a complaint with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, claiming that legislators and the Capitol Police should have reported to Immigrations and Customs Enforcement the presence of undocumented workers who came to protest against the proposed immigration legislation.

At this point, the House proposal, HB 7089, is ready to be heard on the House Floor. Representatives are delaying action, however, until the Senate moves on its bill. The Senate has not been able to reach a consensus on SB 2040.

Leadership of the bill has been given to Sen. J.D. Alexander, R-Lake Wales. Senators continue to explore a variety of options regarding enforcement and employment regulations.

FFBF believes that immigration is a federal issue and should be dealt with on the federal level.

We continue to work with our lawmakers, however, to ensure that agriculture is not negatively impacted.

An Outline of Other Issues of Note for the Agricultural Industry:

Numeric Nutrient Criteria

HB 239 by Rep. Trudi Williams, R-Ft.

Myers; SB 1090 by Sen. Charlie Dean, R-Inverness: This legislation prohibits the implementation of rules regarding certain federal numeric nutrient water quality criteria by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. FFBF supports.

HB 239 – Passed House

SB 1090 – Senate Environmental Preservation and Conservation Committee

Wetlands/Ag Exemption

HB 421 by Rep. Leonard Bembry, D-Madison; SB 1174 by Sen. Gary Siplin, D-Orlando: This legislation authorizes DACS to determine whether an activity is a bona fide agricultural best management practice. FFBF supports.

HB 421 – House Floor

SB 1174 – Senate Budget Committee

Septic Tank Inspections

HB 13 by Rep. Marti Coley, R-Marianna; SB 1698 by Sen. Charlie Dean, R-Inverness: This legislation eliminates the septic tank inspections and associated fees created by SB 550 last year. FFBF supports.

HB 13 – Passed House

SB 1698 – Senate Budget Committee

*****Lawmakers Approve Measures for Property Rights*****

HB 701 by Rep. Eric Eisnagle, R-Orlando; SB 998 by Sen. David Simmons, R-Altamonte Springs: This legislation amends the Bert Harris, Jr., Private Property Rights Act.

Provisions of the bills will have the following effects:

- Allow landowners to bring a claim against a government entity based on when the law was applied, not when it was enacted;
- Provide that a moratorium on a development that is in effect for longer than one year is not a temporary impact to real property and may constitute an inordinate burden;

- Change the notification period from 180 days to 120 days;
- Replace the term “ripeness” with language specifying when the prerequisites for judicial review are met; and
- Waive sovereign immunity for purposes of the Act.

FFBF supported. This legislation has passed both the House and the Senate and becomes effective July 1.

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