

2021 ARKANSAS **LEGISLATIVE** **SUMMARY**



**FARM
BUREAU**
ARKANSAS



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While the 93rd General Assembly was a successful session for agriculture, it was missing something – You. This session was more difficult because Covid-19 restrictions prevented us from having ***Farmers Day at the Capitol*** and did not allow for ***County Legislative Breakfasts*** on the weekends. Despite not being able to have a physical presence, Farm Bureau leaders are persistent and when there was a call to action, legislators told us to “call off the dogs, we got your message.” This produced multiple legislative successes for ARFB members, including:



- The reinstatement of a State Meat Inspection Program
- Improvements to Levee and Drainage District structures
- Expansion of Rural Broadband Authority
- Updates to the State Plant Board appointment process

In total, the General Assembly met for 108 days, where they filed 1,675 bills including 42 proposed constitutional amendments. The state legislature approved three constitutional amendments to send to Arkansas voters for their consideration on the November 2022 ballot.

- HJR1005: “Constitutional Amendment and Ballot Initiative Reform Amendment”
- Requires sixty percent approval in each chamber to refer a constitutional amendment to the ballot and sixty percent approval by the electors to adopt a referred amendment or an amendment submitted through the initiative process.
- SJR10: To amend the constitution to authorize the legislature to enter special session when two-thirds of the legislature submits signatures, or by joint proclamation of the Speaker of the House and Senate President Pro Tempore.
- SJR14: “Arkansas Religious Freedom Amendment”

The 93rd General Assembly gaveled out for an extended recess on April 28, 2021. It is expected legislators will convene later this fall to address redistricting as a result of the 2020 Census.

I would like to thank all of our leaders who contacted elected officials about our priorities. The strength of this organization remains our grassroots involvement. To sign up for updates, text ARFB to 52886.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stanley Hill". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Stanley Hill,
Vice President, Public Affairs & Government Relations

General Session Overview

The 93rd General Assembly gavelled in on January 11, 2021 and gavelled out for an extended recess on April 28, 2021. As a result of the 2020 Census, it is expected legislators will convene later this fall to address congressional redistricting. While this is not the technical conclusion of the 2021 legislative session, it did signal the end of the regular session. In total, the General Assembly met for 108 days, 1,675 bills were filed including 42 proposed constitutional amendments. The state legislature approved three constitutional amendments to send to Arkansas voters for their consideration on the November 2022 ballot. These proposals include:

- **HJR1005:** A constitutional amendment to reform certain measures presented to voters, to be known as the “Constitutional Amendment and Ballot Initiative Reform Amendment.”
- **SJR10:** A constitutional amendment to allow the General Assembly to convene in extraordinary session upon the issuance of a joint written proclamation of the speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro tempore of the Senate or upon the submission of a written proclamation containing the signatures of at least 2/3 of the members of the House of Representatives and at least 2/3 of the members of the Senate to the speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro tempore of the Senate requesting that the General Assembly convene in extraordinary session.
- **SJR14:** A constitutional amendment to create the “Arkansas Religious Freedom Amendment.

This was a challenging state legislative session for many reasons including: working around Covid-19 restrictions, new personalities elected to the legislature and navigating the funding discrepancies between both chambers. The beginning of the session saw empty hallways and masks worn by everyone in the Capitol complex. Still, at least one ArFB lobbyist was present each day to ensure our priorities were front of mind for all members. This produced multiple legislative successes – outlined in detail below – for ArFB members.

Additionally, the 2020 elections resulted in four new members elected to the Senate, while 15 new members were elected to the House. Each of these new members brought their own personalities and priorities. Furthermore, there were discrepancies regarding the condition of the state’s budget between both chambers. This resulted in some frustration in the Capitol during the 2021 legislative session.

During the 2021 legislative session, Republicans had a veto-proof supermajority in both chambers. The House consisted of 78 Republicans and 22 Democrats while the Senate had 28 Republicans and 7 Democrats.

Revenue Stabilization Act

During the final week of the 2021 legislative session, the General Assembly approved the state's budget for fiscal year 2022 (FY2022). This is done via the Revenue Stabilization Act (RSA). For FY2022, the RSA provides \$5.8 billion in state spending; this is \$50 million less than what was budgeted for the previous budget year.

Specifically, the FY2022 budget was based on an estimated net general revenue of \$6.06 billion before the Legislature's tax cut measures collectively reduced projected net revenue by \$203.1 million. The budget projects a surplus of \$17 million in fiscal 2022.

The tax cuts include:

- \$179 million from Act 248, which exempts state income tax from being collected from Covid-19 relief program tax deductions and loan forgiveness programs.
- \$3.1 million from Act 254, which exempts unemployment benefits from income taxes.
- \$1.6 million from Act 970, which provides a sales tax exemption for poultry growers using municipal water.
- \$6.5 million from Act 1013, which reduces the sales tax on used vehicles and trailers priced between \$4,000 and \$10,000 from 6.5% to 3.5%.

On April 22, Governor Hutchinson announced state officials expected a surplus of about \$600 million at the end of FY2021 and expect similarly strong growth in tax collections in FY2022 because of Federal Covid-19 stimulus package. Moreover, state officials have estimated the long-term reserve fund, which has a balance of \$209.9 million, could increase to \$711.1 million, with the help of surplus funds.

Legislative Priorities

✓ Reinstatement of a State Meat Inspection Program under the Arkansas Department of Agriculture and funding for the program.

- **ArFB Policy** – 138 Livestock & Poultry Commission

- #12 “We support establishing a state meat and poultry inspection program for the retail sale of meat.”

- **HB1315 (Act 418)** – *Championed by Rep. DeAnn Vaught (Horatio) & Sen. Ricky Hill (Cabot)*, establishes a State Meat Inspection Program under the authority of the Arkansas Department of Agriculture. Further, it includes a provision requiring the Arkansas Secretary of Agriculture to consult with the industry (including producers and those involved in the meat and meat food products industry), when developing the rules and parameters for the State Meat Inspection Program.

- **Coalition** – ArFB spearheaded the State Meat Inspection coalition, which included the Arkansas Cattlemen’s Association, the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance and the Hunters Feeding the Hungry, to advance HB1315 across the finish line.

- **Testimony** – Two ArFB members testified in support of HB1315. Specifically,

- On February 3, Michael Lee, owner & operator of Flying C Ranch in Faulkner County and the ArFB Beef Division Chairman, testified before the House Agriculture Committee in support of this bill.
 - On March 9, Dustin Cowell, owner & operator of Cowbell Ranch in Newton County and the Chairman of the ArFB YF&R Committee, testified before the Joint Budget Personnel Subcommittee, advocating the subcommittee approve the 8 new positions for the State Meat Inspection Program.

- **Timeline**

- January 27 – HB1315 was filed by Rep. Vaught with 66 House cosponsors and 17 Senate cosponsors.
 - February 3 – The House Agriculture Committee approves HB1315.
 - February 4 – The House approved HB1315, by a vote of 95 to 0.
 - March 2 – The Senate Agriculture Committee debated HB1315, expressing concerns about funding for the program.
 - March 4 – The Joint Budget Committee considered, and approved, an amendment to SB164, the appropriations bill for the Arkansas Department of Agriculture, regarding the state meat inspection program. The amendment simply outlined the funds, and their specific purpose, for the program. In total, for salaries, maintenance and operations, the committee approved \$743,399 for the program.
 - March 8 – The Senate adopted an amendment to HB1315, which requires a legislative reevaluation of the State Meat Inspection Program four years from the date of approval from the USDA.

- March 9 – The Senate Agriculture Committee approved HB1315, as amended.
- March 9 – The Joint Budget Personnel Subcommittee considered, and approved, the 8 positions (1 manager, 5 inspectors, 1 lab tech and 1 veterinarian) for HB1315
- March 11 – The Senate approved HB1315, as amended, by a vote of 34 to 0.
- March 17 – The House Agriculture Committee approved HB1315, as amended.
- March 18 – The House approved HB1315, as amended, by a vote of 92 to 0.
- March 23 – HB1315 was signed by the Governor as Act 418.

- **Funding:** ArFB, and our coalition, requested \$750,000 for the Program. Ultimately, only \$250,000 was provided by the Revenue Stabilization Act. During the Senate Agriculture Committee meeting on March 11, Secretary of Agriculture, Wes Ward, told the committee the Department initially required \$250,000 to begin working on the state meat inspection program cooperative agreement between Arkansas and USDA. Secretary Ward is confident the Department has the necessary funds available within their budget for the initial program start-up. ArFB will continue to work to ensure the Program is a success and the necessary funding levels are realized.

✓ **Improve the Levee and Drainage Board structure in order for them to operate in an efficient and effective manner, in order to maintain the integrity of the overall systems.**

- **ArFB Policy** – 178 Drainage, Levee and Improvement Districts
 - 5. *“We urge the legislature to commission a study creating a means for two or more drainage districts to use funds together on a project that benefits those districts, though the project may be outside those districts.”*
 - 7. *“All landowners within the district should be required to pay drainage taxes.”*
 - 8. *“We support the state placing priority on damaged levees protecting agricultural land.”*
 - 9. *“We recommend an extensive study on updating and streamlining existing levee and drainage districts be done by the state legislature.”*
- Rep. Mary Bentley (Perryville) & Sen. Gary Stubblefield (Branch) introduced four bills to improve the levee and drainage board structure across the state. These bills focused on improving the integrity of the overall system and provide incentives to the boards to operate in a more efficient and effective manner.
 - [HB1248 \(Act 265\)](#) – Authorizes a single county to consolidate two or more levee districts into one district. Waives notice requirements that apply to newly formed levee districts.
 - [HB1249 \(Act 266\)](#) – Creates a process for the dissolution or abolition of a levee district by petition.
 - [HB1250 \(Act 267\)](#) – Increases the maximum rate of tax for a levee and/or drainage improvement district, from 25 cents per acre to \$2.50 per acre on rural lands.
 - [HB1251 \(Act 359\)](#) – Makes various changes to the annual reports that improvement districts file with county clerks for the preceding fiscal year.
- **Testimony** – On February 3, John Bailey, Director, ArFB Commodity & Regulatory Affairs testified before the House Agriculture Committee in support of these bills.

• Timeline

- January 21 – Rep. Bentley met (virtually) with members of the ARFB Levee Committee to discuss the intent and purpose of each bill. The Committee voted to recommend to that the ArFB Board of Directors support these bills.
- January 25 – Rep. Bentley filed HB1248, HB1249, HB1250 and HB1251.
- February 3 – The House Agriculture Committee approved all four bills.
- February 4 – The House approved all four bills:
 - HB1248, 95 to 0.
 - HB1249, 96 to 0.
 - HB1250, 71 to 17.
 - HB1251, 94 to 3.
- March 2 – The Senate Agriculture Committee approved HB1248, HB1249 & HB1250. (HB1251 was not approved, due to a spelling error found in the bill text.)
- March 2 – The Senate approved:
 - HB1248, 35 to 0.
 - HB1249, 35 to 0.
 - HB1250, 34 to 1.
- March 3 – The Senate adopted an amendment to HB1251, correcting the spelling error.
- March 3 – The Senate approved HB1251, as amended, by a vote of 33 to 0.
- March 4 – HB1248, HB1249 & HB1250 were all signed by the Governor, and are now Act 265, Act 266 and Act 267, respectfully.
- March 10 – The House Agriculture Committee approved HB1251, as amended.
- March 11 – The House approved HB1251, as amended, by a vote of 93 to 0.
- March 15 – The Governor signed HB1251, which is now Act 359.

✓ Provide resources for broadband access to rural areas.

• ArFB Policy – 163 Utilities

- 21. “We recommend making affordable, high quality broadband and cellular service a top priority across the state using any and all available resources.”
- 26. “We support the Rural Broadband ID Program to help communities with the broadband grant process.”

- [SB74 \(Act 67\)](#) – Filed by Sen. Ricky Hill (Cabot) and Rep. Brian Evans (Cabot) allows counties and municipalities to use broadband infrastructure as collateral for the purpose of acquiring bonds to enter into partnerships with the telecommunications companies to deploy broadband.

• Timeline

- January 11 – Sen. Hill filed SB74.

- January 21 – The Senate Agriculture Committee approved SB74.
- January 26 – The Senate approved SB74 by a vote of 35 to 0.
- January 27 – The House Agriculture Committee approved SB74.
- January 28 – The House approved the bill by a vote of 94 to 0.
- February 4 – The Governor signed SB74, which is now Act 67.

- **HB1788 (Act 795)** – Filed by Rep. Larry Fite (Benton) & Sen. Kim Hammer (Benton) establishes broadband improvement districts by authorizing existing improvement districts to enter into partnership with a private entity to provide, promote and support broadband internet service and finance public capital facilities.

• **Timeline**

- March 18 – Representative Fite filed HB1788.
- March 29 – The House City, County and Local Affairs Committee approved HB1788.
- March 30 – The House approved HB1788 by a vote of 97 to 0.
- April 6 – The Senate adopted an amendment to HB1788, which made minor technical changes.
- April 8 – The Senate City, County and Local Affairs Committee approved HB1788, as amended.
- April 12 – The Senate Approved HB1788, as amended, by a vote of 34 to 1.
- April 14 – The House City, County and Local Affairs Committee approved HB1788, as amended.
- April 15 – The House approved HB1788, as amended, by a vote of 94 to 0.
- April 20 – The Governor signed HB1788, which is now Act 795.

✓ **Refine the appointment process for the State Plant Board, while maintaining the integrity and authority of the Board.**

- **ArFB Policy** – 137 State Plant Board

- 19. We support:

- 19.1. Membership of the State Plant Board to include more actively engaged farmers.
- 19.4. The current structure of the Arkansas State Plant Board with associations nominating members and being appointed by the governor.

- **HB1210 (Act 361)** – Originally filed by Rep. David Hillman (Almyra), this bill requires entities that currently appoint representative members to the State Plant Board to instead submit a list of two names to the Governor, who will appoint one of those persons to the Board. Specifically, the Act:
 - Ensures the purpose of the State Plant Board is upheld and the constitutionality concerns are addressed.
 - Requires members of the Board to be appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate.
 - Increases the voting membership of the State Plant Board from 16 to 17 members.

- **Testimony** – On February 1, Matt King, Director, ArFB Public Affairs & Government Relations, testified in support of HB1210.

- **Timeline**

- January 19 – Representative Hillman filed HB1210.
- February 1 – The House Agriculture Committee approved HB1210, unanimously by a voice vote.
- February 2 – The House approved HB1210 by a vote of 97 to 0.
- March 2 – The Senate Agriculture Committee reported HB1210, as amended with a Do Pass. The amendment was a complete re-write of the bill to add one voting member to the Board. Additionally, the amendment added Sen. Ron Caldwell as the lead Senate sponsor.
- March 4 – The Senate approved HB1210, as amended, by a vote of 29 to 1.
- March 10 – The House Agriculture Committee reported HB1210, as amended, with a Do Pass.
- March 11 – The House approved HB1210, as amended, by a vote of 89 to 5.
- March 15 – The Governor signed HB1210, which is now Act 361.

Additional Priorities

✓ **Expand Arkansas Lemon Law to match federal standards for Class 3 (one-ton) vehicles.**

- [HB1230 \(Act 92\)](#) *Rep. Marcus Richmond & Sen. Blake Johnson* – Updates the Arkansas Lemon Law to meet the Federal weight definition of up to 14,000 lbs. for Class 3 vehicles, to include heavy pickups.

✓ **Allow the Forestry Commission to use current funds for scholarships to address the shortfall in trained foresters.**

- [HB1389 \(Act 399\)](#) *Rep. Ken Bragg & Sen. Ben Gilmore* – Creates the Arkansas Foresters for the Future Scholarship Program; establishes eligibility requirements for participation; places the program under the administration of the Department of Agriculture, Forestry Division.

✓ **Obtaining funding for a Center for Forest Business at the University of Arkansas-Monticello.**

- [SB213 \(Act 162\)](#) *Joint Budget* – The appropriations bill for the University of Arkansas at Monticello and includes a provision which provides \$814,915 for the Center for Forest Business.
 - ArFB continues to work with the General Assembly and the Governor to secure funds for the Center.

✓ **Require Arkansas dairies be paid based on the posted price of the milk they deliver instead of a blended price that the buyer currently calculates.**

- [HB1729 \(Act 521\)](#) *Rep. Mary Bentley & Sen. Gary Stubblefield* – Provides the Arkansas Milk Stabilization Board jurisdiction over the base milk price paid to a producer and mandates that milk producers in the state receive Class 1 prices for milk utilized and sold; empowers the board to revise Class 1 prices.
- **Adopted House Concurrent Resolution (HCR)1019** *Rep. Jon Eubanks & Sen. Gary Stubblefield* – Encourages Congress to review issues related to dairy products and make changes to improve Federal Milk Marketing Orders in order to better support dairy farmers throughout the country.

Tax Priorities

✓ **Exempt any state income taxes on Federal relief payments (CFAP, PPP).**

- [HB1361 \(Act 248\)](#) *Rep. Les Eaves & Sen. Jonathan Dismang* – Excludes income that a taxpayer received through SBA programs (PPP and EIDL) and CFAP from the definition of gross income for tax purposes. Act 248 is retroactive for tax years beginning on, and after, January 1, 2019.

✓ **Create a tax exemption for all parts and labor on agricultural equipment.**

- [HB1818](#) *Rep. Howard Beaty & Sen. Ben Gilmore* – Creates a sales & use tax exemption for the sale of parts purchased to repair existing agricultural and timber equipment & machinery. This bill did not receive a vote.
 - Revenue Impact as determined by the Dept. of Finance & Administration:
 - FY2022 – \$8.3 million
 - FY2023 – \$20 million
- [HB1820](#) *Rep. DeAnn Vaught & Sen. Jonathan Dismang* – Creates a sales and use tax exemption for parts and services involving the modification, replacement or repair, either in whole or in part, of existing agricultural equipment and machinery. This bill did not receive a vote.

✓ **Expand uses of conservation tax credits to allow additional practices without expanding current funding levels.**

- [HB1773 \(Act 563\)](#) *Rep. David Hillman* – Adjusts the time period during which agricultural water resource conservation projects must be completed from three years to five years.
- [HB1314 \(Act 875\)](#) *Rep. David Hillman & Sen. Ricky Hill* – Adjusts various provisions within the Water Resource Conservation and Development Incentives Act, including increasing the amounts of the tax credits allowed.

✓ **Develop a tax credit program for beginning farmers.**

- [HB1778](#) *Rep. Joe Jett* – Creates a tax credit for a percentage of the sale or lease of land to a certified beginning farmer. The bill also creates a tax credit for a beginning farmer’s cost of participating in a financial management program certified by the Department of Agriculture. This bill did not receive a vote but has been referred to interim study.

– Revenue Impact as determined by the Dept. of Finance & Administration:

- FY2023 – \$11.5 million
- FY2024 – \$12.9 million
- FY2025 and after – \$14.4 million

✓ **Amend state law to allow for Section 179 farm depreciation to mirror federal law.**

- [HB1817](#) *Rep. Howard Beaty & Sen. Ben Gilmore* – Updates state laws concerning the income tax deduction for depreciation and expensing of property to mirror changes in the U.S. Code. This bill did not receive a vote.

– Revenue Impact as determined by the Dept. of Finance & Administration:

- FY2023 – \$96.4 million
- FY2024 – \$81.7 million

✓ **Other Tax Legislation**

- [HB1209 \(Act 362\)](#) *Rep. Joe Jett*– Creates the Elective Pass-Through Entity Tax Act.
- [HB1196 \(Act 970\)](#) *Rep. Craig Christiansen* – Creates a sales tax exemption for poultry farmers using municipal water.
- [HB1912 \(Act 1013\)](#) *Rep. John Payton & Sen. Jason Rupert* – Reduces the sales tax on used vehicles and trailers priced between \$4,000 and \$10,000 from 6.5% to 3.5%.

Other Acts/Bills of Interest

Every commodity promotion board appropriation for 2021-2022 has been signed into law.

✓ Livestock

- [HB1099 \(Act 130\)](#) Rep. DeAnn Vaught – Authorizes a restricted veterinarian license for veterinary medicine graduates who have not passed the licensing examination.
- [HB1142 \(Act 131\)](#) Rep. DeAnn Vaught & Sen. Greg Leding – Recognizes artificial insemination of livestock and animals as a routine animal husbandry practice.
- [SB613 \(Act 700\)](#) Sen. James Sturch – Creates a program within the Department of Agriculture for funding county and district fairs and the State Fair and Livestock Show. Repeals process by which the Livestock and Poultry Commission grades fairs in determining funding amount.
- [HB1575 \(Act 716\)](#) Rep. Jon Eubanks – Removes extrusion and cooking for swine feed from the list of acceptable means of disposing of fowl carcasses that the Arkansas Livestock and Poultry Commission may specify by rule as acceptable methods for disposal.
- [HB1883 \(Act 1091\)](#) Rep. Craig Christiansen – Prohibits municipalities from enacting a resolution or ordinance that terminates, bans, effectively bans or creates an undue hardship related to a working animal.
- [HB1920 \(Act 1076\)](#) Rep. DeAnn Vaught & Sen. Stubblefield – Requires each state agency that has promulgated rules pertaining to milk and cattle production to file initial and final rule reports, the final report to be assigned to the House and Senate Agriculture Committees, etc., for review.

✓ Row Crops

- [HB1471 \(Act 364\)](#) Rep. David Hillman – Changes the Abandoned Pesticide Disposal Fee that is charged per registered agricultural pesticide from \$50 to an amount not to exceed \$100, which will be set by the State Plant Board.
- [HB1679 \(Act 557\)](#) Rep. David Hillman – This is cleanup language from transformation. It moves many pesticide control authorities from the Arkansas Plant Board to the Arkansas Department of Agriculture; repeals the vendor's license that is required to engage in the spreading of liming materials on properties belonging to others.

✓ Regulatory

- [HB1261 \(Act 285\)](#) *Rep. Jack Ladyman & Sen. Lance Eads* – Authorizes the Division of Environmental Quality, subject to the approval of the Governor, to administer its own permit program for the dredge and fill permitting program established in Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.
- [HB1115 \(Act 389\)](#) *Rep. Jeff Wardlaw & Sen. Gary Stubblefield* – Exempts vehicles that have a gross weight of less than 26,000 pounds from the Motor Carrier Act, unless designated as transporting hazardous materials or designed to transport more than 15 passengers.
- [HB1118 \(Act 306\)](#) *Rep. Jim Dotson & Sen. Breanne Davis* – Authorizes cottage food to be sold through the internet directly to end consumers.
- [HB1636 \(Act 692\)](#) *Rep. DeAnn Vaughn & Sen. Kim Hammer* – Authorizes the Livestock and Poultry Commission to create administrative rules to enforce provisions relating to feral hog control, and to enforce those rules with administrative penalties up to \$1,000 per feral hog for violations.

✓ University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture

- [HB1694 \(Act 564\)](#) *Rep. Steve Hollowell & Sen. Ron Caldwell* – Prohibits the University of Arkansas Board of Trustees from selling the Pine Tree Research Station unless it conveys the property to a nonprofit organization with the prime mission of keeping the property open to the public for recreational activities.
- [SB447 \(Act 582\)](#) *Sen. Ron Caldwell* – Appropriates funds to the University of Arkansas for Division of Agriculture for capital improvements for fiscal year 2021-2022.
- [SB221 \(Act 768\)](#) *Joint Budget* – Appropriates funds to the University of Arkansas – Division of Agriculture for 2021-2022 operations.

✓ General Agriculture/Rural Communities

- **SB173 (Act 140)** *Sen. Terry Rice & Rep. John Maddox* – Adds food processing and manufacturing facilities to the definition of ‘critical infrastructure’ for the purposes of excluding unlawful use of an unmanned aircraft or drone from certain installations.
- **HB1674 (Act 451)** *Rep. Jeff Wardlaw & Sen. Ben Gilmore* – Authorizes the State Highway Commission to issue a special one-year permit, upon application, for a truck tractor or single semitrailer to haul forestry equipment exceeding the maximum gross weight as provided in § 27-35-203; sets maximum permit fee of \$250.
- **HB1801 (Act 925)** *Rep. Reginald Murdock* – Prohibits changing the designated or named beneficiary of a life insurance policy or annuity contract in a will. Provides that a beneficiary change can be made generally, according to the terms of the life insurance policy or annuity contract.
- **SB248 (Act 1040)** *Sen. Breanne Davis & Rep. John Payton* – Creates the Food Freedom Act, exempting certain homemade food and drink from licensure, certification and inspection.
 - ArFB testified against this bill and as a result, the bill was amended to eliminate meat and meat products as well as potentially hazardous food, from being sold directly to consumers without certain food safety standards being in place.
- **SB252** *Sen. Garner* – Prohibits the Arkansas Economic Development Commission from establishing or maintaining an office in China.
 - ArFB opposed this bill and it failed to advance out of the House Agriculture Committee.
- **SB312 (Act 1046)** *Sen. Blake Johnson & Rep. Robin Lundstrum* – Mirrors federal guidelines and requires any foreign party that has acquired an interest in, or purchased, agricultural land in Arkansas, to file a report with the Secretary of Agriculture.
- **SB385** *Sen. Clark* – Creates a gated residential community logging permit for cutting ten or more trees within 6 months in the vicinity of homes in a gated community. Requires water quality best management practices.
 - On April 22, the Senate Agriculture Committee failed to advance the bill by a voice vote.
- **SB461** *Sen. Garner* – Right-to-repair; requires original equipment manufacturer of farm equipment to make available on reasonable terms any documentation, tools, or parts, including software updates, necessary to maintain or repair the equipment.
 - This bill failed to advance from the Senate Agriculture Committee and has been referred to interim study.
- **SB670** *Sen. Caldwell* – Allows the Arkansas State Game and Fish Commission to increase or decrease the amount of the maximum fee, also known as the “baseline maximum,” for each resident license, permit or stamp issued for hunting and fishing.
 - On April 13, this bill passed the Senate Agriculture Committee by a vote of 5 to 3; however, it was re-referred back to committee but, the bill was not been reconsidered.