The annual Utah Legislative Session beginning today, Tuesday, January 19 and concluding midnight, March 5 - 45 total days. It’s anticipated the 104 member part-time legislature will consider nearly 900 bills and balance a $20 billion budget. Utah Farm Bureau will be monitoring these bills full-time either virtually or in person on Capitol Hill representing its members and grassroots developed policy.

Here’s a list of initial bills directly impacting Utah’s farmers and ranchers. Updates will be emailed to interested Farm Bureau members Monday morning for eight consecutive weeks. Please make every effort to regularly communicate to your respective Representative and Senator your support and concerns regarding this list of bills. This regular communication, combined with Utah Farm Bureau’s activity on Capitol Hill, will strengthen our voice, unify our efforts and increase our effectiveness in policy implementation.

This Utah Farm Bureau Legislative Update is made available to Farm Bureau members via email or on the Utah Farm Bureau website - www.utahfarmbureau.org. For additional information about these bills, contact Wade Garrett, VP Strategic Relationships & Advocacy at wade.garrett@fbfs.com or 435-660-9292. Contact information for your respective legislator is found online at https://le.utah.gov.

**House Bills**

**HB 14 Water Conservancy District Amendments**, Rep Handy – Establishes a process filling a vacancy in the board of a water conservancy district that is located in more than one county. **Passed**

**HB 24 State Engineer Electronic Communications**, Rep Ferry – Permits the state water engineer to send electronic communications under certain circumstances. Currently official communication from the state engineer must be sent through the mail. **Passed**

**HB 29 Statewide Invasive Species Emergency Response Plan**, Rep Stratton – Requires DWR to develop a statewide emergency response plan aimed at remediating the spread of aquatic invasive throughout the state. **Passed**

**HB 65 Wildland Fire Amendments**, Rep Snider – Addresses salaries and employment of fire wardens and requires the Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands to develop and maintain a wildland risk assessment mapping tool. **Passed**

**HB 94 Microenterprise Home Kitchen Amendments**, Rep Watkins – Grants administrative authority to local health departments to create and issue microenterprise home kitchen permits. These kitchens can then be used to prepare food products for sale to the public. **Passed, Farm Bureau Supports**

**HB 98 Local Government Building Regulations Amendments**, Rep Ray – Allows a building permit applicant to opt out of certain local inspection and plan preview requirements. Allows an applicant to pay an independent building inspector to issue a certificate of occupancy in certain circumstances. There is some concern that this bill will affect water systems, water use and increase liability to water companies with delivery systems in new development areas. **Passed**

**HB 107 Subdivision Plat Amendments**, Rep Ferry – Requires a landowner to record water conveyance facilities
HB 109 Wildlife Amendments, Rep Lyman – requires DWR to notify affected landowners before taking wildlife on private owned land. Passed, Farm Bureau Supports

HB 137 Large Vehicle Registration Amendments, Rep Christofferson – Increases the gross vehicle weight rating of an intrastate commercial vehicle from 10,001 to 12,001 lbs. Passed

HB 144 Water Pricing Structure, Rep Moss – Requires a retail water provider to consider lot size when determining price structure. Did not receive a committee hearing, Failed

HB 145 Clean and Renewable Energy Requirements, Rep Ward - Requires that a certain percentage of a large-scale electric utility’s annual retail sales come from qualifying clean electricity if use of qualifying clean electricity is cost effective. Should drive continued development of alternative energy sources. Failed in committee

HB 163 Agricultural Advisory Board Amendments, Rep Snider – Creates an Executive Committee of the Ag Advisory Board and transfers certain duties to the Executive Committee. Passed Farm Bureau Supports

HB 165 Noise Pollution Amendments, Rep Wheatley – Requires vehicles subject to emissions inspections to be inspected for compliance with noise suppression equipment. Failed in committee

HB 166 Livestock Amendments, Rep Snider – Increases penalties for destruction of livestock and livestock guardian dogs. Creates a presumption of ownership of a livestock guardian dog. Passed, Farm Bureau Supports

HB 170 Vehicle Registration Renewal Notice, Rep Chew – Requires the Motor Vehicle Division to send notification through the mail of the expiration of a vehicle’s registration unless the individual elects to receive the notification by email. Passed, Farm Bureau supports

HB 171 Agricultural Land Use Regulations, Rep Chew – Prohibits a municipality or county from regulating the type of crop that may be grown in specific areas. Passed, Farm Bureau Supports

HB 185 Laboratory Equipment Amendments, Rep Lund – Creates a UDAF laboratory equipment fund to purchase and maintain laboratory equipment at the Department of Agriculture. Passed, Farm Bureau Supports

HB 224 Pollinator Amendments, Rep Matthews – Directs DNR to create a pollinator pilot program dealing with public awareness and education about pollinator habitat and pollinator friendly landscaping. Passed

HB 241 Utah Seed Amendments, Rep Lund – Addresses seed labeling requirements and clarifies definitions relative to seed sales. Passed

HB 281 County Development Activity Amendments, Rep Lyman – Places conditions on a county’s development activities that affect another county. Failed in Committee

HB 295 Wildlife Modifications, Rep Snider – Prohibits the use of trail cameras on Public land at certain times and with certain exceptions and prohibits big game baiting. Farm Bureau has worked with the sponsor to ensure that private property rights and agricultural practices are protected, we are neutral on the bill. Passed

HB 296 Soil Health Amendments, Rep Ferry – Establishes the Utah Soil Health Program and the Soil Health Advisory Committee. The program shall: encourage widespread adoption of soil health practices by producers; promote environmental benefits; advance the understanding of the environmental and economic benefits of soil health practices by producers, policymakers, consumers, and the general public; and support scientific research. Passed, Farm Bureau Supports

HB 297 Colorado River Amendments, Rep Wilson – This bill addresses Utah’s management of Utah’s Colorado River system interests. Creates the Colorado River Authority, a six-member authority tasked with the responsibility to protect, conserve, use, and develop Utah’s waters of the Colorado River System. Farm Bureau is working to ensure that Agriculture has a strong voice in decisions made by the Authority. Passed, Farm Bureau Supports

HB 305 Quality Growth Act, Rep Ferry – Directs the Quality Growth Commission to prioritize working Agricultural lands when establishing conservation easements. Passed, Farm Bureau supports

HB 317 Eminent Domain Amendments, Rep Peterson – modifies the requirements to exercise eminent domain; allows a property owner to assert as a defense in a court proceeding to challenge an eminent domain action that a taking is not necessary for a public use. Failed, did not receive a committee hearing

HB 346 Natural Resource Entities Amendments, Rep Snider – Creates a coordination council; moves the Office
of Energy Development to within the Department of Natural Resources; divides the Division of Parks and Recreation into two divisions and transfers grants administered by the Utah Office of Outdoor Recreation to the new division; addresses the Utah Office of Outdoor Recreation and its powers and duties. **Passed**

**HB 348 Economic Development Amendments, Rep Hawkes** – Renames the Governor’s Office of Economic Development (GOED) as the Governor’s Office of Economic Opportunity (GO Utah office); establishes the Unified Economic Opportunity Commission (commission) to develop, direct, and coordinate a statewide economic development strategy. **Passed**

**HB 356 Rural Economic Development Tax Increment Financing, Rep Albrecht** – Modifies provisions related to the authorization of tax credits by the Governor’s Office of Economic Development for new commercial projects located in rural areas of the state. Adds Agriculture and Mining to the list of industries eligible for these tax credits. **Passed, Farm Bureau Supports**

**HB 364 Utah Lake Authority, Rep Brammer** – creates the Utah Lake Authority to replace the Utah Lake Commission; establishes a board to govern the Utah Lake Authority; and gives then taxing authority. The lake authority has responsibility over planning and coordinating activities relating to the waters of Utah Lake and lake authority land. Farm Bureau has concerns about the lake of Agricultural representation on the Lake authority, we are working with the sponsor to address this concern. **Failed in Committee**

**HB 375 Agriculture Amendments, Rep Handy** – Makes technical changes to the Agricultural code. **Passed, Farm Bureau Supports**

**HB 386 Transportation of Dogs, Rep Matthews** – makes it illegal to allow a dog to ride in the back of a truck on roads with speed limits over 40 MPH. **Failed, did not receive a committee hearing, Farm Bureau opposes**

**HB 390 Urban Farming Amendments, Rep Kohler** – modifies the definition of urban farming under the Urban Farming Assessment Act to include livestock production. **Passed, Farm Bureau supports**

**HB 397 Brand Inspectors Amendments, Rep Stratton** – provides that a brand inspection is not required at the time of slaughter if the owner certifies that the owner has owned the animal since the animal’s birth; or the animal was inspected at the time the owner acquired the animal; prohibits brand inspectors from entering private property at any time without the property owner’s permission or a court-issued warrant. **Failed in committee**

**HB 404 Utah Immigration Assistance Center, Rep Ferry** – creates the Utah Immigration Assistance Center (center) in the Governor’s Office of Economic Development (GOED). **Passed, Farm Bureau Supports**

**HB 414 Uniform Easement Relocation Act, Rep Snow** – establishes the right of a property owner to relocate an easement in certain circumstances. **Failed, did not get a committee hearing**

**HCR 1 Concurrent Resolution Encouraging a Balance Approach to the Release of Water from Flaming Gorge, Rep Chew** – Discusses stakeholder concerns with the management of Flaming Gorge Dam and supports the creation of a new management plan. **Passed, Farm Bureau Supports**

**HCR 2 Concurrent Resolution on the Effects of Federal Land Valuation Model, Rep Stratton** – Clarifies the lack of impact that a federal land valuation model has on greenbelt valuations. **Passed**

**HCR 19 Concurrent Resolution Recognizing Farmers Feeding Utah, Rep Chew** – recognizes the Farmers Feeding Utah program and its benefits to Utah. **Passed, Farm Bureau Supports**

**HCR 21 Concurrent Resolution Recognizing the 100th Year Anniversary of the Department of Agriculture and Food, Rep Kohler** – recognizes the Department of Agriculture and Food at its 100th anniversary. **Passed, Farm Bureau supports**

**Senate Bills**

**SB 39 Hemp Regulation Amendments, Sen Hinkins** – Provides clarity regarding existing and developing hemp production and sales. **Passed**

**SB 40 Petroleum storage tanks amendments, Sen Hinkins** – Addresses regulation of above ground petroleum storage tanks, the bill has an exemption for Agriculture. **Passed**

**SB 94 Trailer Weight Amendments, Sen McKell** – Increases intrastate commercial vehicle gross weight ratings
from 10,001 to 25,001 lbs. Failed, did not get a committee hearing

**SB 104 Tax Levy for Animal Control, Sen Weiler** – authorizes a county to impose a tax levy to fund animal welfare services. **Passed**

**SB 114 Animal Chiropractic Amendments, Sen Sandall** – Allows a licensed chiropractor to treat an animal without a referral from a veterinarian. **Passed**

**SB 130 Regulation of Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations, Sen Sandall** – Defines Large Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations, requires a county desiring to regulate large concentrated animal feeding operation to follow certain guidelines including creating a map of the geographic area where a large concentrated animal feeding operation may be located. **Passed**, Farm Bureau Supports

**SB 141 Task Force on Food Security, Sen Escamilla** – creates the Task Force on Food Security to develop a plan for establishing food security in the state. **Passed**

**SB 147 Confinement of Egg-Laying Hens, Sen Sandall** – beginning January 1, 2025, Requires egg producers with over 300 hens to use a cage-free housing system. **Passed**, Farm Bureau Supports

**SB 168 Designated Vehicle Routes Amendments, Sen McKell** – Allows certain cities and towns (Resort communities) to adopt ordinances restricting the use of street-legal all-terrain vehicles at night. **Failed**

**SB 199 Water Amendments, Sen. McKell** – Address metering of pressurized secondary water and creates a matching grant program to help with the cost of installing meters. **Passed**

**SB 214 Official Language Amendment, Sen Cullimore** – removes the provision that English is the sole language for the government in the state of Utah; allows official government documents, transactions, proceedings, meetings, or publications to be published in multiple languages. **Passed**

**S.B. 239 Small Business Job Creation Tax Credit Act, Rep Bramble** – This bill enacts the Small Business and Rural Job Creation Tax Credit Act. Provides a state nonrefundable tax credit for investments by small business funds in eligible businesses; authorizes the state to approve tax credits on up to $30,000,000 invested in eligible businesses in the state. Farm Bureau is working with the sponsor to make sure this program will include Agriculture. **Failed**