



Mississippi Forestry Association

The Voice of Forestry

Legislative Bulletin

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Progress Report: MFA's hard work is paying off!

The following bills have been defeated:

1. Senate Bill, 2242 LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design)

As part of the effort to defeat the LEED bill, a letter was sent to Senator Tommy Moffatt, chairman of the Senate Environmental Protection, Conservation, and Water Resources Committee. Below is an excerpt from the letter.

"MFA is concerned that individual universities or the Mississippi Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning may create policies that mandate use of a particular building certification system such as LEED.

MFA members are also very troubled by Senate Bill 2242 that seeks to mandate LEED as the only building certification system for new construction and remodeling of state owned buildings.

There are many building certification systems and they each have specific merits. MFA suggests that public policy to grant a monopoly to any particular system be very carefully considered. MFA's interest in this matter is that building certification systems differ in how they recognize and reward use of wood in construction. Just as there are different building certification systems, there are also different systems to certify that forests are sustainably managed. MFA members differ in their participation in these forest certification systems.

MFA's position is to support its members' participation in sustainable forest certification, but not to advocate any specific system over another. We suggest that state government and universities likewise support the goals of sustainable construction without creating policies to advocate or mandate a particular system."

2. SB 3061 Proposal to merge Mississippi Forestry Commission with Mississippi Dept. of Agriculture and Commerce

3. HB 1494 Proposal to merge Board of Registered Foresters with Mississippi Forestry Commission

The House and Senate bills that would merge the Board of Registration for Foresters into the Mississippi Forestry Commission and merge several agriculture agencies into the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, both died on Feb 2 2010, the action deadline.

4. Access to cemeteries on private lands

This bill would have weakened private property rights by granting public access to cemeteries on private land.

MFA will continue working in the Capitol to oppose those bills that are contrary to our Position Statements and not in the best interests of the forestry and natural resources community.

County Road Issues: Message from Robby Toombs Chair, MFA Government Affairs Committee



As the Chair of the 2010 MFA Government Affairs Committee, I want to update everyone on what MFA members and partners are doing on the county road issue. One point I would like to emphasize is that through your membership YOU are the MFA. It is critical that we all work together particularly in these tough economic times. Times of trouble are when we find our true strengths and weaknesses. By working together we can magnify our strengths and mitigate our weaknesses.

The reason I'm emphasizing teamwork is that the issues MFA is facing, and in particular this road issue, is bigger than any of us. Our Executive Vice President is working on many issues at the Mississippi Capitol in partnership with the Mississippi Logger's Association. It seems that I have spent as much time on government affairs as my paying job. Many of you have done the same and through these efforts we will have success.

So what are we doing about county road issues and log hauling restrictions during this winter season? At the state level we have been in discussions with legislators, executive branch representatives, representatives of the Miss. Association of Supervisors and basically anyone who will listen. I have personally discussed it with members of the House and Senate Forestry and Agriculture Committees on two different occasions. In one meeting I was point blank asked by a state representative "Why is Mississippi 's growth exceeding its harvest by over 30%?" Part of my reply was that we have lost mills and not had any major new ones built in large part due to road/infrastructure issues, and in particular the county road issues.

This state-level part of the process is a long-term strategy to improve our industry's ability to move raw material (logs, pulpwood, and other forest products) to market within our state. We are taking an economic development impact focus and pointing out to the legislators the negative impact of the inability to get logs to market and to their constituents. To get a politician's ear, it is all about the voters, and in this case, the county landowners, loggers, and wood procurement professionals.

At the county level, we have asked individual MFA members and the County Forestry Associations (CFA's) to take the lead. Many have done so with good results. There is a role in this effort for everyone! You as an individual citizen/voter of a county are *important* to those elected supervisors. This is an issue that we can all get behind because of the widespread community impact. Without the ability to get goods to market, everyone loses.

This county level strategy allows local constituents to address local issues with local solutions. Again, I see evidence that this strategy is working and I want to thank you for your efforts.

Dr. Jim Shepard and the good folks at MSU are working hard to pull together talking points on

the economic value of the forestry community to the state of Mississippi and individual counties. I want to thank the MSU staff for their response and effort.

Members of the SFI State Implementation Committee are significantly addressing this issue as well.

While I don't know about every single activity, the key is that we are focusing efforts on the state and local level and many people are putting in a great deal of time and work.

Each of you is important in this effort. I know that you are working hard to rectify this situation. At the risk of sounding too corny, I ask you to join me in asking others to make sure we are all pulling together.

Leadership sets the tone, but you don't need a title to lead. As leaders in the forestry community you help set that tone. Let's make it a positive one. Too often, we sit around and say "Somebody ought to do something," and right now that somebody is you.

Finally, I think I will adapt the famous quote from President John F. Kennedy, "Ask not what MFA can do for you, but what YOU can do for MFA." With this servant attitude we will have the strength we need to be successful in these tough times and really magnify OUR Voice of Forestry.

MFA Tracking List

MFA Positions: M = monitor, S = support, O = oppose

House of Representatives

[House Bill 1046](#)

To: Conservation and Water Resources By: Representative Hamilton (6th)

AN ACT TO DESIGNATE A CERTAIN PORTION OF THE COLDWATER RIVER IN MARSHALL, DESOTO AND TATE COUNTIES AS ELIGIBLE FOR NOMINATION TO THE STATE SCENIC STREAMS STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM; TO BRING FORWARD SECTION 51-4-7, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, FOR THE PURPOSE OF CREATING THE STATE SCENIC STREAMS STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

02/15 (S) Referred To Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks

[Recommended MFA Position - M](#)

[House Bill 958](#)

To: Agriculture By: Representative Stringer

AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 69-19-9, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE THAT THE COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE SHALL ESTABLISH AND CHARGE FEES FOR PEST/WEED CONTROL LICENSES, PEST/WEED TECHNICIAN LICENSES, CONSULTANT LICENSES, LANDSCAPE LICENSES, TREE SURGERY LICENSES, SOIL CLASSIFIER LICENSES AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICE BRANCH PERMITS AND FOR ADMINISTERING EXAMINATIONS TO APPLICANTS FOR THOSE LICENSES AND PERMITS; TO AMEND SECTION 69-23-27, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE THAT THE COMMISSIONER SHALL ESTABLISH AND CHARGE FEES FOR PESTICIDE DEALER LICENSES AND FOR ADMINISTERING EXAMINATIONS TO APPLICANTS FOR THOSE LICENSES; TO AMEND SECTION 69-23-111, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE THAT THE COMMISSIONER SHALL ESTABLISH AND CHARGE FEES FOR CERTIFICATION OF COMMERCIAL APPLICATORS OF PESTICIDES AND FOR ADMINISTERING EXAMINATIONS TO APPLICANTS FOR THAT CERTIFICATION; TO AMEND SECTION 69-25-7, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE THAT THE COMMISSIONER SHALL ESTABLISH AND

CHARGE FEES FOR CERTIFICATION OF NURSERIES AND FOR PLANT DEALER LICENSES; TO PROVIDE THAT ALL OF THOSE LICENSE, PERMIT AND EXAMINATION FEES SHALL BE DEPOSITED INTO A SPECIAL FUND IN THE STATE TREASURY TO THE CREDIT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE; TO AMEND SECTION 69-25-19, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO CONFORM TO THE PRECEDING PROVISION; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.
02/09 (S) Referred To Agriculture; Fees, Salaries and Administration
[Recommended MFA Position - M](#)

[House Bill 961](#)

To: Agriculture By: Representative Stringer
AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 69-23-7, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF THE ANNUAL FEE FOR REGISTERING PESTICIDES WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.
02/09 (S) Referred To Agriculture; Fees, Salaries and Administration
[Recommended MFA Position - M](#)

[House Bill 607](#)

To: Judiciary B By: Representative Turner
AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 99-1-5, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO REVISE THE TIME LIMITATION ON PROSECUTIONS OF THE OFFENSE OF LARCENY OF TIMBER; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.
02/05 (S) Referred To Judiciary, Division B
[Recommended MFA Position - S](#)

[House Bill 1555](#)

To: Insurance; Judiciary B By: Representative Jones (111th)
AN ACT TO AMEND SECTIONS 31-3-13 AND 73-59-11, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO REQUIRE DISCLOSURE IN CONTRACTS BY CONTRACTORS WHETHER THEY CARRY WORKERS' COMPENSATION OR GENERAL LIABILITY INSURANCE; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.
02/15 (H) Motion to Reconsider Tabled
[Recommended MFA Position - O](#)

[House Bill 49](#)

To: Labor By: Representative Mayo
AN ACT TO MAKE IT UNLAWFUL FOR AN EMPLOYER TO TERMINATE THE EMPLOYMENT OF ANY EMPLOYEE WHO HAS MADE A GOOD FAITH CLAIM UNDER THE MISSISSIPPI WORKERS' COMPENSATION LAW; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.
02/15 (H) Transmitted To Senate

[Senate](#)

[Senate Bill 2834](#)

To: Education By: Senator(s) Lee (35th)
AN ACT TO AMEND SECTIONS 29-3-1, 29-3-82, 29-3-29 AND 19-3-41, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO DELETE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS TO APPROVE OR REJECT THE RENTAL VALUE AMOUNT OF SIXTEENTH SECTION SCHOOL LAND LEASES; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.
02/11 (H) Referred To Education
[Recommended MFA Position - S](#)

[Senate Bill 2444](#)

To: Housing; Finance By: Senator(s) Baria, Jackson (11th), Dickerson, Kirby, Tollison, Yancey
AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE AN INCOME TAX CREDIT FOR CERTAIN COSTS AND EXPENSES INCURRED BY A TAXPAYER FOR CERTAIN ENERGY EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENTS TO PROPERTY

USED AS A DWELLING BY THE TAXPAYER AND UPON WHICH HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION IS GRANTED; TO AUTHORIZE AN INCOME TAX CREDIT FOR CERTAIN EXPENSES INCURRED FOR THE INSTALLATION OF A WIND OR SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM IN THE RESIDENCE OF THE TAXPAYER OR AT A RESIDENTIAL RENTAL APARTMENT COMPLEX OWNED BY THE TAXPAYER; TO EXEMPT FROM AD VALOREM TAXATION THE TRUE VALUE ADDED TO A RESIDENCE OR A RESIDENTIAL RENTAL APARTMENT COMPLEX AS A RESULT OF THE INSTALLATION OF A WIND ENERGY SYSTEM OR A SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM THAT IS ELIGIBLE FOR THE TAX CREDIT; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

01/27 (S) DR - TSDPCS: HO To FI

[Senate Bill 2857](#)

To: Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks By: Senator(s) Gollott (COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE)
AN ACT TO PROVIDE A PENALTY FOR WILLFULLY DISCHARGING A FIREARM TOWARD THE DWELLING OF ANOTHER AND CAUSING DAMAGE TO THE DWELLING OR DOMESTICATED ANIMALS OR LIVESTOCK; TO PROHIBIT DISCHARGING A FIREARM IN OR ACROSS HIKING, RIDING AND WALKING TRAILS IN WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS; TO AMEND SECTION 97-15-13, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO INCREASE THE PENALTY FOR HUNTING FROM A PUBLIC STREET OR HIGHWAY; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

02/16 (H) Referred To Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks

Want to know more?

MFA Online www.msforestry.net

MS State Legislature <http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/> Use the Quick Lookup feature in the lower left corner of the homepage to quickly locate and read a bill

Grow the Vote - A guide to politics & important issues for the forest products industry
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