

## PABC 2016 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

1. Highway Infrastructure – Increase funding for roads & bridges.\*

*Support long-term sustainable funding to fix South Carolina's declining infrastructure.*

2. Surface Water Withdrawal\*

*Oppose H. 3564 - Surface Water Withdrawal Registration, which would amend the Surface Water Permitting Act of 2010 and place agriculture registrations into a permitting and public appeal situation. Support the completion of the Statewide Assessment of Water Resources before any changes are made to ensure they are based on science.*

3. Waters of the US (EPA)●

*Oppose an EPA rule that would expand the scope of the navigable waters subject to the Clean Water Act jurisdiction by regulating small and remote waters.*

4. Eminent Domain\*

*(Property rights issue) Eminent domain laws are very specific to local governments and public utilities. We would oppose any effort to open discussion to change the definition of condemning rights.*

5. Increase Federal Highway Weight Limits●

*Support federal legislation- the Safe Trucking Act, which will increase the weight limit for trucks traveling on federal highways from 80,000 pounds to 91,000 pounds. This bill has a state "opt-in" measure and requires addition of a sixth axle. The increase in weight limits would lead to a reduction in the number of truck trips and a decline in truck miles traveled.*

6. Poultry Permitting\*

*Support a more efficient permitting process for poultry houses to keep this industry doing business and expanding in SC.*

7. Renew Act 271 The Forest Fire Protection Act\*

*Act 271 diverts a percentage of the insurance premium tax (2.25% of the annual revenue) to the SC Forestry Commission for firefighting and firefighting equipment replacement. The legislation sunsets in 2017. Support continuing this funding.*

8. Immigration (State\*/Federal●)

*For agribusiness to remain profitable and in business, we must have federal immigration reform that allows access to a stable and legal workforce.*

9. Agency Funding (SC Dept. of Ag, SC Forestry Commission, Clemson PSA)\*

*Support funding for the budget requests of the SC Department of Agriculture, SC Forestry Commission and Clemson PSA.*

10. Pollution Control Act\*

*Support S. 229 which simply reaffirms a 2012 decision by the General Assembly stating that there is no private cause of action under the Pollution Control Act and that a business cannot be sued arbitrarily for a permit that does not even exist.*

11. Tort Reform (CDL Employment Protection Act)\*

*Support the CDL Employment Protection Act (S.529), which addresses limiting the liability of companies employing Commercial Driver's License holders, contracted or not contracted. This legislation would ensure such "direct negligence claims" serve their intended purpose and are not used simply to fault the employer based on the employee's action.*

Other Tort Reform Issues: *Issues impacting business owners that increase liability and costs.*

12. Maintain Agribusiness Sales Tax Exemptions/Property Tax Assessments\*

13. Business License Fees\*

*Support an improved system of determining business license fees and a cap on the amount local governments can charge.*

14. Agricultural Packaging Operations Jobs Tax Credits\*

*Support S.427 which extends jobs tax credits to ag packaging companies and exempts sales taxes on packaging equipment, as is now available on processing equipment.*

15. Ag Equipment on the Roads\*

*Support H.3909 which would make it mandatory for motorists to yield to farm equipment, limiting liability.*

16. Energy Issues●

*The BOEM recently announced initial approval for seismic testing to move ahead off the Atlantic states. PABC supports this important step in determining what resources are off the coast of SC.*

17. Dams and Reservoirs Standards●

*This relates to growing concern with the Corps of Engineers and ag exemptions for dam permitting on farm ponds.*

**Other issues for consideration:**

- Federal Timber Taxes●: *Protect current tax laws to preserve timber tax provisions.*
- EPA Clean Power Plan ●:(Forest Biomass): *Support Congress adopting federal policies on forest biomass that affirm the carbon neutrality of biomass derived from residuals of forest product manufacturers.*

- **GMO Regulations●:** *Support timely GMO regulatory approval at the federal level to ensure row crop farmers are able to be competitive internationally.*
- **Increase the Use of Wood Products in Public Buildings●:** *The SC Forestry Association, SC Forestry Commission and Clemson University's Wood Utilization and Design Institute are working to promote the increased use of wood products in public buildings. Support action plan that is anticipated to be developed in 2016.*
- **Buck Tags \*:** *Support legislation that would place a limit of bucks in the entire state and would require tags for all deer harvested. This does not affect depredation permits.*
- **Shorter Legislative Session\*:** *Support shorter legislative session to encourage business owners to seek office.*
- **Incentives to Grow More Trees\*:** *Support incentives for private landowners to grow more timber to help alleviate the severe scarcity of pulpwood size pine trees that is worsening and will stress existing manufacturing and restrict industry growth and forest management options if action is not taken.*

*\*State Issues*

*●Federal Issues*