



Week of February 25, 2019

The end of this week marked the deadline for House appropriations and revenue bills to be introduced and passed. The House Appropriations Committee finished passing bills regarding budgets for state agencies last week, so most legislation came from the House Ways and Means Committee.

[House Bill 822](#) from the Ways and Means Committee would impose an annual professional privilege tax of \$400 on attorneys who practice law in the state, but who are not domiciled in the state and do not maintain a regular place of business in the state. The bill passed 90-15 and has been sent to the Senate for consideration.

The Ways and Means Committee also introduced several bond bills on the House floor. Examples of these bills include [House Bill 935](#), which would issue bonds to provide funds for the Small Municipalities and Limited Population Counties Fund; [House Bill 958](#), which would increase the amount of bonds that may be issued for certain Department of Marine Resources improvements; and [House Bill 1674](#), which would authorize the issuance of bonds for general capital improvements for state entities like Institutions of Higher Learning, Community and Junior Colleges and various other state agencies.

Each of these bond bills passed when presented on the House floor. The Senate has been busy working on similar legislation, and now the two Houses will come together to begin deciding how much money will be put into each bill. This process typically lasts until the end of session when a final decision is reached.

Committees continued to meet this week to discuss Senate bills. Over the next few weeks, Senate Bills will make their way out of House committees and onto the House floor for discussion. The same process will take place in the Senate as they review bills that passed through the House.

One Senate bill made its way to the House floor twice. [Senate Bill 2901](#), or the Landowners Protection Act, would clarify the liability of business owners when someone is injured on their property with an intentional and willful act by a third party. Judiciary A Chairman Mark Baker introduced a strike-all amendment revising some language in the original bill. Proponents of the bill said that the bill would protect business owners and give more power to juries. Opponents argued that the bill will make it harder for victims to sue property owners for negligence. On Monday, Feb. 25, the House passed the bill 73-39 before it was held on a motion to reconsider. On Thursday, Chairman Baker reconsidered the vote for purposes of offering a clarifying amendment. It was voted on a second time and passed 78-36 and was again held on a motion to reconsider.

[Senate Bill 2802](#) amends the Airport Authorities Law which would limit the ad valorem tax exemption to facilities on airport property as a result of airport-related contracts and leases. The bill passed 113-4 without much debate and has been sent to the Governor to be signed.

The House also approved [Senate Bill 2922](#), which would prohibit food products derived from animal cultures, plants and insects as meat products from being labeled as meat. This is similar to [HB 793](#), which passed the House earlier in the legislative session. [Senate Bill 2243](#) is also a bill that is similar to a piece of earlier legislation ([HB 344](#)). The bill would allow the president of a county board of supervisors to declare a local emergency. Both of these bills passed with a bipartisan vote of 117-0.

Students who are members of Future Farms of America came from all over the state to visit the Capitol on Wednesday. Legislators also received visitors from Farm Bureau, Mississippi Valley State University, the Mississippi Association of Community and Junior Colleges, Catholic Charities of Jackson and students from Electric Cooperatives of Mississippi's Youth Leadership Program.