



# ADVOCACY IN ACTION

## OFBF Advocacy in Action Report May 17th, 2024

### **Federal Updates:**

*2024 Farm Bill-* Today, Chairman “GT” Thompson released the House's most recent bill language of the US House Committee’s version of the 2024 Farm Bill. As AFBF and OFBF begin reviewing the 942 pages of text, many of the items outlined in documents distributed prior demonstrate a need for bipartisan support, but also a willingness to address much-needed updates to today’s agricultural industrial climate. Reference prices, research, prop 12, and MAP/FMD have all been addressed. OFBF will continue to monitor these developments and provide an update to this critical legislation once a full review of the language has been completed. Here is a [link to the full bill text](#) for your review.

*California's Prop 12-* This week OFBF signed on to a letter with AFBF and other state Farm Bureaus supporting national legislation within the farm bill to prevent a state from implementing regulations that would impact another state's commerce. This critical component of the 2024 farm bill is still being debated. If your county Farm Bureau would like to sign on to the letter please contact your organizational director for information.

*Capitol Hill-* Last week, OFBF and their midwestern counterparts visited Washington DC to have discussions with industry leaders regarding sustainability, regenerative agriculture, and sustainable aviation fuel. While many of the 2030 goals for decreases in greenhouse gas emissions made last decade are starting to become a reality, the goal for AFBF and other state Farm Bureaus is to make sure the difficulties the agriculture industry is facing to be a partner in these endeavors are recognized. The need to have direct commitments with industry partners, sharing of best practices, and the need to provide options to meet these goals was expressed. If there are any experiences or ideas your operation can share regarding this issue please let the public policy team know as we will continue to engage in this space.

### **State Updates:**

*Water Quality-* OFBF Executive Vice President Adam Sharp, along with Ohio’s agricultural commodity and business organizations, recently submitted a letter to the editor in response to the Toledo Blade Editorial Board’s article again citing agriculture as the sole cause of algal blooms in Lake Erie. Mr. Sharp pushed back on unfounded jabs at Ohio agriculture in response to a new lawsuit filed against the US EPA by Lucas County commissioners and the Toledo City

Council. OFBF remains steadfast in its commitment to protecting Ohio's water quality for the benefit of all, and you may find the letter [here](#) to learn more. Ohio Farm Bureau stands ready to take action and foster conversations regarding the progress being made in Ohio to protect our water supply.

*Property Taxation-* On May 8th, OFBF Board Trustee Matt Aultman testified to the Joint Committee on Property Tax Review and Reform on the struggles his county has faced with not only this most recent reappraisal year for CAUV, but how historically landowners are no stranger to the large increases we have seen recently. The Committee will meet for what is expected to be the final time on May 22nd, and hope to issue recommendations on how to address Ohio's property tax issues by the end of summer. You can see OFBF's coverage of the testimony [here](#).

*Ag Sales Tax Exemption-* The House voted out HB 347 unanimously, which would add a specific list of vehicles/equipment to be eligible for the Ag Sales Tax Exemption. OFBF testified in support of the bill, which would add smaller tractors, trailers, and UTVs/ATVs to name a few, to be eligible for the exemption if the purchaser has filed Schedule F's with the IRS in the most recent three tax years, essentially proving farm income and that the goods purchased would be for agricultural use. The legislation was offered by Rep. Don Jones, and now heads to the Senate.

*Ohio State Fair/Expo Center-* On May 13th, Gov. DeWine helped break ground on some of the first projects for the Expo 2050 Project, including rebuilding OFBF's Land and Living Building. Other projects include a new Ohio Showcase Building, a new Taste of Ohio Cafe, a new Town Square, and enhancements to infrastructure throughout the Expo Center. Over \$300 million have been allocated so far to the Expo 2050 project, and OFBF is proud to support Gov. DeWine's initiative to revitalize the fairgrounds and make the Ohio State Fair and the other countless events held at the Expo Center one of the best fairgrounds in the country.

*Feral Swine-* HB 503 was introduced and referred to the agriculture committee for a hearing on May 21st. It is a year-long project of the Ohio pork industry to close the loopholes that currently allow feral swine to exist in certain instances in Ohio, including allowing feral swine/wild boar to be released in hunting preserves for recreational hunting. This bill further expands clarifications on feral swine as a nuisance species in Ohio and establishes penalties for anyone knowingly possessing, breeding, releasing, or hunting feral swine, while clarifying a property owner may eradicate feral swine if discovered on their property, as long as they subsequently notify the division of wildlife of such actions within 24 hours. Feral swine/wild boars continue to be a biosecurity threat to commercial swine facilities, among other segments,

*E-Verify-* OFBF has had discussions with the bill sponsors who introduced a bill that would require any employer with 75+ employees, across all employment statuses, to use the federal E-Verify system during the hiring process to ensure potential employees are legally able to work. While OFBF recognizes the current immigration issues nationally, this legislation has no ag-exemption or exemption for temporary workers who have been permitted to work under the H-2A program administered by the US State Department. OFBF will continue discussing this bill with members of the GA as the bill is expected to move this week.

*Vet Telehealth*-A bill to address access to vet telehealth services was introduced in the senate this week. Ohio Farm Bureau is supportive of efforts to refine policy in this area, and we will continue to engage in conversations with the bill sponsors and interested parties.

*GLRI*- The Great Lake Restoration Initiative is up for reauthorization with the federal government, and Ohio legislators introduced a House Concurrent Resolution (HCR) to ask Congress to reauthorize those funds. The Blanchard Demo Farms are partly funded by GLRI dollars, so OFBF staff offered testimony in support of HCR 14 and continued funding to the four areas with the federal impairment designation. The US Senate's Environment and Public Works Committee signed off on legislation this week that would increase and extend funding through 2031. The bill now heads to the Senate for a full vote.