

# Government Relations Report

by: *Tim May*  
*ABF Vice President*

The ABF Legislative Committee met to discuss the upcoming 2018 Farm Bill. The current Farm Bill (2014) will expire September 30, 2018. ABF President Gene Brandi and Vice President Tim May have had multiple meetings with Congressional Ag Committee staffers this year to discuss the issues that the ABF has regarding the 2018 Bill and the honey bee industry.

The ABF priorities for the Farm Bill include four main categories.

1. Continue to follow the "National Strategy to Promote the Health of Honey Bees and Other Pollinators"
2. Continue the "Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-raised Fish" program (ELAP). We have recommended eliminating or at least raising the cap on the program. The current cap is set at \$20M per year.
3. Continue to make honey bee and other pollinator research a priority within the USDA.
4. Expand conservation programs and lands. Allow for more managed bees on public lands. Present lower cost pollinator seed mixes for CRP and other similar programs.

The House Ag Committee has been out in front of the 2018 Farm Bill and has held multiple listening sessions throughout the country. ABF President Gene Brandi was able to speak on behalf of the ABF at the listening session that was held in Modesto, CA.

The ABF Legislative Committee will have a meeting with AHPA officers to discuss our priorities. We will come up with a consensus list of priorities for the industry and draft a letter to be presented to the House and Senate Ag Committees.

According to Representative Michael Conaway (chairman of the House Ag Committee) details on the Farm Bill will not be available until



January or February, because Congress has been kept busy with tax reform and government funding legislation. Failure to get appointees approved by the Senate is also leaving the USDA short staffed.

We will be joining many other livestock organizations in petitioning for an ELD delay. The petition is being drafted by the "Livestock Marketing Association" and will contain some combination of the following three priorities:

1. Allow livestock haulers to use the entire 14 hours of on-duty time for livestock transportation.
2. Allow livestock haulers to use a flexible split sleeper berth provision, which would allow rest time to be split in at least three parts with two-hour minimum periods of rest.
3. Apply the 150 air-mile exemption to the back end of the haul.

We are confident that we will receive a delay, but to come up with a long-term solution for mandatory ELD and livestock hauling the Livestock Coalition will have to present a unified request on these issues.

## Member Milestones

*Milestones for September and October 2017*

### 5 Years

Janet Brisson  
Mark Creighton  
Russell Dittfurth  
Clay "Bear" Kelley  
Nick Lissaman  
Ray McAllister  
Cheryl Nelson  
Robert Nelson  
Ken Olinger  
George O'Neil  
Perry Plescia  
Stephen Repasky

### 15 Years

Gilbert Vannoy  
Kenneth Voorhes

### 25 Years

Jill Clark  
Marla Spivak

### 30 Years

David R. Hackenberg

### 40 Years

Darryl Rebuck

### 60 Years

Phil May

### 65 Years

Donald Schmidt