2019 House of Delegates Policy Book Highlights

At the 87th Oregon Farm Bureau Convention, which took place in Gleneden Beach Dec. 10-12, 2019, the Oregon Farm Bureau House of Delegates convened to amend and ratify OFB’s Policy Book. Over the course of two days, new policy was added to help guide OFB’s advocacy efforts for 2020. Although this is not an exhaustive list, the major policy changes (including policy numbers) are as follows:

TAXATION: In response to a number of highly controversial tax issues this year, the OFB House of Delegates adopted three new tax policies, which include opposing the creation of urban renewal districts outside of UGBs (Urban Renewal Districts 2.955), wrongful determinations having an intent to make a profit (Intent to Make a Profit 2.960), and the new Corporate Activities Tax (Corporate Activities Tax 2.965).

LAND USE: Delegates adopted policy opposing the designation of historic districts or traditional cultural properties in agricultural and forest zones, while also supporting landowners’ statutory right to refuse consent to designations if they are to occur (Historic/Cultural Designations 3.034). Additionally, the delegates adopted policy opposing bike paths on EFU (Exclusive Farm Use) land (Bike/Multi-Use Paths in Farm or Forest Zones 3.043). Also, new language was added to OFB’s policy on solar siting in EFU zones, which supports bonding and weed control for future facilities (Solar Siting in EFU 3.678).

ENVIRONMENT: New language was also added to the policy book regarding designated wilderness areas (Wilderness Areas 6.440). Specifically, policy was added opposing the study, creation, or expansion of new wilderness areas. Language was added that supports the continuation of existing resource management practices and natural resource economic enterprises within wilderness areas.

WATER: The House of Delegates adopted a number of new policies relating to water quality and quantity in the state, including new language opposing the reporting of water use, unless the Oregon Water Resources Department actually has the resources and infrastructure needed to process the information (Reporting of Water Use 7.230), as well as policy affirming that state CAFO regulations should closely mirror federal regulations (Confined Animal Feeding Operations 7.495).

FISH & WILDLIFE: In response to new regulations of tidegates in the state, delegates also adopted brand new policy opposing the implementation of one-size-fits-all fish passage requirements on farm infrastructure on minor waterways and agricultural drainage ditches (Fish Passage 9.720).

COMMODITIES: The definition of “livestock” was updated to include not only more traditional livestock, but commercially bred and maintained fur-bearing animals (Definition of Livestock 10.015). New policy was also added excluding certain practices from regulation as the “practice of veterinary medicine” (Veterinary Services 10.040). Moreover, the cannabis section was significantly amended to bring OFB policy up to date with new federal regulation of industrial hemp (Cannabis 10.660).

PUBLIC AFFAIRS: The 2019 delegates also adopted a number of updates regarding limiting legislative sessions, preferred format for bill drafts, as well as paid postage for voters (Limiting Legislative Sessions 13.780).