

# PERSPECTIVE

June 27, 2025

## Oklahoma Farm Bureau 2025 legislative review

**T**he halls of the Oklahoma state Capitol are once again empty after a busy 2025 legislative session. Of the thousands of bills filed at the first of the year, Oklahoma Farm Bureau closely monitored nearly 400 pieces of legislation over the course of the four-month session.

### Private Property Rights

The protection of private property rights has been a top priority for Farm Bureau members since the organization's inception in 1942, and OKFB secured passage of three of the organization's priority bills during the 2025 legislative session, each of which dealt with private property rights.

OKFB priority bill HB 1166 by Rep. Mike Kelley and Sen. Brent Howard requires a majority of landowners to consent before a municipality can annex property. It also includes a provision for forced annexation via a court action when the municipality can prove the landowners would be better off in the municipal limit, and it prohibits adding property taxes for a sinking fund because of a lawsuit settlement or ruling if the property was not part of the municipality at the time of the settlement.

OKFB members have traditionally opposed municipal annexation as it often comes with additional restrictions that could ultimately limit what farmers and ranchers can produce on their land.

OKFB also saw the passage of another priority bill for the organization, HB 2752, which prohibits the use of eminent domain for renewable energy projects and facilities. The legislation, authored by Rep. Trey Caldwell and Sen. Todd Gollihare, provides another level of protection to Oklahoma's landowners from losing their land through eminent domain.

The final OKFB priority bill passed into law for 2025 was HB 2756 by Rep. Trey Caldwell and Sen. Grant Green. HB 2756 requires utilities to obtain a certificate of authority from the Oklahoma Corporation Commission before the construction of high voltage transmission lines.

This will require energy companies to declare the proposed location of the lines, notify the affected county commissioners, host a public meeting and assemble a financial impact report.

OKFB strongly supported this legislation to ensure improved transparency between energy companies and landowners.

Conversely, OKFB opposed the passage of HB 2036 by Rep. Nick Archer and Sen. Casey Murdock, which eases the process by which the state or a business can take property via eminent domain without paying attorney fees and court costs. OKFB actively opposed the bill throughout session, but it ultimately was approved by the governor in late May.

Lawmakers also passed HB 1103 by Rep. Tom Gann and Sen. Ally Seifried, which requires the Oklahoma Department of Transportation to notify the previous owner of real property taken via eminent domain if it is going to be offered for sale. The previous owner would be offered the real property for no more than the original price, so long as the previous owner did not use federal funds to purchase the property.

This OKFB-supported legislation amends existing law that originally applied only to property within five years of the initial taking.

### Energy

OKFB hosted numerous town halls last fall in areas where communities

were discussing new renewable energy installations. Throughout this process, OKFB gathered feedback from both Farm Bureau members and non-member rural residents that helped set the stage for both OKFB's grassroots policy development season and the 2025 Oklahoma legislative session where numerous renewable energy-related bills were heard.

One such bill was HB 1373 by Rep. Brad Boles and Sen. Grant Green, which creates the Commercial Solar Facility Decommissioning Act. This bill requires solar leases to include a provision guaranteeing the removal of the solar equipment from the landowner's property and requires the solar facility to maintain financial assurance to cover the removal costs.

Farm Bureau was pleased to see the passage of a handful of bills concerning wind energy, including HB 1205 by Rep. Cody Maynard and Sen. David Bullard, which repeals the tax credit for small wind turbine manufacturers.

Sen. Darcy Jech and Rep. Carl Newton authored SB 713, which requires wind facilities built after Jan. 1, 2026, to apply to the Federal Aviation Administration for approval of the installation of light-mitigating technology on wind turbines that only illuminates turbine-mounted beacon lights when an aircraft is approaching.

### Water

The unresolved groundwater metering issues of 2024 did not gain any more traction during the 2025 legislative session, but the legislature did pass several additional water measures, including HB 1588 by Rep. David Hardin

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## Legislative Review (continued from front)

and Sen. Tom Woods. The measure creates the Spring Creek Watershed Study Act, which seeks to improve and protect water quality and the aquatic habitat in the Spring Creek watershed through voluntary, incentive-based programs as part of a comprehensive water quality plan under the direction of the Oklahoma Conservation Commission.

SB 940 by Sen. Darcy Jech and Rep. Mike Dobrinski also requires the Oklahoma Conservation Commission to implement a plan for the control, removal and eradication of harmful and invasive plants on state-owned and operated land.

The legislature also passed a few bills concerning the Oklahoma Water Resources Board, including SB 1151 by Sen. Chuck Hall and Rep. Trey Caldwell, which appropriates \$6 million to the OWRB for water infrastructure improvement and construction. Caldwell and Hall also teamed up on HB 2766, which provides for \$5.9 million in funding for the Terry Peach North Canadian Watershed Restoration Act.

HB 1438 by Rep. Kenton Patzkowsky and Sen. Spencer Kern raises the amount the OWRB Rural Economic Action Plan grant program and the REAP Water Projects Fund can give to a single entity from \$150,000 to \$350,000. All three measures are backed by OKFB members' policy on supporting the improvement of water infrastructure in the state of Oklahoma.

### Transportation

HB 1419 by Rep. Josh West and

Sen. Tom Woods effectively changes the definition of "street legal utility vehicles" to allow maintained speeds of 50 miles per hour for all terrain and utility terrain vehicles. The bill also allows ATVs and UTVs to be used on U.S. highways in counties with a population of less than 75,000 if properly registered, and it permits their usage on U.S. highways in counties with a population of more than 75,000 if the posted speed limit is less than 50 miles per hour.

Rep. Trey Caldwell and Sen. John Haste authored HB 2758, which creates the Preserving and Advancing County Transportation Fund to construct and maintain Oklahoma's county highway system by allocating some of the gross production tax on natural gas to the PACT Fund.

### Education

OKFB members have placed a high priority on the education of future veterinarians who plan to practice in rural Oklahoma, and the 2025 legislative session brought an enormous victory to the Oklahoma State University College of Veterinary Medicine through HB 2773. The measure authored by Rep. Trey Caldwell and Sen. Chuck Hall appropriates \$250 million from the Legacy Capital Financing Fund to build a new animal teaching hospital on the OSU campus.

### Consumer Protection

OKFB was pleased to see the passage of HB 1126 by Rep. Jim Grego and Sen. Roland Pederson, which prohibits the false advertisement, misbranding or distribution of any manufactured-

protein food product that is labeled with an identifying meat term.

### Taxes

Two bills of note were passed in 2025 that deal with taxation, including HB 1183 by Rep. Jim Grego and Sen. Avery Frix, which requires motor vehicle excise tax be calculated on the actual sales price and eliminates the 20% adjustment above and below the average retail price when determining the taxable value.

Oklahomans can also expect some changes to their income tax structure with the passage of HB 2764 by Rep. Trey Caldwell and Sen. Chuck Hall, which reduces income tax rates by 0.25% to the top marginal personal income tax rate and restructures the income tax brackets. Beginning in 2026, the top rate will be lowered from 4.75% to 4.5% and the number of tax brackets will be reduced from six to four. Then a trigger is in place to phase out the personal income tax by quarter-percent increments.

### Next Steps

As elected officials return home to their constituents, work for Farm Bureau members has just begun with the start of the organization's policy development season. Throughout the rest of the summer and early fall, Farm Bureau members will gather across the state for August Area Meetings and county annual meetings to develop new grassroots policy to guide the organization in 2026.

Read the full article online at [okfb.news/legislativereview25](https://okfb.news/legislativereview25).

## Applications are open for OKFB's Capitol Camp

**O**klahoma Farm Bureau is now accepting applications for Capitol Camp, set for Sept. 3-4, 2025, at the Oklahoma state Capitol.

Capitol Camp is an immersive two-day legislative experience for incoming high school juniors and seniors to learn about Oklahoma's legislative process and how bills become law through a mock legislature held on the floor of the Oklahoma House of Representatives.

Prior to the camp, students will have the opportunity to write a piece of legislation about an issue important to them with help from mentors through

a series of Zoom calls. Students will then discuss, lobby and vote on their legislation during the two-day camp.

Capitol Camp was previously held in June but has been moved to early September to better accommodate high school students' busy summer schedules.

The Capitol Camp application can be found at [okfb.news/applications](https://okfb.news/applications). Completed applications must be submitted no later than Aug. 15, 2025.

Applications may be submitted to Holly Carroll at [holly.carroll@okfb.org](mailto:holly.carroll@okfb.org) or by mail to Oklahoma Farm Bureau,

Attn: Holly Carroll, 2501 N. Stiles Ave., Oklahoma City, OK 73105.

The cost to attend Capitol Camp is \$50 per student. This covers all meals, lodging and transportation for the duration of the event. OKFB will contact selected students with further instructions and payment information.

For questions and more information please contact, Holly Carroll at **(405) 523-2300**.

The application can be found online at [okfb.news/applications](https://okfb.news/applications).

# OKFB to kick off grassroots policy development season with August Area Meetings

Oklahoma Farm Bureau members from around the state are invited to gather and discuss the issues and policies impacting agriculture at the organization’s annual August Area Meetings.

The meetings serve as the beginning of Farm Bureau’s grassroots policy development season. OKFB members are encouraged to bring their ideas for potential changes and updates to the organization’s policy that will help agriculture and rural Oklahoma.

In addition to policy discussions, updates on numerous OKFB programs and events will be shared by committee

members and staff.

A total of 11 meetings will be held across all nine Farm Bureau districts. Each meeting begins at 6 p.m. and will include a meal. OKFB members can attend the area meeting that is most convenient for them.

After each area meeting, OKFB members will draft grassroots policy proposals in the form of resolutions that will be presented first at county resolutions meetings held in September and October. Resolutions that pass the county level will be presented to the state resolutions committee, which will meet in October, and resolutions

approved by the state committee will be passed along to the delegate body at the 2025 OKFB annual meeting in Oklahoma City in November to be considered and voted upon.

OKFB’s grassroots policy positions guide the organization’s advocacy efforts at both the state and national level as Farm Bureau works to represent family agriculture in Oklahoma City and Washington, D.C.

For questions about OKFB’s August Area Meetings, members can contact their field representative or the OKFB public policy department at **(405) 523-2300**.

## August Area Meeting Schedule 2025

<b>District 1 West</b> Monday, August 4 • 6 p.m.	<b>District 5</b> Thursday, August 14 • 6 p.m.	
<b>District 1 East</b> Monday, August 18 • 6 p.m.	<b>District 6</b> Monday, August 25 • 6 p.m.	<b>District 7</b> Tuesday, August 5 • 6 p.m.
<b>District 2</b> Tuesday, August 19 • 6 p.m.	<b>District 4 East</b> Tuesday, August 12 • 6 p.m.	<b>District 8</b> Thursday, August 21 • 6 p.m.
<b>District 3</b> Thursday, August 28 • 6 p.m.	<b>District 4 West</b> Monday, August 11 • 6 p.m.	<b>District 9</b> Thursday, August 7 • 6 p.m.

# AFBF encourages members to develop immigration enforcement plans

American Farm Bureau is encouraging agricultural producers who rely on migrant or international labor to have a plan in case of an on-farm visit from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers.

With recent ICE arrests of undocumented workers at a variety of businesses, including farms, AFBF is encouraging agricultural producers who use migrant labor to take two steps:

- Develop a plan in case ICE officers visit your operation
- Self-audit your I-9 paperwork

AFBF President Zippy Duvall also released the following statement June 17 regarding the ICE enforcement on farms:

“President Trump recently emphasized agriculture faces unique circumstances that warrant a different approach to enforcement practices,” Duvall said. “Agriculture is inherently labor intensive – farmers cannot care for crops and animals without the contributions of the men and women willing to do the hard work. These are dedicated employees who work alongside farm families every day.

“Current agriculture workforce programs are broken. They do not meet the year-round needs of farmers, and they’ve become so expensive they are out of reach for many farmers. Unfortunately, domestic workers do not apply for farm jobs, despite aggressive

hiring efforts. Without farm workers, vegetables will be left in the fields, fruit will remain unpicked, and cows will go unmilked. The end result is a reduced food supply and higher grocery prices for all of America’s families.

“Congress must prioritize fixing the farm labor crisis that the President identified. Outdated systems must be modernized so farmers can find enough workers to help plant and harvest crops and care for livestock. America can have both a secure border and a labor program that provides a desperately needed and dependable farm workforce.”

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**Postmaster:**

Send address corrections to:

*Perspective*  
P.O. Box 53332,  
Oklahoma City, OK 73152-3332

**STAFF DIRECTORY**

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

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**COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST**

Mickinzi Ferguson  
(405) 523-2343

Oklahoma Farm Bureau  
2501 N. Stiles  
Oklahoma City, OK 73105-3126

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## Business owners can learn how to craft compelling lending applications with OKFB In the Weeds masterclass series

Oklahoma small business owners can learn how to prepare applications for state and federal funding opportunities with the third session of Oklahoma Farm Bureau's In the Weeds masterclass series offered through the organization's Oklahoma Grassroots Rural and Ag Business Accelerators program.

The "Unlocking Lending Opportunities with TEDC" masterclass will be offered at eight different sites spread across Oklahoma on four different dates, ensuring local business owners in across the state have an opportunity to attend the in-person session.

The session will prepare small business owners of all types to craft compelling applications and gather the necessary supporting documents to apply for a wide array of government-funded business loan programs, including U.S. Small Business Association loans, State Small Business Credit Initiative venture capital, SSBCI

lending and other Oklahoma Center for Advancement of Science and Technology funding programs.

Attendees will learn how they can prepare loan and other funding applications to be able to present them to a funding decisionmaker with all the necessary steps in place. The session will walk participants through the process as they work to complete a sample loan application, with a special focus on the Oklahoma Business Lending partnership, a collaborative effort between OCAST and TEDC Creative Capital funded through SSBCI.

"Even if a business owner or entrepreneur is not currently seeking a loan or business capital, preparing a funding application is a great skill to have in your toolbox as your business grows and you seek new opportunities," said Amarie Bartel, OKFB's rural economic development coordinator.

The locations and dates for the Unlocking Lending Opportunities with TEDC masterclass are:

- June 25 – Fairview and Pryor
- July 16 – Alva and Drumright
- August 6 – Duncan and Wilburton
- August 27 – Elk City and Ada

Each class will be held from 5:30-7 p.m., and dinner will be provided at each location.

The event is free for business owners to attend, but registration is required and is available online on the OKFB website at

**[okfarmbureau.org/intheweeds](https://okfarmbureau.org/intheweeds).**

OKFB's In the Weeds program is a four-session masterclass series designed to break down barriers that often exist between entrepreneurs and funding. The remaining session for 2025 is "Custom Solutions for Market-Specific Needs," which will be hosted in the fall.

For more information on OKFB's Oklahoma Grassroots Rural and Ag Business Accelerators program, In the Weeds and other rural development initiatives, visit **[okfarmbureau.org/accelerator](https://okfarmbureau.org/accelerator)**.