

PERSPECTIVE

March 24, 2023

Oklahoma Farm Bureau, coalition helps defeat recreational marijuana state question

Oklahoma Farm Bureau, alongside a coalition of Oklahoma organizations and businesses, helped defeat SQ 820, which would have legalized recreational marijuana during a special election held March 7.

The question failed to pass with almost 62 percent of Oklahomans voting against the measure. SQ 820 garnered a majority “No” vote in every Oklahoma county according to data from the Oklahoma Election Board. Statewide voter turnout was recorded at just over 25 percent.

OKFB worked to share the problems farmers, ranchers and rural residents experienced during the past few years as Oklahoma’s medical marijuana industry grew.

OKFB held a press event March 1 at the OKFB home office in Oklahoma City with the Oklahoma Cattlemen’s Association and American Farmers and Ranchers. The groups highlighted the negative impacts medical marijuana



has had on rural communities and agriculture while asking voters to vote No on SQ 820 to keep marijuana-related problems from growing.

OKFB members shared resources and information in their local communities, wrote letters to the editor in their local papers and spread information about the possible repercussions of SQ 820 on social media.

The Protect our Kids No 820

campaign spent just over \$219,000 in opposing the question, with the Yes campaign spending more than \$4 million, according to reports from the Oklahoma Ethics Commission available just after the election.

OKFB’s grassroots-created policy opposes recreational marijuana in the state of Oklahoma, which was the basis for the organization’s involvement in the coalition opposing SQ 820.

Legislative Update: Initiative petition process changes, youth farm driver’s permits

March 23 marked the halfway point for the Oklahoma legislative session as the deadline week for bills to pass from their chamber of origin. Oklahoma Farm Bureau continues to track several pieces of legislation pertaining to agriculture.

Two pieces of legislation of note that have moved recently includes SB 518 and HB 1962.

SB 518 by Sen. Julie Daniels was passed off the Senate floor and now moves to the House. SB 518 makes modifications to Oklahoma’s initiative petition statutes. If enacted, it would require four data points matching a voter’s registration to be verified for those signing initiative petitions instead of the previously required three points. There are five listed data points that must be collected including legal first name, legal last name, zip code, house number, and birthdate.

HB 1962 by Rep. Carl Newton was passed by the House and is now waiting to be heard by the Senate. HB 1962 would allow kids who are under 17 years old but not less than 14 years old and who reside on or are employed by a farm the ability to apply for a special farm driver’s permit. The farm permit would allow them to operate a Class D motor vehicle when going to or from the farm or driving for farm-related work. It would also allow those individuals who reside on the farm to drive to school.

Following the failure of State Question 820 March 7, the OKFB public policy team is watching a few pieces of marijuana-related legislation that would make minor tweaks to the medical marijuana industry. OKFB will continue to work with legislators on marijuana-related legislation that aligns with OKFB’s grassroots policies.

**Bill progress information was current as of press time. For an update on weekly happenings at the Capitol and an outlook on what is ahead, be sure to tune in to Oklahoma Farm Bureau’s Weekly Public Policy Update call each Friday at noon.*

Collegiate Farm Bureau members visit the state Capitol

More than 25 Collegiate Farm Bureau members traveled to the Oklahoma state Capitol for the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Collegiate Farm Bureau Day at the Capitol March 8.

Lt. Gov. Matt Pinnell greeted the students from across the state and provided insight into what it takes to manage the tourism industry in the state, including agri-tourism. Representatives Josh West, Judd Strom, Steve Bashore and Anthony Moore shared their experiences representing their constituents and the importance of being involved in the legislative process.

Collegiate members had the opportunity to visit with other legislators, watch proceedings on the Senate and House floors and make connections with fellow students.

Students from Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College, Northwestern Oklahoma State University, Oklahoma State University and Southwestern Oklahoma State University were in attendance.



Collegiate Farm Bureau members hear from Lt. Gov. Matt Pinnell during their visit.



Sen. Blake Stephens answers questions and explains the current status of the legislature.



OKFB collegiate member Emma Farmer asks questions during OKFB's Collegiate Day at the Capitol.



Rep. Anthony Moore addresses the group during Collegiate Day at the Capitol.

OKFB supports ag youth at 2023 OYE

Oklahoma Farm Bureau proudly supported Oklahoma's agriculture youth at the 2023 Oklahoma Youth Expo with more than \$60,000 of premium purchases, sponsorships and partnerships.

OKFB purchased premiums during the annual OYE Sale of Champions in Oklahoma City Friday, March 17, where the organization gave out \$45,000 in premium purchases to 4-H and FFA members during the sale. OKFB was

also recognized at the sale as the 2022 volume buyer as the purchaser of the greatest number of premiums at last year's sale.

OKFB also purchased the chalice for the grand champion steer, shown by Finley Yocham of Sapulpa 4-H.

OKFB also sponsored a wide variety of events and programs during OYE, bringing the organization's total financial support to more than \$60,000.



Elgin FFA member Tommy Glover exhibits his steer during the 2023 OYE Sale of Champions.



OKFB member Taylor Fent (left) competes in the collegiate discussion meet.



OKFB YF&R and WLC members at FUSION Conference.

OKFB members attend AFBF FUSION conference

Nearly 20 Oklahoma Farm Bureau Women's Leadership and Young Farmers and Ranchers members attended the American Farm Bureau FUSION Conference March 3-6 in Jacksonville, FL.

The conference brought together more than 900 Farm Bureau members from three AFBF program areas – WLC, YF&R and Program & Education.

Members at the event heard from various keynote speakers including motivational speaker and American

Ninja Warrior Alex Weber, who shared tools for members to become the best leaders in the organization; AFBF President Zippy Duvall, who reminded members of the importance of being involved in every aspect of the organization – especially the grassroots policy process; and ESPN sports broadcaster Lauren Sisler, who offered her story of overcoming obstacles to become an award-winning reporter.

Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College student Taylor Fent competed in the

AFBF Collegiate Discussion meet, where 33 students from across the country replicated a committee meeting where discussion and active participation were expected from each participant to come to an answer or solution.

Breakout session topics included leadership development, how to cultivate business relationships, mental health, tax issues, the 2023 farm bill and much more. Members also toured local farms, ranches and businesses to gain perspective on agriculture in Florida.

Kay and Comanche County Farm Bureau members visit the state Capitol



Comanche County Farm Bureau members visit Rep. Trey Caldwell, Rep. Rande Worthen and Rep. Eddy Dempsey.



Kay County Farm Bureau 4-H and FFA members met Rep. Ken Luttrell (center) during their visit to the state Capitol.



Oklahoma Farm Bureau board of directors member Kerry Givens speaks with Rep. Daniel Pae (left) about current legislation.

Upcoming Application Deadlines

YF&R Legislative Day

Due: March 28

Find the application on our website at:
okfb.news/YFRLegDay23

Capitol Camp application

Due: April 1

Find the application on our website at:
okfb.news/CapitolCamp

OYLA application

Due: April 1

Find the application on our website at:
okfb.news/OYLA23

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OYLA youth conference applications due April 1



Oklahoma high school students completing their junior year in 2023 are invited to apply for the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers Oklahoma Youth Leading Agriculture conference held June 13-16 in Oklahoma City.

The conference will include leadership development, knowledgeable speakers, networking opportunities and agriculture industry experience. Students selected to attend the four-day leadership conference should be excellent students at the top of their

class with an interest in pursuing a post-secondary education.

Students will have the opportunity to build connections with their peers and visit with industry leaders. Sessions will be held at the Farm Bureau home office and will include opportunities for selected students to visit other organizations and businesses in the Oklahoma City area.

Applicants are not required to be Oklahoma Farm Bureau members. All costs are covered by the OKFB YF&R committee.

Applications for the conference are available on the OKFB website application center at okfarmbureau.org/applications. To be considered for the program, applications must be completed and postmarked by **April 1, 2023**, to Oklahoma Farm Bureau, Attn: Zac Swartz, YF&R Coordinator, 2501 N. Stiles, Oklahoma City, OK 73105, or emailed to Zac Swartz at zac.swartz@okfb.org.

For more information, contact OKFB YF&R Coordinator Zac Swartz at (405) 523-2300.