



2018-19

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY SUMMARY

**FARM
BUREAU**
MISSISSIPPI

MISSISSIPPI FARM BUREAU[®] FEDERATION

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



As 2019 draws to a close, I believe it is important to look back on the many federal policy and advocacy accomplishments Farm Bureau achieved over the last two years. This document summarizes the achievements and activities Farm Bureau leaders and staff have participated in at the federal level.

I am proud to lead this organization down new roads, and I attribute our success to the hard-working men and women involved in our organization. As you read this document, I hope you see how much stronger we are as one.

Sincerely,



Mike McCormick

**OUR MISSION IS TO CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH
MISSISSIPPI FARMERS, RANCHERS, AND FARM BUREAU MEMBERS
CAN HAVE A BETTER LIFE AND MAKE A BETTER LIVING.**

FARM BILL 2018

In December 2018, President Donald Trump signed the 2018 Farm Bill into law. Farm Bureau played an instrumental role in the final passage of this key legislation. The 2018 Farm Bill added cotton and dairy back into the commodity title of the bill. The livestock components and conservation programs of the bill also received other positive enhancements. Passing the 2018 Farm Bill was a monumental achievement for Farm Bureau and the nation's farmers and ranchers.



significant decline in soybean and cotton export market opportunities.

As a member of the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) Trade Advisory Committee, Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) President Mike McCormick engaged with officials from the Trump Administration during the ongoing trade dispute. The committee vocalized the concerns for the well-being of the American farmer to the Trump Administration on a regular basis.

The U.S.-China Trade Dispute prompted the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to implement the Market Facilitation Program (MFP), an effort aimed at mitigating the impact of the tariffs to United States agriculture. Although grateful for the help, Farm Bureau made it clear that United States farmers prefer markets, not aid.



TRADE

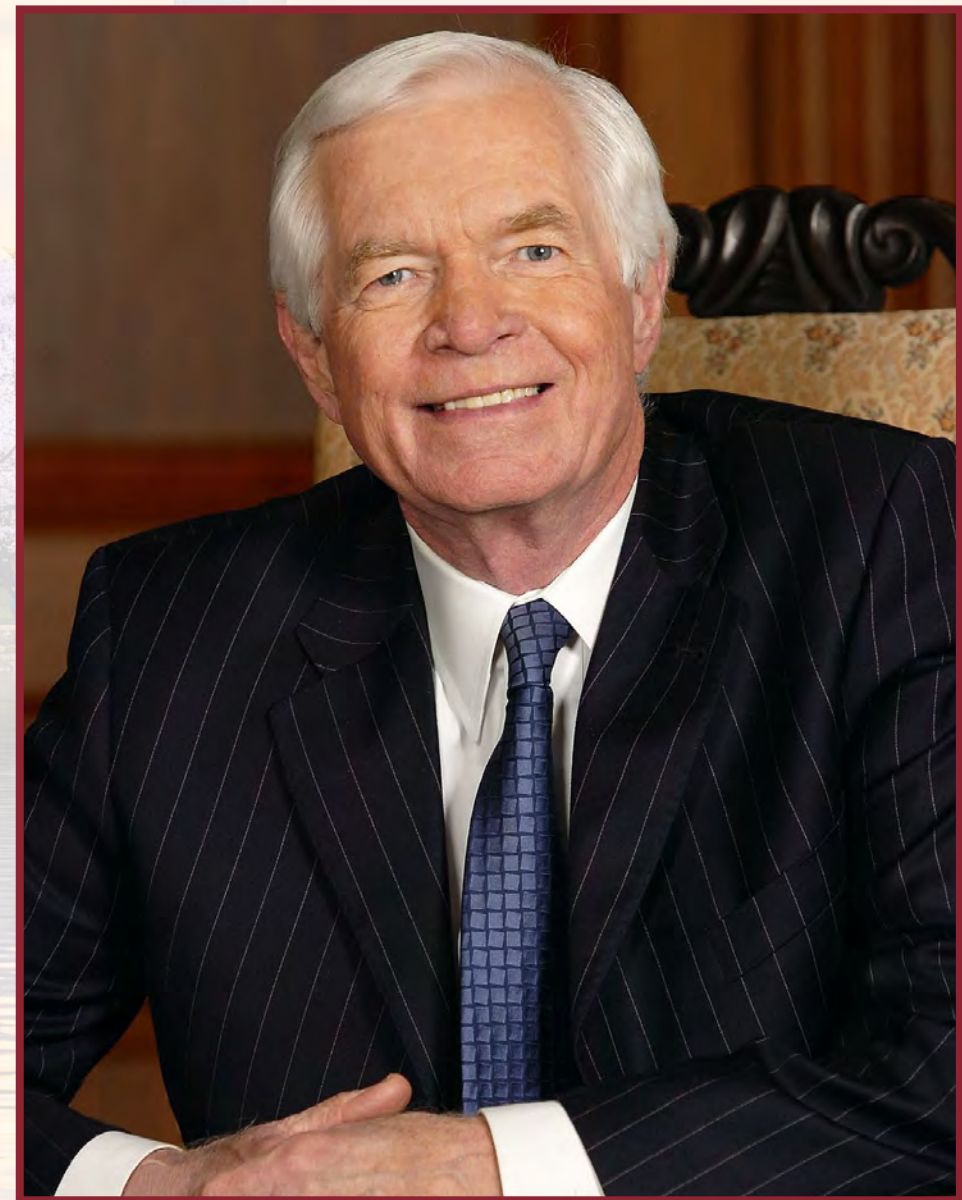
U.S. - CHINA TRADE DISPUTE

In May 2018, the United States formally initiated a series of new tariffs on Chinese goods. The Chinese retaliated with their own tariffs, which resulted in a

IN MEMORY OF THAD COCHRAN

As we close a successful 2019, it is important to acknowledge and remember the life of public servant U.S. Senator Thad Cochran who passed away on May 30, 2019. Cochran spent his 45-year career in Congress advocating for farmers and rural Mississippians.

Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) honored Cochran in 1990 with its highest honor, the Distinguished Service Award. Over the years, Cochran received hundreds of other accolades from the agriculture community during his time in Congress.



MFBF commends and applauds the lifetime of public service Cochran devoted to the citizens of the state of Mississippi. There will never be a stronger ally of the farmer in Congress, and all Mississippi farmers and ranchers will sorely miss his presence.

MARKET FACILITATION PROGRAM

In July of 2018 and 2019, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced details of the Market Facilitation Program (MFP) implemented by the Trump Administration to mitigate the impact of the U.S.-China Trade Dispute to United States farmers.

MFP takes into account market impact, and has assisted the farm community in a great time of need.



USMCA

On November 30, 2018, the United States, Mexico and Canada joined to form the United States, Mexico, Canada Agreement (USMCA), the successor trade agreement to NAFTA.

During the August 2019 Congressional Recess, Farm Bureau leaders and staff spent time with members of Congress and their staff to impress upon them the importance of moving forward with this agreement as soon as possible. Our trading partners are monitoring movements of this key agreement.

Final passage of the USMCA will remain a priority for Farm Bureau.



U.S. - TAIWAN GOODWILL TRADE MISSION

During August and September 2019, Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) leadership and staff worked closely with the Mississippi Governor's Office, the Mississippi Development Authority, and the Mississippi Department of Agriculture & Commerce to secure Mississippi's first commodity procurement through the U.S.-Taiwan Goodwill Trade Mission, a program that has been in place since 1998.

In August, (MFBF) President Mike McCormick and MFBF policy staff flew to Taiwan to participate in an agricultural trade mission led by Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant and Commissioner Andy Gipson of Mississippi Agriculture & Commerce. The goal of the mission was to further develop and enhance agricultural trade opportunities between the two countries. The group met with the President of Taiwan, the Ministers of Economic Affairs, Foreign Affairs and Agriculture, and various private industry officials representing the soybean, beef, cotton, forestry and energy sectors.



In September, a group of 22 Taiwanese government officials and industry representatives traveled to the United States to sign letters of intent to purchase approximately 97 million bushels of soybeans and 197 million bushels of corn. States targeted under the 2020-2021 procurement program are Mississippi, Indiana, Illinois and Nebraska.

Mississippi hosted the delegation of Taiwanese governmental officials and agricultural merchants on September 19 in Jackson to announce these major purchases of soybeans and corn. While in Jackson, MFBF hosted the distinguished guests for breakfast, a roundtable and a briefing on agriculture in Mississippi. Later in the day, the delegation signed a letter of intent with Mississippi's officials and agricultural industry representatives at the Mississippi Governor's Mansion.

LABOR

H2-A and H2-B are vital to the workforce needs of the agricultural community in Mississippi. During the fall of 2018, the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) worked diligently to help Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee Bob Goodlatte gather support for the Ag and Legal Workforce Act of 2018. The stand-alone legislation would have created a new H-2C temporary work visa for United States agriculture. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) would have administered the new H-2C program, expanded its use in the livestock industry, and brought about numerous reforms to the old H-2A program. Unfortunately, the United States House of Representatives did not consider the legislation.

MFBF continues to work with the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) and the Mississippi Congressional Delegation on the labor needs of Mississippi agriculture.

FLOODING & DISASTER ASSISTANCE

The 2019 crop year served as one of the most devastating years for Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) members farming in the Mississippi Delta and the batture lands south of Vicksburg.

In August 2018, MFBF hosted Major General Richard Kaiser, Mississippi Valley Division of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, for a tour of the persistent flooding in the batture lands and its impact on local farms and communities.

The 2018 Farm Bill includes Farm Bureau-drafted language directing the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Risk Management Agency (RMA) to conduct a study on the feasibility of special provisions crop insurance to assist batture land farms impacted by increased frequency of flooding.

In April 2019, USDA RMA Administrator Martin Barbre spent time touring flooded areas along the Mississippi River and speaking to farmers impacted by the flooding. Barbre and his staff split their time between the farmers and land in the Mississippi Delta and then in the batture lands south of Vicksburg, holding meetings with each group to discuss the problems and potential solutions. Each meeting allowed farmers, crop insurance professionals and Mississippi Department of Agriculture & Commerce personnel to have an open dialogue about these issues.



In May 2019, a small group of farm leaders from Mississippi traveled to Washington to discuss the ongoing flooding problems in Mississippi with lawmakers and agency officials. MFBF President Mike McCormick, MFBF members Jeffry Mitchell of Cary and Louis Guedon of Natchez, and other MFBF staff participated in the trip. During the trip, the group met with staff from multiple offices, including the office of the Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; staff from the office of the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); the Administrator of the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA); the Administrator of the USDA RMA; U.S. Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith; and staff from the Office of U.S. Senator Roger Wicker.



In June 2019, American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) President Zippy Duvall wrote EPA administrator Andrew Wheeler requesting the agency officially take steps to lift the current veto of the Yazoo Pump Project.

"This matter is of urgent importance to the residents of Mississippi, and AFBF strongly supports completion of the project," Duvall stated in the letter. "I would like to request your immediate attention to this matter and formally to request reconsideration by EPA of



the 404 (c) veto exercised by your agency on this important pump project. Reconsideration and reversal of this veto would positively affect countless lives, farms, and economic activity in the South Delta."

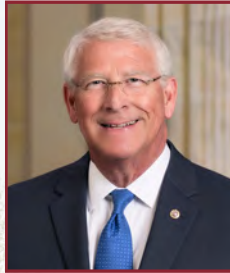
Farm Bureau will continue its efforts of working with the EPA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Mississippi Congressional Delegation, Delta Council, and local community leaders to advocate for relief for both the Yazoo Backwater area and the batture lands south of Vicksburg.

RURAL BROADBAND

In the last two years, rural broadband deployment has become a new focus area for Farm Bureau. Farm Bureau works closely with the Chairman of the United States Senate Commerce Committee, Mississippi Senator Roger Wicker.

In February 2018, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) released a map showing areas across the United States presumed eligible to receive support for the deployment of 4G LTE service as part of its Mobility Fund Phase II (MF-II) auction. MF-II is critically important to supporting mobile voice and broadband coverage with federal dollars, incentivizing the deployment of mobile wireless service throughout the country. In essence, the map shows Mississippi to be 98 percent covered which Wicker and the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) dispute.

The FCC granted MFBF a waiver to participate in the FCC MF-II challenge process. MFBF collaborated with the Mississippi Public Service Commission (PSC) to direct our members to report mobile broadband service issues to the PSC.



On April 10, 2019, MFBF President Mike McCormick provided a congressional testimony before members of the United States Senate Commerce Committee in Washington, D.C. on the rural broadband needs specific to agriculture and rural America. The focus of the hearing centered on mapping current broadband and how current mapping systems are inaccurate. During his testimony, McCormick shared his experience with the FCC MF-II challenge process and stressed the need for more aggregate data collection on the ground.

FEDERAL APPROPRIATIONS

Federal appropriations have become a new focus area for the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF). During 2018, MFBF and the Alabama Farmers Federation worked to secure a \$2 million appropriation in the FY19 funding bill through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) for Cogongrass suppression programs. Funds from these programs went to the Alabama and Mississippi Departments of Agriculture and Forestry Commissions. Once in place, these federal dollars will assist private landowners with herbicide applications to suppress the spread of Congongrass.



LIVESTOCK ISSUES

DAIRY INDUSTRY

During the negotiation process of the 2018 Farm Bill, the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) led efforts to revise the current farm safety program for dairy farms. MFBF began reviewing the 2014 Farm Bill support structure challenges by hiring Dr. Bill Herndon, retired Mississippi State University (MSU) dairy economist, as a consultant in spring 2017. Herndon developed a program to provide market risk protection, similar to the Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) program. In the end, Herndon's program was not included in the 2018 Farm Bill.



In addition to the farm safety program for dairy farms, MFBF focused on the removal of the \$20 million spending authority applied to the Livestock Gross Margin (LGM) program during the 2018 Farm Bill negotiations. The LGM program's cap prevented the research and development of certain livestock risk management programs. In February 2018, Congress removed this cap, paving the way for the development of American Farm Bureau Federation's (AFBF) Dairy-Revenue Protection Policy (Dairy-RP).

In 2018, MFBF joined 36 other state and regional organizations in a letter calling on Federal Drug Administration (FDA) Commissioner Scott Gottlieb, M.D., to enforce the existing standards of identity for milk

products. In July 2018, MFBF President Mike McCormick joined four fellow state presidents in a meeting with Gottlieb to discuss this issue. Gottlieb indicated the agency's intent to review and open public comment on this issue in the future.



At the close of the 2019 AFBF Annual Meeting, delegates approved the commission of a comprehensive review of the federal milk marketing order study. MFBF appointed Herndon to represent the southeastern dairy industry on this committee.

LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY

LIVESTOCK COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP TRIP TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

In July 2019, Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) staff and leaders from the beef, poultry and small ruminant committees traveled to Washington, D.C. to address several on-going policy issues within the livestock sector. The group met with various government officials regarding the issues below.



ELDS & LIVESTOCK HAULERS

Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) spent a great deal of time monitoring Electronic Logging Devices (ELDs) and their impact on livestock haulers. In July 2019, MFBF hosted staff from the office of U.S. Senator Roger Wicker at Southeast Mississippi Livestock in Hattiesburg for a discussion on the issue and a first-hand look at a livestock hauler apparatus. During their Washington visit in July, MFBF leaders met with Senate Commerce Committee staff and staff from Wicker's office on the issue of electronic logging devices for livestock haulers.

GIPSA RULE

Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF), American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) and other state Farm Bureaus have continuously worked to develop policy to be included in the final GIPSA Rule. AFBF provided a set of recommendations to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) in their final preparation for the rule. According to USDA, the proposed rule is still in the clearance process. Producers can expect the final rule to take effect in spring 2020.

BEEF MARKET DIALOGUE WITH USDA

In September 2019, the Alabama Farmers Federation and the Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas Farm Bureaus submitted a letter to United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Sonny Perdue and Under Secretary Greg Ibach thanking them for directing the Packers and Stockyards Division to launch an investigation on the price margin volatility beef cattle producers experienced following the August 9 fire at the Tyson Beef Plant in Holcomb County, Kansas. On October 1, Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) President Mike McCormick and his fellow state presidents on the letter met with Ibach to further this dialogue.



BLACK VULTURE DEPREDATION

Black vultures and the predatory habits they undertake on newborn cattle serves as a growing problem for farmers in the Southeast. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) acts as the federal management agency for black vultures, while the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) aids producers with depredation problems. USFWS and USDA-APHIS collaborate on research, allowable vulture take models and permit processes. The Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) is gathering data to present a plan to request a permit to USDA-APHIS for a state-level depredation permit.

REGULATORY

REPEAL OF 2015 WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES RULE

Farm Bureau prioritized the repeal of the 2015 Waters of the United States (WOTUS) Rule for the last several years. In September 2019, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) finalized a rule repealing WOTUS and remodifying the rules in place before WOTUS. The rule repealing WOTUS is a huge step in finalizing a new clean water rule. Farm Bureau will now turn its attention to finalizing a new clean water rule protecting water and our members' ability to work and care for the land.



ELIMINATING REPORTING IN THE CERCLA-EPRA RULE

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a final rule on June 4, 2019 to exempt farms from reporting animal waste emissions to state and local authorities under the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPRA). The rule follows the passage of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), a law providing similar exemption.

"[The new rule] eliminates an onerous reporting requirement and allows emergency responders and farmers to focus on protecting the public and feeding the nation, not routine animal waste emissions," EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler said.

Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) worked closely with the office of U.S. Senator Roger Wicker, a member of the U.S. Senate Environment & Public Works Committee, to pass this legislation clarifying the intent of Congress on this rule.

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT REFORM

In the last two years, Farm Bureau spent a great deal of time working on reforms to Endangered Species Act (ESA) regulations. In October 2018, Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) President Mike McCormick testified before the U.S. Senate Environment & Public Works Committee on balancing the needs of agriculture and protection of endangered species.



McCormick shared several examples of how private landowners collaborate effectively with state agencies to recover and conserve wildlife. "One of several great examples of state and local communities coming together to address an issue is the Mississippi Honey Bee Stewardship Program, an effort launched jointly by the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation and the Mississippi Department of Agriculture & Commerce to protect managed pollinators," he said.

In August 2019, the United States Department of Interior (DOI) unveiled three final rulemakings designed to increase transparency and effectiveness of the ESA. The final rules relate to changes to critical habitat and the consultation process between DOI and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

TOURS FOR EPA OFFICIALS

In August 2018, members of the National Cotton Council, Delta Council and Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) hosted Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) officials from the office of Pesticide Programs in Tunica and Clarksdale. During the visit, the EPA discussed several topics related to pesticide application, resistance management and product stewardship with area farmers.



WHITTINGTON SERVES ON EPA PESTICIDE POLICY DIALOGUE COMMITTEE

Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) Environmental Programs Coordinator Andy Whittington continues to serve on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Pesticide Policy Dialogue Committee (PPDC). Whittington has held the position for six years, representing the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF). Established



in 1995, the PPDC is a diverse group of stakeholders chartered under the Federal Advisory Committee Act to provide feedback to EPA on various pesticide regulatory, policy, and program implementation issues. Whittington completes his final term on PPDC in the fall of 2019.

POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT, ADVOCACY & LEADERSHIP

THIRD CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATE AGRICULTURE FORUM

In April 2018, Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) hosted its first-ever Third Congressional District Candidate Agriculture Forum at the Mississippi Agriculture & Forestry Museum. The event allowed MFBF members from the third congressional district to hear from candidates seeking to fill the open seat vacated by U.S. Congressman Gregg Harper. Artis Ford, former Farm Week anchor, served as moderator of the event. Candidates who participated in the event included Michael Aycox, Sally Doty, Morgan Dunn, Michael Ted Evans, Michael Guest, Whit Hughes, Perry Parker and Katherine Tate.



2018 WASHINGTON, D.C. FLY-IN TO THE FARM

On November 1, 2018, Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) hosted its first Washington, D.C. Fly-In to the Farm. Due to limited legislative days on the United States House and Senate calendars during November, MFBF decided to conduct its annual Washington, D.C. related member engagement activities at home through this unique event. The event kicked off with a welcome from American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) President Zippy Duvall.



In addition to Duvall, members heard from numerous officials during the opening general session, including United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) Administrator Ken Isley; USDA Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs Greg Ibach; United States Food & Drug Administration (FDA) Deputy Commissioner for Food & Veterinary Medicine Dr. Stephen Ostroff; United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Southeastern Regional Administrator Trey Glenn; Mississippi Commissioner of Agriculture & Commerce Andy Gipson; U.S. Senator Roger Wicker; and U.S. Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith. Following the general session, members broke out into congressional district constituent meetings with U.S. Congressman Trent Kelly, U.S. Congressman Gregg Harper, and U.S. Congressman Steven Palazzo.

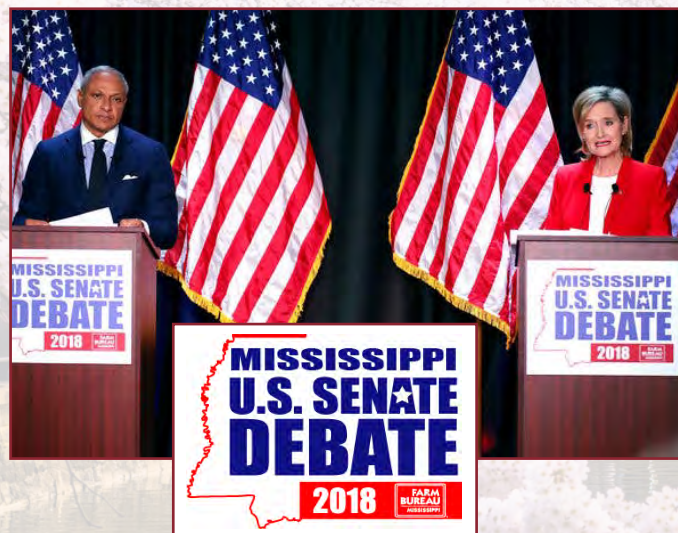


AFBF FRIEND OF FARM BUREAU AWARDS

United States Senators and Representatives who vote to pass key legislation identified by the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) up to 70% of the time can be honored with the Friend of Farm Bureau Award. In November 2018, Representatives Gregg Harper, Trent Kelly, and Steven Palazzo received the AFBF Friend of Farm Bureau Award from the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) for the 115th Congress. Additionally, Senators Roger Wicker and Cindy Hyde-Smith were honored with the award. During the 115th United States Congress, AFBF registered 22 votes relating to agriculture.

U.S. SENATE DEBATE

In November 2018, Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) served as the host location for the United States Senate debate between U.S. Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith and Mike Espy. The two candidates were in the run-off election at this time. The winner of the election would fulfill the remainder of U.S. Senator Thad Cochran's term. MFBF worked closely with WLBT in Jackson and other news outlets from across the state and world to make the event a success.



AGRICULTURAL TOUR FOR CONGRESSMAN MICHAEL GUEST

In August 2019, Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) hosted U.S. Congressman Michael Guest and his staff on a three-day agricultural tour of the Third Congressional District. The tour consisted of stops in Rankin, Franklin, Adams, Wilkinson, Amite and Lincoln counties where Guest met with local farmers, ranchers and citizens. Guests' goals for the three-day tour consisted of acquiring knowledge about the agricultural members of his district and the issues they are facing in order to be well versed when returning to Washington, D.C. In addition to farmer specific issues, Guest also heard of other problems affecting rural Mississippi.



"We have so many needs outside of those directly related to agriculture, including infrastructure and rural broadband, that rural Mississippi needs Congressman Guest working on in Washington D.C.," MFBF President Mike McCormick said.

YOUNG FARMERS & RANCHERS WASHINGTON ACTIVITIES

Each year, the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) sends its second year Young Farmers & Ranchers (YF&R) committee members to Washington, D.C. for a week to advocate for their industry. In 2019, the group made the trip in February. American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) staff briefed the members on agriculture policy. The young farmers and ranchers had meetings with key officials at the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Representatives Trent Kelly, Michael Guest and Steven Palazzo, and Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith and Senator Roger Wicker's staff.



THAD COCHRAN AGRICULTURAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

In 2017, the Mississippi State University Extension Service, in partnership with the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF), established a two-year, nine-seminar program to help emerging leaders in the state's agricultural industry develop leadership skills and policy knowledge while visiting agricultural systems in Mississippi and abroad. Named in memory of the late U.S. Senator Thad Cochran, the first class spent the past two years improving their leadership and communication skills, increasing their knowledge of agricultural enterprises and issues, and networking with leaders in government and industry. Class I graduated in October 2019. The members of Class II were announced in the fall of 2019.



AFBF ISSUE ADVISORY COMMITTEES

In December 2018, American Farm Bureau Federation's (AFBF) Issue Advisory Committees (IACs) appointed six Mississippians. The IACs provide an avenue for Farm Bureau's grassroots leaders to contribute their expertise on specific issues to the organization's policy deliberations. Committee members meet in person once a year and hold additional meetings via webinar or conference calls throughout the program year as needed to discuss new developments on their assigned issues. Mississippi's appointments are Jon Koehler Bibb (Budget and Economy), David Arant (Water), Lonnie Fortner (Farm Policy), Larry Jefcoat (Market Structures), Jo Lynn Mitchell (Organic & Direct Marketing), and Noble Guedon (Technology). Members of the committees traveled to Washington, D.C. to participate in a series of meetings in February 2019.

CONGRESSIONAL STAFF FARM TOURS

Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) staff and members spend a large amount of time each year with key staff members from Washington, D.C. to help them learn more about agriculture and to talk about issues affecting farm operations across Mississippi. These relationships continue to grow when MFBF members open their farms to members of Congress and their staff to show them how policy in Washington, D.C. affects operations on the farm. These farm tours serve as one of MFBF most powerful advocacy tools.



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