

Bills Gain Senate Committee Approval

HARRISBURG — Several ag-related bills were reported out of the State Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee following a committee meeting on Wednesday.

Sheila Miller, an assistant to committee chairman Edward

Helfrick, reported that House Bill 73, a bill that would delay penalties under the new rabies law, received committee approval. The law calls for penalties of up to \$300 per offense for the owners of unvaccinated dogs and housecats. HB 73 would give pet owners until

Sept. 1, to have their animals vaccinated.

Also receiving the committee's stamp of approval was Senate Bill 429, that would provide protection for farm equipment dealers under contract with manufacturers. In the case of company mergers or

consolidations, the bill calls for manufacturers to buy back any special tools or equipment that their dealers purchased at 100 percent of the the original dealer cost. The bill would also prevent dealer contracts from being broken without due cause. The

legislation pertains to both large and small implement and equipment manufacturers.

Senate Bill 156, introduced by Senator Noah Wenger, was also approved. The legislation would provide funding for farmland preservation easements, whereby landowners would be reimbursed the difference between their property's value as farmland and its value on the open market when the land is sold. This bill was also reported out of the Senate Appropriations Committee on Tuesday and is ready for a full Senate vote.

Also approved was Senate Resolution 10, which requests that Virginia stop taxing eggs brought in from Pennsylvania. Virginia currently levies a 5-cent-per-case (30 dozen) excise tax on Pennsylvania eggs, with the money going toward egg promotion programs. Pennsylvania has no such reciprocal tax.

Another resolution, SR 20, calls for the establishment of a bipartisan committee to explore the possibility of creating a major Pennsylvania agriculture products exposition. The goal is to encourage other states and foreign countries to buy Pennsylvania products.

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