

Farm Bureau's Policy Development Process

Nebraska Farm Bureau's policy development program is a vital "grassroots" process which establishes NFBF's official legislative policies. County Farm Bureau members, through the representative delegate process, determine what policies and actions are needed to address issues of concern.

County Legislative Policy Committee

County Farm Bureau Presidents, with the approval of the County Board of Directors, should appoint a County Legislative Policy Committee (CLPC). The County Legislative Policy Committee shall be comprised of eight to 13 members from the membership. The committee should include the President, Vice President, Ag Promotion Committee Chair, Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee Chair, Commodity Advisory Chair, and five individuals who have an interest in legislative issues.

State Legislative Policy Committee

The State Legislative Policy Committee (SLPC) serves at the pleasure of the Nebraska Farm Bureau President and Board of Directors. This committee consists of 16 district representatives, selected according to NFBF Board member districts, seven commodity representatives and two representatives from each of the three advisory committees (Education, Tax, and Natural and Environmental Resources). They serve under the leadership of the state First Vice President. Half of the district representative positions are appointed each year to serve two-year terms but members can serve no more than two consecutive two-year terms.

Commodity representatives on SLPC are chosen from NFBF's Core Commodity Committee or from a commodity leader database to provide expertise in their particular commodity interest. The Core Commodity Committee represents the commodities of Beef, Swine, Wheat, Soybeans, Feed Grains, Dairy and Dry Beans. A commodity representative can serve no more than four consecutive years.

County Farm Bureau Boards of Directors are requested to submit the names and qualifications of individuals for SLPC district representative positions. At the state annual meeting, the county delegate chairs caucus by district. The caucuses make recommendations to the State Board of Directors, which then appoints the district representatives. This allows the members to recommend those individuals they would like to have in the organization's leadership.

Members of the SLPC and their spouses are prohibited from serving as county delegates to the state annual meeting. This avoids a conflict between the positions of the committee and of the position of his/her County Farm Bureau.

Policy Development Process

Following completion of the County Farm Bureau annual meetings, the Nebraska Farm Bureau Governmental Relations Department staff compiles a master outline of the policy recommendations submitted by the counties. In November, county representatives meet

for the Nebraska Farm Bureau Policy Forum to review policy recommendations submitted by each County Farm Bureau. This review and debate allows every county the opportunity to explain and defend its policy recommendations, as well as to discuss the impact other county recommendations may have on their respective counties. These representatives are the only individuals who may vote at this meeting.

Members of the SLPC, who do not have voting rights, attend this meeting to become better informed about why each recommendation had been proposed. Taking into consideration the discussions which occurred, the committee subsequently drafts formal policy recommendations which are submitted to the House of Delegates for its approval at the state annual meeting.

House of Delegates

The House of Delegates consists of only those individuals who are elected by members of their respective County Farm Bureaus and certified by their respective County Farm Bureau President and Secretary to the State Credentials Committee. Delegates must be "voting members," individuals receiving a substantial portion of their income from production of agricultural commodities. Each county is entitled to a minimum of two delegates with one additional delegate for each 100 voting members in excess of 15.

The Nebraska Farm Bureau Federation Board of Directors does not have a vote in the House of Delegates. Any recommendations by the State Board must be presented and approved by the House of Delegates.

The House of Delegates considers recommendations of the SLPC and may consider additional recommendations from the floor. Those state affairs policy recommendations adopted by the House of Delegates become the official legislative policy of Nebraska Farm Bureau. Those national affairs policy recommendations adopted by the House of Delegates are forwarded to the American Farm Bureau Federation for consideration in its policy development process.

Board of Directors

The State Board of Directors shall remain the senior body in the organization accountable to the delegates. The Board is given the responsibility of drafting a policy recommendation report to be presented to the House of Delegates. This charge of responsibility requires that it have the authority to provide staff and resource material and to name a committee to prepare such a report. The content of the report, however, is entirely the concern of the State Legislative Policy Committee. The Board cannot dictate report content to the committee.

The State Legislative Policy Committee cannot challenge the role of the State Board of Directors with reference to the administration of Nebraska Farm Bureau. The Board has the authority to administer the overall program of Nebraska Farm Bureau