

SB 230 — State Symbols/ Florida Cracker Horse

by Senator Baker

This bill designates the Florida Cracker Horse (Marshtackie) as the official state horse. In addition, it designates the Loggerhead Turtle as the official Florida state salt water reptile. The bill provides for future legislative review and repeal.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2008.

Vote: Senate 38-1; House 116-1

SB 1630 — OGSR/Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

by Agriculture Committee

This bill reenacts the public records exemption that allows the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (department) to keep confidential any federal records which are provided to the department during a joint food safety or food-borne illness investigation. Before the exemption, federal agencies would not allow the department to fully participate in these investigations because the state's Open Government laws require any data given to the department to be made public. The goal of this exemption is to allow federal and state agencies to share information and fully participate together to achieve timely resolutions of causal or contributing factors to outbreaks. The result of this exemption has been a safer and more secure food supply for the consuming public.

Senate staff was required to review the exemption in s. 500.148, F.S., pursuant to the Open Government Sunset Review Act, and found that the exemption from the public records law meets the statutory criteria for reenactment.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect October 1, 2008.

Vote: Senate 39-0; House 119-0

CS/HB 219 — Gertrude Maxwell Save a Pet Act

by Environment and Natural Resources Council and Rep. Domino and others (CS/CS/SB 1994 by Governmental Operations Committee; Agriculture Committee; and Senator Atwater)

This bill, known as the "Gertrude Maxwell Save a Pet Act," creates the Gertrude Maxwell Save a Pet Direct-Support Organization within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. This direct-support organization (DSO) is created for the purposes of providing grants to animal shelters for spaying and neutering, for sheltering and providing services during times of

emergencies, and for developing and disseminating educational materials concerning the care of pets. The DSO will be governed by a board of directors made up of eight members and three honorary members.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect upon becoming law.

Vote: Senate 38-0; House 114-0

CS/SB 2222 — Citrus

by Agriculture Committee

This bill provides for the use of *Casuarina cunninghamiana* (specific variety of Australian Pine) as a windbreak for commercial citrus groves. The bill creates a five year pilot program for use of *Casuarina cunninghamiana* as a windbreak to protect fresh fruit groves in Indian River, St. Lucie, and Martin Counties where citrus canker is determined by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (department) to be widespread. This pilot program must be reevaluated annually, and a comprehensive review is required in 2013.

Property owners who participate in the program are required to obtain a special permit from the department. The department is authorized to charge a fee for the special permit, not to exceed \$500. The *Casuarina cunninghamiana* must be produced in an authorized registered nursery and certified by the department as being vegetatively propagated from male plants. Nurseries which are authorized to produce the plants must obtain a special permit from the department certifying that the plants have been vegetatively propagated from sexually mature male source trees currently grown in the state. The bill authorizes the department to charge a special permit fee, not to exceed \$200. The department is authorized to charge an annual fee, not to exceed \$50 for each tree registered as a source tree.

All *Casuarina cunninghamiana* must be destroyed by the property owner within six months if the site is no longer used for commercial citrus production, has not been used for commercial citrus production for a period of five years, or if the department determines that the trees have become invasive. If the owner neglects to comply the department may proceed to destroy the plants. The cost of the destruction by the department will be assessed, collected, and enforced against the owner. Upon failure to pay the assessed cost, the department is authorized to record a lien against the property. The bill authorizes the department to require a permit holder to provide verified statements of the planted acreage subject to the special permit. It also authorizes the department to review the permit holder's business or planting records at his or her place of business during normal business hours. Failure to produce such information is cause for suspension or revocation of the special permit.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2008.

Vote: Senate 39-0; House 116-0