

ASSOCIATED INDUSTRIES OF FLORIDA
**LEGISLATIVE
DAILY BRIEF**



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FROM AUGUST 13, 2003

The Senate took up the medical-negligence reform bill today, expecting to pass it quickly. Six hours were necessary before the final vote was taken and SB 2D was passed on a vote of 32 to 4.

Supporters and opponents of the bill set aside their differences to praise Senate President Jim King (R-Jacksonville) who has withstood fierce criticism in his home district and predictions that he would give in to the pressure exerted by his Republican colleagues in the House and the governor's office. Senator King responded by thanking the chamber's negotiating team, Senators Rod Smith (D-Gainesville) and Tom Lee (R-Brandon), along with members of his leadership team and the Senate staff.

The bill then went to the House where it was greeted by a round of congratulations and thanks to the staff members; the House negotiators, Representatives Allan Bense (R-Panama City) and Dudley Goodlette (R-Naples); House Speaker Johnnie Byrd (R-Plant City); and Lt. Governor Toni Jennings. The House placed its bill on the table and replaced it with SB 2D then passed it by a vote of 87 to 26.

After almost a year of contentious debate, a medical-liability reform package is now on its way to the governor's desk. The legislation is not perfect but it is a significant vehicle that will help doctors and patients, while laying the groundwork for a prevention of later crises.

Please send your comments or suggestions to us at aif@aif.com or call the Governmental Affairs department at (850)224-7173.

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