

ASSOCIATED INDUSTRIES OF FLORIDA
**LEGISLATIVE
DAILY BRIEF**



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We have learned that SB 2006 Relating Damage Apportionment/Civil Actions by Senator Dan Webster (R-Winter Garden) has been placed on the Senate's special order calendar for Wednesday, March 29th. This means that it is ready to be considered and voted on by the entire Senate. SB 2006 is the Senate's version of the repeal of Joint and Several Liability. Repealing this unfair legal doctrine is the business community's top priority for the 2006 session. It is likely, that a vote will be taken during Thursday's Senate session.

Please take a moment to contact your Senator and urge them to vote in favor of SB 2006 - as it is written and with no amendments. Adding any amendments to the bill would most likely weaken the legislation and destroy the original intent of the bill.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT

The Senate Environmental Preservation Committee unanimously approved SB 1020 Relating to Growth Management by Senator Mike Bennett (R-Bradenton). Senator Bennett introduced a strike-all amendment that was adopted by the committee. The language in the strike-all amendment now resembles the House companion, HB 683 by Representative Trey Traviesa (R-Tampa). The bill addresses multiple issues related to the Developments of Regional Impact (DRI) process. DRIs are large-scale developments that are likely to have regional effects beyond the local government jurisdiction in which they are located. The DRI process is important to the business community because it directly affects how fast an employer can or cannot get their projects started and how developers interact with local governments. Specifically, the bill provides for the elimination of DRIs for marinas; provides enhanced workforce Housing; provides for additional items for rural counties; provides for local transportation concurrency bill; prohibits the exclusive control of real property or the operation of any port in the state to an entity controlled by a foreign business, without the consent of the legislature; provides for a severability clause.

The bill also provides additional exemptions from DRI review and increases the thresholds that trigger DRI review for proposed development. For example, dry storage boat facilities are exempted from the DRI review process. It also increases the thresholds for determining whether a proposed change is a substantial deviation that requires further review.

Senator Carey Baker (R-Eustis) proposed a late filed amendment that allowed for a rural comprehensive plan amendment process for creating rural towns. The amendment required a 50% land set a side. The amendment was withdrawn by Senator Baker. Finally, Senator Baker offered a late filed amendment which was adopted that conformed some of the language of the bill to be consistent with the requirements of SB 360, last year's landmark growth management legislation. If this legislation is passed, the development community would derive a fiscal benefit from increased thresholds and expanded exemptions from the DRI-review process. SB 1020 will now be heard by the Senate Transportation Committee.

AIF supports legislation aimed at making the DRI process more business friendly for developers by providing exemptions from the DRI review and increasing the thresholds that trigger the DRI review for newly proposed developments.

OTHER BILLS OF INTEREST

Regulated Industries

The Senate Regulated Industries Committee passed SB 282 - Relating to Beverage Law/Direct Shipment of Wine by Senator Paula Dockery (R-Lakeland) by a 9 to 1 vote. This bill legalizes the direct shipment of wine to Florida consumers. It creates an alcoholic beverage license classification for direct shippers. It also prohibits retail vendors from purchasing or acquiring wine from a direct shipper for the purpose of resale.

There was some healthy debated among committee members on this issue. Senator Dockery repeatedly stated that her intent was to pass a good "consumer" bill that would allow Floridians to have access to wine that was not easily available in our markets and that she had built in strong provisions to address the issue of minors ordering wine. Senator Bill Posey was the lone vote in opposition to the bill.

SB 282 will now be heard by the Senate Criminal Justice Committee.

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

- For more information on all of the important legislative information concerning the business community, go to our "members only" Florida Business Network web site at <http://fbnet.com>
- Send us your E-mail address and we will begin to send this report to you automatically via E-mail.