

ASSOCIATED INDUSTRIES OF FLORIDA
**LEGISLATIVE
WEEKLY UPDATE**



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FROM THE WEEK OF APRIL 17 – APRIL 21, 2006

Legal Reform

The House Justice Council passed HB 841 Relating to Supersedeas Bonds by Representative Frank Attkisson (R-Kissimmee). This bill would set a \$25 million cap on the amount of bond an appellant must post in certain cases. There were several amendments filed to the bill which passed. One of which clarified an exception to the \$25 million cap for individuals and employers with less than 300 employees. In those cases, the bond would be capped at 5% of net assets or \$5 million, whichever is greater.

Representative Carl Domino (R-Palm Beach Gardens) discussed the possibility of changing the criteria for employers subject to the exception to a standard based on revenue or income stream rather than a number of employees. Representative Attkisson agreed that many companies in a variety of industries may be better judged by such criteria and promised to work with Representative Domino to find an appropriate measure in the remaining days of session. A few other members of the committee also expressed concern that the bill may need additional modifications prior to final passage, but all agreed that it was a worthy goal to protect access to courts at the appellate level.

The bill passed on a party line vote of 8-2. The representatives voting for the bill were Bruce Kyle (R-Fort Myers), Carl Domino (R-Palm Beach Gardens), Greg Evers (R-Milton), Dick Kravitz (R-Jacksonville), Marcelo Llorente (R-Miami), Mark Mahon (R-Jacksonville), John Quinones (R-Kissimmee), and David Simmons (R-Altamonte Springs). Representatives Arthenia Joyner (D-Tampa) and Irv Slosberg (D-Boca Raton) voted against the bill.

AIF supports HB 841 and applauds Representative Attkisson for his leadership on this issue, which will ensure that businesses and individuals have fair and predictable access to the appeal process.

Jessica Lunsford Act

The House Justice Council unanimously approved HB 7187 Relating to Sexual Predators and Offenders by the House Criminal Justice Committee. This is the House version of the Jessica Lunsford Act (JLA) “glitch” bill. The bill aims to correct some unintended consequences of last year’s JLA, while at the same time keeping the intent of the bill, which is to protect our children from sexual predators and offenders. Representative Charles Dean (R-Inverness) presented the bill which requires that sexual predators and offenders to obtain special drivers licenses or identification cards which identify them as such by January 1, 2007. In addition, the bill establishes background screening requirements for contractors and workers who come in contact or are near school children. The bill further requires school districts to share background screening records with each other eliminating the onerous requirement for businesses and contractors to pay for multiple background checks.

HB 7187 has passed all its committees of reference and will now be considered on the floor of the House for final passage.

AIF supports HB 7187 because it makes implementation of the Jessica Lunsford Act workable for those companies that have working relationships with school districts while upholding the integrity of the original law to protect our children from sexual predators.

Health Care

Today the House Health and Families Council unanimously approved HB 1409 by Representative Holly Benson (R-Pensacola). The bill creates the Florida Health Information Network Act as a public/private partnership that will implement a statewide electronic medical records network. This network would collect and monitor data related to innovations in healthcare technology as well as integrate all health care data currently being collected by the various health care agencies.

HB 1409 has passed all its committees of reference and will now be placed on the House calendar for final passage.

AIF supports legislation which uses the power of Information Technology to make healthcare data available for consumers, thereby empowering them to make better choices in the health care arena.

- 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://fbnnet.com>
- Send us your E-mail address and we will begin to send this report to you automatically via E-mail.