

ASSOCIATED INDUSTRIES OF FLORIDA  
**LEGISLATIVE  
DAILY BRIEF**



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**APRIL 19, 2007**

The House and Senate have arrived at a point where both sides can begin to negotiate on their respective property insurance reform plans after each chamber has passed their property tax plans and they have refused to concur with one another. There are significant differences between the two plans, mainly the fact that the House proposes the elimination of property taxes in return for a 2.5 percent increase in sales tax. The latest rumor in the Capitol is that neither side is willing to budge, and questions are arising whether they will be able to resolve their differences within the two remaining weeks in session.

In addition, the budget conference process also began this afternoon with the House and Senate holding an initial organizational session following the conclusion of today's House session. Budget conferences are expected to take place tomorrow and throughout the weekend.

Only the Senate will be in Session tomorrow; several of AIF's bills are scheduled to be heard for the first time and are on the Special Order calendar so be sure to check AIF's Weekly Report for coverage of these bills. The House Policy & Budget Council will be holding another marathon meeting tomorrow afternoon with a packed agenda.

### **Property Tax Reform**

The Senate considered their property tax reform proposal today. Four bills make up the package.

SB 1020 – rolls back the millage rate to and then freeze for 2 years; cap on spending. There were several technical amendments and one that requires additional budget hearings by local governments if they plan to raise the millage rate.

- SJR 3034 - this is the Joint Resolution needed for a constitutional amendment and includes the Homestead Plus for first time homebuyers; the tangible personal property tax exemption of \$25,000; and portability of the "Save Our Homes" on homestead property.
- SB 1022 – affordable housing tax breaks.

- SB 560 – taxpayers bill of rights and includes eminent domain; highest & best use; data tabulation; transparency – truth in spending, transparency in budget and transparency in contracts; Truth in Millage (TRIM) notice must be posted on website; and assessment appeal process.

(For more detailed information on each of these bills, please see the AIF Daily Report from April 17th)

All of the bills were rolled over to Third Reading. When this happens the bills usually will be considered for a final vote the next time the Senate is in Session. However, the Senate decided to take up the House property tax proposals that were passed yesterday and substitute their bills. The substitutions are as follows:

- HB 7001 now contains SB 1020
- HB 261 now contains SB 560
- HB 7089 now contains SJR 3034
- HB 1483 now contains SB 1022

The bills have been sent back to the House for them to concur with the amendments or appoint a conference committee. Senate Majority Leader Dan Webster (R-Winter Garden) thanked Senate President Ken Pruitt (R-Port St. Lucie) and Senator Mike Haridopolos (R-Melbourne) for their leadership on this major issue facing Floridians. “We will go into conference with a united front to give property tax relief to every Floridian,” said Webster.

Late that afternoon the House took up the Senate messages, which included the four property tax reform bills that had been substituted with the Senate language. On motions by Representative Anitere Flores (R-Miami), the House refused to concur with the Senate and agreed to go to conference with Senate on these proposals.

**AIF is opposed to the idea of sales tax increase as a way to offset revenue raised by property taxes. Florida’s economy is vibrant and our state’s unemployment level is among the lowest in the country. An increase in sales tax could potentially disrupt the current state of Florida’s economy. AIF does support many of the provisions outlined in the Senate’s plan including the \$25,000 tangible property exemption for business, portability of the “Save our Homes” cap, and the transparency provisions that allow taxpayers to know how their tax dollars are being spent.**

## Workforce Housing

The Senate Finance and Tax Committee unanimously approved SB 780 Relating to Affordable Housing by Senator Rudy Garcia (R-Miami). The bill requires certain counties to adopt a plan for ensuring workforce housing by a certain date, creates an expedited amendment process for certain comprehensive plan amendments, and creates an exception to restrictions on the number of plan amendments which can be adopted annually. A tax deferral program on property taxes for affordable housing rental properties is created by the bill. The bill was amended at a previous committee stop and now contains provisions that tie state affordable housing grants to the successful development of specific affordable housing plans by counties where the disparity between median income and median cost of housing is greater than \$150,000 dollars.

Chairman Mike Haridopolos (R-Melbourne) offered an amendment, which was adopted, that provides a 3-year extension for projects currently under construction that are considered developments of regional impact (DRI). These DRIs are large-scale projects that range across multiple counties at once. Senator Jeff Atwater (R-North Palm Beach) attempted to amend the bill so that seaport master plans would be exempt from the requirements of the bill, but was unsuccessful because the bill sponsor had not heard about this amendment prior to the meeting.

**AIF supports legislation that provides incentives for local governments and developers to build new workforce housing projects. Employers in Florida must be able to attract a stable and dependable workforce. This can only be accomplished if employees can find affordable homes close to the jobsite. In addition, local governments must be held accountable so that the dollars they receive from the state are well spent.**

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

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