



WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE UPDATE FROM MAY 2, 2008

The Legislature adjourned Sine Die at 6:02 p.m. today, bringing the 2008 legislative session to a close. This year's session was one of the most unique in many years due to the state's unprecedented fiscal slowdown. A record low number of bills were passed this year as activity slowed down to crawl on the final day of session. Most of the day was spent saying good bye to term limited legislators as well as the presiding officers.

The last bill to pass this year was SB 2654 Relating to Autism by Senator Steve Geller (R-Hallandale Beach). The bill went back and forth between the two chambers during the final hours of session, until the House reluctantly agreed to the Senate's position, which strictly dealt with children suffering from autism. Earlier in the day, the House has passed similar legislation that included treatment for children with developmental disabilities, not just autism.

Unfortunately, in the end, major issues such as the Central Florida Commuter Rail Project and changes to the state's growth management laws did not pass.

Legislation important to the business community that did pass today includes:

- Changes to Value Adjustment Boards (VABs) to help business owners challenge assessments on their properties
- Reforms to the state's educational system - including tougher curriculum standards
- The Governor's "Cover Florida" Health Insurance plan (with pieces of the House's marketplace plan)
- Economic Stimulus legislation, which leverages the state's retirement fund for investments in Florida start-up companies

AIF will be providing a complete wrap-up of all the issues important to the business community next week. Be sure to check out AIF's *2008 Session Wrap-Up* publication for the latest on the issues tracked by AIF this session.