



DAILY BRIEF

From January 18, 2012

In an otherwise quiet day at Florida's Capitol, AIF continued to see several of its legislative priorities continue along their respective committee stops with little opposition or debate – a sign that lawmakers are geared up to pass legislation that will spur economic development and growth. Tomorrow will provide a great opportunity for some of the business community's top priorities to see progress. Some of these measures include:

- SB 668 Relating to Workers' Compensation Medical Services by Senator Alan Hays (R-Umatilla) will fix a loophole in current statute relating to how repackaged drugs are dispensed, effectively providing relief to Florida employers by lessening workers' compensation insurance rates.
- SB 1150 Relating to the New Market Development Program by Representative Steve Crisafulli (R-Merritt Island) would increase the amounts available to eligible companies and extend this popular program through the existence of an additional \$97 million in incentives.
- SB 1168 Relating to Freight Mobility Development by Senator Jeremy Ring (D-Margate) would provide up to \$500,000 in tax incentives through the creation of capital investment projects or hiring of new employees.

In addition, AIF has released a new video illustrating the hidden hurricane tax – a danger that Floridians currently face according to the current Hurricane Catastrophe Fund (CAT Fund) structure. This video is designed to educate Floridians on the reality of special hurricane assessments that they could face in the event of a major storm. HB 833 by Representative Bill Hager (R-Boca Raton), which is designed to help repair Florida's current system, is a top priority for AIF this legislative session.

Health Care

On Wednesday, January 18th the House Community and Military Affairs Subcommittee unanimously approved HB 711 by Representative Ed Hooper (R-Clearwater).

Currently, the authority to sell or lease a county, district or municipal hospital is provided to its governing board. HB 711 amends current law to require that the governing board of a county, district or municipal hospital, prior to completing a proposed sale or lease of the public hospital, receive approval from a majority of registered voters in the county, district or municipality. Alternatively, the governing board may submit a petition for approval of sale or lease to the circuit court. This change would allow for more transparency in the governing board's decision-making process when deciding to agree to the sale or lease, and would further allow for more public input into the proposed sale or lease.

A couple of amendments, offered at the suggestion of the Safety Net Hospitals Alliance of Florida, were also considered and approved.

HB 711 will now head to the House Civil Justice Subcommittee for further consideration. The Senate proposal – SB 464 by Senator Rene Garcia (R-Miami Gardens) – is awaiting a hearing in the Senate Health Regulation Committee.

AIF SUPPORTS legislation that will ensure that the taxpayer and the community are protected by ensuring that full and fair market value is received in exchange for the sale and/or lease of public hospitals.

Growth Management

On Wednesday, January 18th the House Government Operations Subcommittee considered HB 673 Relating to Preference in Award of State Contracts by Representative Jason Brodeur (R-Sanford).

Currently, the law authorizes state agencies, counties, municipalities, school districts, and other political subdivisions to award a preference to a Florida based business for the purchase of personal property, through competitive solicitation, when the lowest responsible and responsive bid, proposal, or reply is by a vendor whose principal place of business is another state. The reciprocal preference law is discretionary and may be used by a procuring entity to award a preference to the lowest responsible and responsive vendor having a principal place of business in Florida.

HB 673 expands the reciprocal preference provided in current law to include the purchase of construction services. The bill also provides that for a competitive solicitation in which payment is to be made, in whole or in part, from funds appropriated by the state, Florida's reciprocal preference preempts and supersedes any local ordinance or regulation based upon specified criteria.

HB 673 passed on a vote of 8-3. The measure will now advance to the House Community and Military Affairs Subcommittee. The Senate companion – SB 1460 by Senator Davis Simmons (R-Altamonte Springs) has yet to be heard in the Senate Community Affairs Committee.

AIF SUPPORTS legislation that will result in more business being awarded to Florida based companies as it relates to preference for construction services.

Environmental

The House Select Committee on Water Policy unanimously approved proposed committee bill **(PCB) SCWP1** on Wednesday, January 18th that will allow longer permits for alternative water supply projects. Chair Trudi Williams (R-Ft. Meyers) explained that the PCB would extend consumptive use permits (CUP) for the development of new alternative water supply projects for a 30 year term instead of the current 20 year time limit.

Keyna Cory, Senior Lobbyist for AIF, spoke in favor of the bill. She thanked Chair Williams for filing the proposed committee bill. “You have heard me time and time again stress the importance of alternative water supply programs. Without water there is no development, no growth, no environmental protection, and no economic rebound for the State of Florida.”



AIF has supported funding for alternative water supply projects but realizes with the budget constraints that money may not be available for the Water Protection and Sustainability Trust Fund to build these projects. But until we can find recurring funds, the PCB gives a great incentive for both public and private entities to build these vitally important projects.

AIF SUPPORTS state funding for alternative water supply programs.