



DAILY BRIEF

From January 23, 2012

With Presidential candidates gearing up for the Florida Presidential Preference Primary, all eyes appear to be focused on the upcoming elections as Republican nominees prepare to contend in the battleground state. Nonetheless, AIF continues to focus its advocacy on the premier issues facing Florida employers. Some of the big issues coming forth for consideration this week include:

- HB 1127 Relating to Citizens Property Insurance Corporation by Representative Ben Albritton (R-Bartow), which was been workshopped by members of the House Insurance & Banking Subcommittee earlier this month, is slated for a final vote by its members on Tuesday, January 24th. This proposal will provide significant protection from costs that would otherwise be incurred by Florida businesses through “special” hurricane taxes. [View AIF’s position on Citizens Reform](#)
- SB 1354 Relating to Environmental Resource Permitting by Senator Nancy Detert (R-Venice) is top priority for the business community in 2012. This legislation will introduce uniformity to the regulated community by providing consistency among Water Management Districts (WMDs). Foremost, employers will experience cost savings without harming the environment. [View AIF’s Position on Statewide Environmental Resource Permit](#)
- SB 170 Relating to Transfer of Tax Liability by Senator Thad Altman (R-Melbourne) will make Florida more attractive for potential buyers of businesses by providing certainty that they do not have to assume any outstanding tax liabilities – or clarifying the maximum tax liability if the buyer agrees to assume them.

In addition, be sure to check out [this week’s edition of AIFTV](#) featuring an exclusive interview with Representative Matt Hudson (R-Naples) on his sponsorship of AIF’s top legislative priority: closing the loophole on workers’ compensation drug repackaging. A practice that is costing employers more than \$62 million per year.

Energy

On Monday, January 23rd Agriculture Commissioner Adam Putnam outlined his recommendations for an energy policy for the State of Florida before members of the Senate Communications, Energy, and Public Utilities Committee. Commissioner Putnam stated that the package he proposed is designed to increase diversity in the State's energy portfolio, advance renewable energy production, encourage the development of home-grown technologies and promote energy efficiency. He further said that his recommendations for energy policy are “market driven, in the public interest and are designed to have the least possible impact on the customer.”

Commissioner Putnam offered eleven proposals for the Legislature to consider. Among those are proposals for:

- Infrastructure investment
- Reporting requirements
- Power plant need determination
- Public interest determination for renewable energy projects
- Energy efficiency; and
- The removal of barriers to future investments.

Many of these proposals would place new requirements on the Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services and the Public Service Commission to evaluate and make a determination of the various issues outlined above. A full copy of Commissioner Putnam's recommendations can be found [here](#).

AIF commends Commissioner Putnam for offering a comprehensive proposal that will address the future of Florida's energy policy. Furthermore, AIF looks forward to working with Commissioner Putnam and his department to adequately address our state's energy needs.

Environmental

On Monday, January 23 the Senate Community Affairs Committee unanimously approved SB 540 Relating to Secondary Metals Recyclers by Senator Chris Smith (D-Oakland Park). This legislation is designed to decrease copper and metal theft that is plaguing our state. AIF and the Floridians for Copper & Metal Crime Prevention Coalition (read the Coalition's handout [here](#)) have been working closely on this bill with Senator Smith. This proposal clarifies permissible types of personal identification necessary for the legal sale of regulated metal, prohibits cash transactions on restricted regulated metal property and for those which require proof of ownership, prohibits checks for metal purchases to be sent to a P.O. Box and implements a statewide standard to keep metal thieves from "shopping" stolen property to cities or counties with less onerous penalties.

During the hearing, members adopted an amendment offered by Senator Jim Norman (R-Tampa) that would expand penalties associated with theft from a utility or communications services provider. Specifically, the language would allow utilities or communications services providers to recoup damages in an amount equal to three times the actual damages sustained.

SB 540 will now proceed to the Senate Criminal Justice Committee for further consideration.

AIF and the Floridians for Copper & Metal Crime Prevention Coalition SUPPORT legislation that will enact precautionary methods to help deter the removal of metal from private property and government structures, causing economic loss for both the private and public sectors.