



# DAILY BRIEF

From February 27, 2012

As the House & Senate continue to hash out their budget allocations, the respective appropriations chairs have signified great cooperation among the chambers. Chair Denise Grimsley (R-Sebring) and Chair JD Alexander (R-Lake Wales) provided an update to members on the floor today, pointing out that while a compromise is near, differences remain and include varied spending projections on road-building projects and sweeps to state universities' savings. Until these differences are resolved, budget conferees will be unable to move forward with finalizing a spending plan for Fiscal Year (FY) 2012-2013.

With little to report on policy during this light "travel day," we're happy to share that tomorrow is jam-packed with a number of the business community's top priorities. These include:

- SB 668 Relating to Workers' Compensation Medical Services by Senator Alan Hays (R-Umatilla) focuses on addressing a loophole in the Workers' Compensation system that allows physicians to dispense repackaged drugs and charge employers exorbitant prices that greatly exceed the statutory reimbursement for the same pharmaceuticals dispensed by pharmacies. This legislation is a top priority for AIF this year as it will provide savings to all employers paying workers' compensation premiums in Florida. **WE URGE ALL MEMBERS TO CONTACT SENATE PRESIDENT MIKE HARIDOPOLOS AND ASK FOR HIS SUPPORT TO HELP PASS THIS TOP PRIORITY FOR EMPLOYERS IN FLORIDA.** View AIF's "Vote Alert" on SB 668
- SB 1416 Relating to Unemployment Compensation by Senator Ellyn Bogdanoff (R-Ft. Lauderdale), if amended, is another measure with far reaching implications for all Florida employers. AIF is strongly supporting amendments to this proposal that will lower the taxable wage base from \$8,500 to \$8,000 and reduce unemployment costs for employers in 2012. (Read AIF's Breakdown of SB 1416 with Amendments)
- SB 1372 Relating to Florida Hurricane Catastrophe Fund by Senator JD Alexander (R-Lake Wales) would reduce hidden "hurricane assessments" on policyholders by reducing the amount of reinsurance backed by the state under the current Hurricane Catastrophe Fund (CAT Fund). This legislation will ultimately generate tremendous cost savings for policyholders across Florida. ( Read AIF's "Call to Action")
- HB 1323 by Representative Brad Drake (R-DeFuniak Springs) increases the penalty for those secondary metal recyclers who knowingly and intentionally accept stolen materials from a misdemeanor of the first degree to a felony of the third degree. HB 1323 increases the penalty for those secondary metal recyclers who knowingly and intentionally accept stolen materials from a misdemeanor of the first degree to a felony of the third degree.
- HB 609 Relating to Wage Protection for Employees by Representative Tom Goodson (R-Titusville) provides that the regulation of wage theft is expressly preempted to the state. Therefore, local governments may not regulate over and above the existing state and federal laws.
- HB 7087 by the House Finance & Tax Committee contains a number of AIF's top economic development priorities for 2012. HB 7087 comprises a number of tax breaks for businesses, including the agriculture and manufacturing industries.

Last, and certainly not least, AIF is on schedule with the release of this week's segment of AIFTV. Our team had the opportunity to sit down with Representative Jim Boyd (R-Bradenton) this week – sponsor of HB 119 – which provides major reform to Florida's automobile insurance system. The personal injury protection (PIP) system in Florida is in need of a major overhaul due to the rampant fraud that is currently taking place in our state. Tune in to this week's episode to learn more about this issue and what Florida employers can do to help with its passage.