



DAILY BRIEF

From March 25, 2014

Health Care

HB 1001/SB 1354 – relating to Health Care

On Tuesday, March 25th, HB 1001, relating to Health Care, by Representative Jason Brodeur (R-Sanford) unanimously passed the House Insurance & Banking Subcommittee. **Tammy Perdue, General Counsel of AIF**, stood in opposition of the bill during the committee. The bill now heads to the House Health & Human Services Committee.



Also on Tuesday, March 25th, SB 1354, the companion bill to HB 1001, by Senator Denise Grimsley (R-Sebring) unanimously passed the Senate Committee on Health Policy. **Tammy Perdue, General Counsel of AIF**, stood in opposition of the bill during the committee. The bill now heads to the Senate Committee on Banking and Insurance, its last stop before the Senate floor.

AIF released the following press release today regarding HB 1001/SB 1354.

Tallahassee, Fla. – The Associated Industries of Florida (AIF) today opposed the advancement of House Bill 1001, by Representative Jason Brodeur (R-Sanford), and Senate Bill 1354, by Senator Denise Grimsley (R-Sebring). These bills relating to health care both passed out of their respective committees in the Florida House Insurance and Banking Subcommittee and the Florida Senate Committee on Health Policy.

“All along, AIF has supported access to affordable quality health care for Floridians,” said Tammy Perdue, general counsel for AIF.

“Unfortunately, HB 1001 and SB 1354 do the opposite. These bills actually make health care less affordable for Florida consumers and businesses by ultimately causing an increase in pharmacy costs through additional, onerous regulation.”

“AIF opposes this legislation that would bring additional costs to Florida consumers and businesses,” said Perdue. “With the current state of our health care system, we must focus on measures that will ensure greater access to quality care for Floridians at more affordable costs for their employers.”

HB 1001 has been referred to Health & Human Service, Appropriations and Regulatory Affairs Committees in the Florida House, while SB 1354 is now slated to move to the Senate Committee on Banking and Insurance.

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Legal & Judicial

SB 470 – relating to Malt Beverages

On Tuesday, March 25th, SB 470, relating to Malt Beverages, by Senator Nancy Detert (R-Venice) unanimously passed the Senate Committee on Community Affairs. **AIF Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs, Brewster Bevis**, stood in support of the bill during the committee. The bill now heads to the Senate Committee on Appropriations.



The bill repeals the prohibition against beer tastings and permits licensed malt beverage distributors and vendors to conduct malt beverage tastings at licensed premises that are authorized to sell malt beverages for consumption on premises. Current law permits only wine and liquor distributors and vendors to conduct wine and liquor tastings at licensed premises that are authorized to sell such beverages.

AIF supports this legislation because it creates a level playing field here in the state for beer manufacturers.

SB 926 – relating to Local Regulation of Wage Theft

On Tuesday, March 25th, SB 926, relating to Local Regulation of Wage Theft, by Senator Wilton Simpson (R-New Port Richey) unanimously passed the Senate Committee on Judiciary. AIF stood in support of the bill during the committee. The bill now heads to the Senate Committee on Rules, its last stop before the Senate floor.

This bill would prescribe a wage theft model ordinance for local governments in order to ensure consistency and reduce regulatory burdens for employers with multiple locations throughout the state and lessen the confusion for employees. The model ordinance would require that counties partner with a local legal service organization to help resolve these issues to the satisfaction of both parties in a timely fashion while providing flexibility and certainty.

However, an AIF opposed late-filed amendment by Senator Darren Soto (D-Kissimmee) added a second model ordinance as an option for counties. The amendment was passed and included in the bill language. AIF stood down on supporting the amended bill during its vote in the Senate Committee on Judiciary due to the detrimental impact of the Soto amendment.

The bill goes to the Senate Committee on Rules next, where Senators and stakeholders from the business community and employee groups have agreed to continue to work together to come to a compromise.

AIF supports this legislation that will foster positive work environments and encourage economic development.

Education & Workforce

SB 900 – relating to Public-private Partnerships

On Tuesday, March 25th, SB 900, relating to Public-private Partnerships, by Senator Jack Latvala (R-Clearwater) unanimously passed the Senate Committee on Community Affairs. **AIF Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs, Brewster Bevis**, stood in support during the committee. The bill now heads to the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Education.

The bill is designed to help both the State University System (SUS) and the construction industry in Florida. SB 900 will allow for the private sector to offer unsolicited bids on university projects,

comprehensive agreements for construction projects, and grants the Board of Governors approval authority on public-private partnership projects within the SUS.

AIF strongly supports utilization of the private sector in helping to solve public construction needs. Government's role is critical in securing and advancing our state's infrastructure.

SB 212 – relating to High School Graduation Requirements

On Tuesday, March 25th, SB 212, relating to High School Graduation Requirements, by Senator Dorothy Hukill (R-Port Orange) passed the Senate Committee on Education by a 6-3 vote. AIF stood in support of the bill during the committee. The bill now heads to the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Education.

The bill removes the requirement for financial literacy to be included in the instruction of Economics. Beginning with students entering grade 9 in the 2014-2015 school year, the high school graduation requirements must include a one-half credit in personal financial literacy and money management instruction. Additionally, the bill reduces the number of required elective credits from eight to seven and one-half credits.

AIF supports the bill because it is important that our future workforce is not only equipped with technical skills, but also basic financial literacy skills such as balancing a checkbook, understanding budgets and general money management.

SB 628 – relating to Educational Facilities Financing

On Tuesday, March 25th, SB 628, relating to Educational Facilities Financing, by Senator Bill Montford (D-Apalachicola) unanimously passed the Senate Committee on Education. AIF stood in support of the bill during the committee. The bill now heads to the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Education.

The bill expands the Higher Educational Facilities Financing Law (HEFFA) in two significant ways by adding non-profit, SACS accredited, K-12 schools to those institutions eligible to participate and expanding the definition of a project that can be financed with tax exempt bonds, which would include related projects such as wetland mitigation when financing a building project. HEFFA was created in Florida Statute in 2001 to give independent, non-profit, four year, SACS accredited institutions (all 31 Independent Institutions) access to the tax exempt bond market to borrow funds for capital outlay and cash flow purposes. These funds are not backed by the full faith and credit of the state, but rather by private capital and institution credit. The bill also expands the types of projects that can be financed with tax exempt bonds. An amendment was adopted by the committee, clarifying that charter schools would not be eligible for this mechanism.

AIF supports this bill and has made this expansion a priority for the 2014 legislative session. This bill will allow ICUF institutions and non-profit SACS accredited K-12 institutions to expand their capacity and access for Florida's K-20 students and at no cost to the Florida taxpayers.

SB 1528 – relating to School Choice

On Tuesday, March 25th, SB 1528, relating to School Choice, by Senator Rob Bradley (R-Orange Park) passed the Senate Committee on Education by a 7-1 vote. AIF stood in support of the bill during the committee. The bill now heads to the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Education.

This bill creates new opportunities for high-performing charter school operators to establish quality charter schools in Florida, including charter schools in hard-to serve areas. The bill authorizes an out-of-state entity that successfully operates a system of charter schools to apply and qualify for high-performing charter school system status. The state board must adopt rules specifying a process and criteria for evaluating out-of-state entities for "high-performing" status. Eligibility criteria must be aligned with the priorities specified in the federal Charter Schools Program Grants for Replication and Expansion of High-Quality Charter Schools, which emphasizes student achievement. Additionally, the bill

shifts the focus of the state's program for replicating quality charter schools towards meeting school district needs for innovative school choice options and serving areas served by struggling traditional public schools.

AIF supports educational choice. In addition, AIF supports capital outlay funding for public charter schools, removing artificial enrollment caps that prevent public charter schools from meeting the demand of students on waiting lists, restricting authority of school districts from imposing additional regulatory burdens on public charter schools and changes to funding formulas to require that funding follows the individual student.

Economic Development

HB 685 – relating to Business Organizations

On Tuesday, March 25th, HB 685, relating to Business Organizations, by Representative Patrick Rooney, Jr. (R-Palm Beach Gardens) unanimously passed the House Economic Development & Tourism Subcommittee. AIF waived in support of the bill during the committee. The bill now heads to the House Judiciary Committee, its last stop before the House floor.

The bill amends the Florida Business Corporation Act to allow for the creation of two new forms of corporate enterprise: the social purpose corporation and the benefit corporation. These new entities will allow businesses to engage in societal benefit programs that may not involve or satisfy the traditional corporate norm of profit maximization. The new forms of corporation are similar, the primary difference being that a social purpose corporation has a specified social purpose or purposes designated in advance, whereas a benefit corporation is to create a general public benefit in a manner selected by management and assessed by a third-party standard.

AIF supports this legislation that will attract new businesses and entrepreneurs to the state of Florida.

Environment

SB 1206 – relating to Agricultural Industry Certifications

On Tuesday, March 25th, SB 1206, relating to Agricultural Industry Certifications, by Senator Bill Montford (D-Apalachicola) unanimously passed the Senate Committee on Education. AIF stood in support of the bill during the committee. The bill now heads to the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Education.

The bill would develop a pathway for students to show their expertise in the agricultural industry. The bill requires the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS), in cooperation with the Institute of Food and Agricultural Science at the University of Florida and the College of Agriculture and Food Sciences at Florida Agriculture and Mechanical University, to annually provide to the state board and the Department of Education information and industry certifications for farm occupations to be considered for placement on the Industry Certification Funding List and the Postsecondary Industry Certification Funding List.

AIF supports adding agriculture to industry certifications because it recognizes the critical need for agricultural careers in the state of Florida.

Insurance

SB 1308 – relating to Insurer Solvency

On Tuesday, March 25th, SB 1308, relating to Insurer Solvency, by Senator David Simmons (R-Altamonte Springs) unanimously passed the Senate Committee on Judiciary. AIF stood in support of the bill during the committee. The bill now heads to the Senate Committee on Rules, its last stop before the Senate floor.

The bill adopts several updates from the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC). Specially, the bill adds additional protections for holding company systems, updates requirements for life insurance reserves, and improves actuarial information provided to OIR from insurers.

AIF supports legislation that modernizes insurance regulation and takes steps to achieve uniformity with other states, creating consistent regulations and a more efficient allocation of capital, which improves Florida's insurance marketplace for business and personal lines policyholders.