



# DAILY BRIEF

From April 3, 2014

## Economic Development

### **HB 5601 – relating to Economic Development**

On Thursday, April 3rd, HB 5601, relating to Economic Development, by House Finance & Tax Subcommittee and Representative Ritch Workman (R-Melbourne) passed the House chamber by a 106-11 vote. The bill now heads to the Senate for consideration.

The bill provides a broad range of tax cuts and spending aimed at either directly or indirectly encouraging economic development. The bill incorporates provisions from a handful of other bills AIF has been advocating this session. Specifically, the bill includes tax holidays for consumers, an increase in the corporate tax exemption, a sales tax exemption for machinery and equipment, modernization of communication services taxes, and the Commissioner of Agriculture's priority of reducing the sales tax on electrical usage for businesses while increasing revenues for the Public Education Capital Outlay fund. AIF has been advocating for all of these provisions individually throughout the 2014 legislative session.

AIF supports reducing the tax burden on Florida's businesses and any measure that will make the state more attractive for conducting business.

### **SB 208 – relating to Motorsports Entertainment Complexes**

On Thursday, April 3rd, SB 208, relating to Motorsports Entertainment Complexes, by Senator Dorothy Hukill (R-Port Orange) passed the Senate chamber by a 32-5 vote. The bill now heads to the House for consideration.

The bill would allow for a monthly distribution of a specified amount of sales tax revenue to a complex certified as a motorsports entertainment complex by the Department of Economic Opportunity while the complex upgrades its facilities.

AIF supports this measure due to the massive economic driver that motorsports are in the state of Florida. The positive economic impact to the state and the jobs created is a worthwhile return.

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## Education & Workforce

### **HB 7083 – relating to School Choice**

On Thursday, April 3rd, HB 7083, relating to Charter Schools, by House Choice & Innovation Subcommittee and Representative Manny Diaz (R-Hialeah) passed the House Education Committee by an 11-6 vote. AIF stood in support of the bill during the committee. The bill now heads to the House floor.

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.

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## Health Care

### **HB 1275 – relating to Physicians Assistants**

On Thursday, April 3rd, HB 1275, relating to Physicians Assistants, by Representative Larry Ahern (R-St. Petersburg) unanimously passed the House Health & Human Services Committee. AIF stood in support of the bill during the committee. The bill now heads to the House floor.

The bill also increases the number of physician assistants a physician may supervise from four to eight. An amendment adopted during the committee exempts this increased ratio for dermatologists’ office, which generally requires more hands-on supervision by a physician. An additional amendment added allows a physician to supervise a PA at a site other than their primary office for the provision of specialty skin services if certain training is completed. Further, the bill would simplify the reporting system for PA’s who work under multiple physicians in hospitals. Currently, a PA is required to list all of the physicians with whom they work in a report to the Department of Health (DOH). This bill would require the PA to report to DOH only their primary supervising physician.

AIF supports access for Floridians to high-paying jobs, such as pharmacy technician.

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## Insurance

### **HB 565 – relating to Insurance**

On Thursday, April 3rd, HB 565, relating to Insurance, by Representative David Santiago (R-Deltona) passed the House chamber by a 109-6 vote. The bill now heads to the Senate for consideration.

This bill makes changes to the boiler inspection law. The changes made should allow more persons to be eligible to inspect boilers in Florida while maintaining the inspector competency requirement in current law. The changes also mean insurers writing boiler and machinery insurance no longer have to maintain a certificate of authority to transact insurance in Florida in order for boiler inspectors employed by the insurer to be authorized to inspect boilers in Florida. However, the insurer must hold an insurance license in another state or Canadian province. The changes made by the bill to the use of retrospective rating in workers’ compensation may reduce workers’ compensation premiums for some employers which provides sensible regulatory reform for the insurance marketplace.

AIF supports this bill because it provides sensible regulatory reform for the insurance marketplace. Also, the changes made by the bill to the use of retrospective rating in workers’ compensation may reduce workers’ compensation premiums for some employers.

## Legal & Judicial

### **SB 670 – relating to Nursing Home Litigation**

On Tuesday, April 3rd, SB 670, relating to Nursing Home Litigation, by Senator John Thrasher (R-St. Augustine) passed the Senate chamber by a 36-3 vote. The bill now heads to the House for consideration.

These bills provide that the statutory cause of action is the exclusive remedy against a nursing home licensee, its management or consulting company, managing employees, and direct caregivers alleging direct or vicarious liability for the recovery of damages for the personal injury or death of a nursing home resident arising out of negligence or a violation of a resident's statutory rights.

AIF supports the streamlining of litigation in order to preserve the growth of the nursing home industry while protecting our vulnerable elderly.

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## Transportation

### **HB 947/SB 1070 – relating to Fuel Terminals**

On Thursday, April 3rd, HB 947, relating to Fuel Terminals, by Representative Lake Ray (R-Jacksonville) passed the House Local & Federal Affairs Committee by a 15-1 vote. AIF stood in support of the bill during the committee. The bill now heads to the House Transportation & Economic Development Appropriations Subcommittee.

Also on Thursday, April 3rd, SB 1070, by Senator Wilton Simpson (R-New Port Richey) unanimously passed the Senate Committee on Transportation. **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 floor.



These bills would declare fuel terminals located in or next to Florida's ports as critical state infrastructure. The bill would also limit local governments' regulation of the existing terminals and prohibit them from declaring the terminals illegal or non-conforming. It goes further to allow for expansion of existing fuel terminals within the terminals property boundaries, while limiting local governments' regulation of permitting although nothing in the bill will prevent local government from enforcing state and federal safety standards.

AIF supports terminals being designed as critical infrastructure preempting local governments from changing the land use designation. Terminals are essential components to petroleum logistics, and Florida's energy portfolio, enabling the bulk transfer of the 27 million gallons of gasoline and diesel into Florida each day for further distribution.