



# DAILY BRIEF

From April 9, 2014

## Education & Workforce

### **SB 900 – relating to Public-private Partnerships**

On Wednesday, April 9th, SB 900, relating to Public-private Partnerships, by Senator Jack Latvala (R-Clearwater) unanimously passed the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Education. **AIF Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs, Brewster Bevis**, stood in support during the committee. The bill now heads to its last stop before the Senate floor in the Senate Committee on Appropriations.



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 1400 – relating to Postsecondary Student Tuition**

On Wednesday, April 9th, SB 1400, relating to Postsecondary Student Tuition, by Senator Jack Latvala (R-Clearwater) passed the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Education by an 8-5 vote. **AIF Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs, Brewster Bevis**, spoke in support of the bill during the committee. The bill now heads to its last stop before the Senate floor in the Senate Committee on Appropriations.

The bill provides that students, regardless of immigration status, who attend a Florida high school for 3 consecutive years and enroll in an institution of higher education within 24 months after graduation are not required to pay out-of-state fees, provided they submit their high school transcript as documentary evidence of attendance and graduation. While these students are not classified as residents for tuition purposes, they may be reported for purposes of state funding.

*AIF supports legislation that would allow all Florida high school graduates to qualify for in-state tuition at our public colleges, universities and independent universities regardless of their immigration status, subject to meeting all admission standards.*

### **SB 212 – relating to High School Graduation Requirements**

On Wednesday, April 9th, SB 212, relating to High School Graduation Requirements, by Senator Dorothy Hukill (R-Port Orange) passed the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Education by a 12-1 vote. AIF stood in support of the bill during the committee. The bill now heads to its last stop before the Senate floor in the Senate Committee on Appropriations.

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 Independent Nonprofit Higher Education Facilities Financing**

On Wednesday, April 9th, SB 628, relating to Educational Facilities Financing, by Senator Bill Montford (D-Apalachicola) unanimously passed the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Education. AIF stood in support of the bill during the committee. The bill now heads to the Senate Committee on Appropriations.

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 Charter Schools**

On Wednesday, April 9th, SB 1528, relating to School Choice by Senator Rob Bradley (R-Orange Park) unanimously passed the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Education. AIF stood in support of the bill during the committee. The bill now heads to its last stop before the Senate floor in the Senate Committee on Appropriations.

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

### **SB 1646 – relating to Telemedicine**

On Wednesday, April 9th, SB 1646, relating to Telemedicine Services, by the Senate Committee on Health Policy unanimously passed the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services. The bill now heads to its last stop before the Senate floor in the Senate Committee on Appropriations.

There were amendments adopted for the bill today which further limit the practitioners who could use this technology in Florida. While AIF supports the expanded use of technology in health care delivery, there are ongoing concerns with this version of the bill as it could increase regulatory barriers and costs of health care delivery.

The bill seeks to increase the use of telemedicine for providing health care services to Floridians. Under the bill, PAs, ARNPs, and pharmacists will be added to the list of health care providers that would be allowed to provide services to Floridians through the use of telemedicine. The bill would also allow out of state physicians to provide telemedicine services from another state to if they maintain professional liability coverage for telemedicine services and if they:

- Have privileges at an out-of-state hospital affiliated with a Florida licensed hospital;
- Are affiliated with an out-of-state health insurer authorized to conduct business in Florida; or
- Practice in a state that authorizes Florida-licensed physicians to provide telemedicine services to patients located in that state without having to be licensed to practice medicine in that state.

Further, the out of state physician would be subject to disciplinary action by the professional medical board or regulatory entity that has jurisdiction over the hospital or insurer affiliated with the physician.

AIF supports legislation that permits an unfettered role for telemedicine services that will allow our citizens access to better quality care at lower costs.

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## Insurance

### **SB 1308 – relating to Insurer Solvency**

On Wednesday, April 9th, SB 1308, relating to Insurer Solvency, by Senator David Simmons (R-Altamonte Springs) unanimously passed the Senate Committee on Rules. AIF stood in support of the bill during the committee. The bill now heads to 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.