

DAILY BRIEF



From May 1, 2014

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE

HB 851 – relating to Education Tuition

On Thursday, May 1st, **HB 851**, relating to Education Tuition, by **Representative Jeanette M. Nuñez (R-Miami)** and **Senator Jack Latvala (R-Clearwater)** passed the Senate chamber by a 26-13 vote. The bill now heads back to the House for consideration.

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.

ENVIRONMENT

SB 312 – relating to Agriculture

On Thursday, May 1st, **SB 312**, relating to Agriculture, by **Senator Wilton Simpson (R-New Port Richey)** unanimously passed the Senate chamber. The bill now heads to the House for consideration.

The bill allows a farmer who enrolls in a Dispersed Water Storage program offered by a water management district retain the "Greenbelt" land classification on his property as long as he participates in the programs. The bill also provides several sales tax exemptions for agriculture producers.

AIF supports legislation which allows land owners to continue to have their property classified as "agricultural" if they are participating in a water retention program. This bill will benefit Florida's farmers in the form of reduced taxes.

INSURANCE

SB 1672 – relating to Property Insurance

On Thursday, May 1st, **SB 1672**, relating to Property Insurance, by the **Senate Committee on Banking and Insurance** passed the House chamber by a 25-8 vote. The bill now heads to the Governor for consideration.

The bill addresses several aspects of Citizens eligibility for commercial residential multi-peril policies and includes several fraud protections including prohibiting contractors from waiving deductibles to induce policyholders to file claims.

AIF also supports reducing fraud in the property insurance marketplace, which helps control insurance costs for businesses and homeowners alike.

TAXATION

HB 5601 – relating to Economic Development

On Thursday, May 1st, **HB 5601**, relating to Economic Development, by **House Finance & Tax Subcommittee, Senator Dorothy Hukill (R-Port Orange)**, and **Representative Ritch Workman (R-Melbourne)** was rolled to third reading in the Senate. The bill will be voted on by the Senate tomorrow, May 2nd.

Senator Joe Negrón (R-Palm City) explained the bill is the session tax package to complete the \$500 million tax cut. This bill relates to the \$105 million remaining after the \$395 million vehicle fees.

Senator Joe Negrón (R-Palm City) said the communication services tax cut is too large at over \$60 million and result in actual customer savings so low it's not a significant reduction. Therefore it is not a viable option and the adopted amendment removes it and adds the following:

- 3 day back to school sales tax holiday;
- 9 day hurricane tax holiday;
- 3 day tax exemption on Energy Star and WaterSense products;
- 3 year exemption on;
 - cement mixing drums,
 - child booster car seats and bicycle helmets,
 - pet food - therapeutic only,
 - college meal plans made tax exempt,
 - new market tax credit,
 - community contribution tax credit,
 - prepaid cell phone subject to sales tax not CST (communication services tax),
 - tax credit on uncollected purchases paid by credit card,
 - bail bond - lowering effective premium tax rate,
 - title insurance - lowering effective premium tax rate,
 - cigarette tax change in distribution benefiting Moffitt Cancer Center,
 - Public Education Capital Outlay - swap sales tax or general revenue for GRT which goes to PECO,
 - Department Of Revenue cost appropriations,
 - local business tax ease for reducing rate by local government,
 - tourist development tax information sharing clarification.

After temporarily postponing the bill, they came back and took up the bill and Sen. Negrón offered the substitute amendment to the **Senator Dorothy Hukill (R-Port Orange)** strike all, which includes the above tax cuts.

AIF supports the bill because it reduces taxes for individuals and businesses and therefore stimulates the Florida economy.