



WEEKLY BRIEF

From the Week of March 31 – April 4, 2014

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.

HB 1389 – relating to Chauffeured Limousines

On Friday, April 4th, HB 1389, relating to Chauffeured Limousines, by Representative James W. Grant (R-Tampa) passed the House Economic Affairs Committee by a 9-8 vote. **Tammy Perdue, AIF's General Counsel**, stood in support of the bill during the committee. The bill now heads to the House floor.



AIF released the following press release today regarding HB 1389:

Tallahassee, Fla. – The Associated Industries of Florida (AIF) today released the following statement attributed to its Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs Brewster Bevis in regards to the advancement of House Bill 1389 by Representative James Grant (R-Tampa). HB 1389, relating to chauffeured limousines, passed the House Economic Affairs Committee earlier today.

"AIF commends the House Economic Affairs Committee for passing House Bill 1389 by Representative Grant.

“This legislation, which will create price competition, promote consumer choice and create jobs via statewide digital transportation service policies, is good for Floridians.

“We look forward to seeing this legislation advance to the House floor.”

HB 1389 will create a new category of public transit under chauffeured limousines, define those services and give authority to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles to oversee the licensure and regulation of chauffeured limousines, services and drivers.

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AIF supports statewide digital transportation service policies that will work to create price competition, promote consumer choice and create jobs.

Economic Development

HB 7095 – relating to Professional Sports Facilities

On Tuesday, April 1st, HB 7095, relating to Professional Sports Facilities Incentive Application Process, by House Economic Affairs Committee and Representative Jimmy Patronis (R-Panama City) passed the House Appropriations Committee by a 25-2 vote. **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 House floor.

The bill creates the Professional Sports Facility Incentive Program process to provide state funding for the public purpose of constructing, reconstructing, renovating, or improving a professional sports facility. The bill creates a new application, review, and approval process for funding sports facilities, but does not require any expenditure of funds. It also caps the total potential annual distributions at \$12 million in General Revenue funds. Once an applicant has been approved by the Legislature and certified by the Department of Economic Opportunity, the DEO shall determine the annual distribution based on the estimate of new incremental states sales taxes provided in the Expected Sales Tax Analysis. A certified applicant may receive up to 75 percent of the estimate or \$2 million, whichever is less.

AIF supports this bill because of the positive impact that professional sports have on Florida’s economy and the thousands of jobs they provide to Floridians.

HB 685 – relating to Business Organizations

On Friday, April 4th, HB 685, relating to Business Organizations, by Representative Patrick Rooney, Jr. (R-Palm Beach Gardens) unanimously passed the House Judiciary Committee. **Tammy Perdue, AIF’s General Counsel**, stood in support of the bill during the committee. The bill now heads to 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.

SB 586 – relating to Brownfields

On Tuesday, April 1st, SB 586, relating to Brownfields, by Senator Thad Altman (R-Melbourne) passed the Senate Committee on Judiciary by an 8-1 vote. AIF stood in support of the bill during the committee. The bill now heads to the Senate floor.

The bill clarifies, in statute, the process for designation of a Brownfields area and offers liability protection for anyone responsible for rehabilitation of a Brownfields site. Subsequently, the bill encourages redevelopment in our state's Brownfields areas.

AIF supports any legislation promoting Florida's Brownfield Program as it provides a variety of financial and regulatory incentives encouraging parties to voluntarily clean up and redevelop Brownfield sites. By restoring Brownfield sites, the properties return to the tax rolls quicker and become useful to their community.

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.

SB 7023 – relating to Economic Development

On Friday, April 4th, SB 7023, relating to Economic Development, by House Economic Development & Tourism Subcommittee and Representative Travis Hutson (R-Palm Coast) unanimously passed the House Economic Affairs Committee. The bill now heads to the House floor.

This bill does a number of things, including making technical changes to statutes, directs Space Florida to consult with VISIT Florida in developing a space tourism marketing plan, promotes the goals of accountability and proper stewardship by recipients of the state's loan programs and most importantly, exempts new small business developments from transportation concurrency requirements and proportionate share requirements for three years.

AIF supports this legislation that will assist Florida's small businesses and encourage economic development in our state.

Education & Workforce

SB 1400 – relating to Postsecondary Student Tuition

On Tuesday, April 1st, SB 1400, relating to Postsecondary Student Tuition, by Senator Jack Latvala (R-Clearwater) passed the Senate Committee on Judiciary by a 7-2 vote. **AIF Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs, Brewster Bevis**, was slated to stand in support of the bill. The bill now heads to the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Education.



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.

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.

Environment

HB 703 – relating to Environmental Regulation

On Monday, March 31st, HB 703, relating to Environmental Regulation, by Representative Jimmy Patronis (R-Panama City) passed the House Agriculture & Natural Resources Appropriations Subcommittee by an 8-4 vote. **AIF Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs, Brewster Bevis**, stood in support of this bill during the committee. The bill now heads to its last stop before the House floor in the House State Affairs Committee.

Under the bill, voting requirements adopted by a local government for proposed plans or plan amendments that are more stringent than a simple majority, such as a super majority vote, would be prohibited. Rep. Patronis pledged to work with all stakeholders moving forward.

AIF supports this bill because it will lessen regulation on Florida businesses. AIF supports legislation that requires all mandatory and optional elements of a comprehensive plan by a board of county commissioners be adopted by a simple majority vote.

SB 312 – relating to Agriculture

On Wednesday, April 2nd, SB 312, relating to Agriculture, by Senator Wilton Simpson (R-New Port Richey) unanimously passed the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Finance and Tax. **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 its last stop before the Senate floor in the Senate Committee on Appropriations.



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 testified in favor of this legislation. The bill now heads to the House Finance & Tax Subcommittee.

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.

SB 1576 – relating to Springs

On Monday, March 31st, SB 1576, relating to Springs, by Senator Charles Dean, Sr. (R-Inverness) unanimously passed the Senate Committee on Agriculture. AIF stood in support of the bill during the committee. The bill now heads to the Senate Committee on Appropriations.

The bill provides for the protection of springs in Florida. Specifically, the bill provides for funding from documentary stamp revenues to pay for changes to the makeup and mission of the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) and requires the establishment of minimum flows and levels (MFLs) in Outstanding Florida Springs (OFSs). The bill also requires a study of nutrient reduction improvements for row crops and the beneficial use of reclaimed water, stormwater, and excess surface water.

AIF supports funding science-based programs and projects to improve the water quality and water quantity of Florida's major first-magnitude springs. AIF also supports state funding for alternative water supply projects.

SB 1174 – relating to Power Plant Carbon Dioxide Emissions

On Tuesday, April 1st, SB 1174, relating to Power Plant Carbon Dioxide Emissions, by Senator Audrey Gibson (D-Jacksonville) unanimously passed the Senate Committee on Communications, Energy, and

Public Utilities. AIF stood in support of the bill during the committee. The bill now heads to the Senate floor.

This bill is a memorial that urges the United State Congress to allow states to develop their own performance standards, compliance schedules, and guidelines for regulating carbon dioxide emissions. Specifically, the memorial urges Congress to respect the primacy of states and to rely on state regulators who take into account unique policies, energy needs, resource mix, economic priorities, and environmental priorities.

AIF supports clean coal technology as a source of reliable and reasonably priced energy and believes the state is best suited to determine its own performance standards, compliance schedules, and guidelines for regulating carbon dioxide emissions.

Health Care

SB 1646 – relating to Telehealth

On Tuesday, April 1st, SB 1646, relating to Telemedicine Services, by the Senate Committee on Health Policy passed the Senate Committee on Communications, Energy, and Public Utilities by a 6-2 vote. The bill now heads to the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services.

The bill seeks to increase the use of telemedicine for providing health care services to Floridians. An amendment was added to the bill which added PAs, ARNPs, and pharmacists to the list of health care providers that would be allowed to provide services to Floridians through the use of telemedicine. Another amendment approved by the committee would 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. **Tammy Perdue, AIF's General Counsel**, told committee members that concerns remain whether the proposal in its current form would increase access and lower the cost of providing care. However, AIF appreciated Senator Aaron Bean's (R-Jacksonville) efforts to find a common ground and will continue to work with him on the proposal.

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

SB 278 – relating to Pharmacy

On Wednesday, April 2nd, SB 278, relating to Pharmacy, by Senator Denise Grimsley (R-Sebring) unanimously passed the Senate Committee on Rules. **Tammy Perdue, AIF's General Counsel**, stood in support of this bill during the committee meeting. The bill now heads to the Senate floor.



The bill would remove the cap of three pharmacy technicians that the Board of Pharmacy may authorize one pharmacist to supervise. Further, the bill would revise the composition of the board to increase the

pharmacists representing both community and institutional class II pharmacies from a minimum of one in each category to a minimum of three each.

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

SB 1230 – relating to Physician Assistants

On Tuesday, April 1st, SB 1230, relating to Physician Assistants, by Senator Alan Hays (R-Umatilla) passed the Senate Committee on Health Policy by an 8-1 vote. The bill now heads to the Senate Committee on Appropriations.

The bill, as amended through a strike-all by Senator Denise Grimsley (R-Sebring), capped at five the amount of physician's assistants a physician may supervise. Further, the amendment provided that a physician may only supervise four ARNPs or PAs if those professionals work in an office other than the physician's primary practice location and the services provided are mainly aesthetic skin care services.

AIF supports access for Floridians to high-paying jobs, such as physician's assistant.

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.

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 926 – relating to Local Regulation of Wage Theft

On Wednesday, April 2nd, SB 926, relating to Local Regulation of Wage Theft, by Senator Wilton Simpson (R-New Port Richey) passed the Senate Committee on Rules by an 8-7 vote. **Tammy Perdue, AIF's General Counsel**, stood in support of the bill during the committee and expressed appreciation of Senator Wilton Simpson and Senator Rob Bradley (R-Orange Park) for their extensive work and leadership on this important bill for Florida employers. The bill now heads to the Senate floor.



This bill prescribes a statewide wage theft claim process to ensure consistency and reduce regulatory burdens for employers, particularly those with multiple locations throughout the state. This measure will also lessen the confusion for employees.

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

SB 1138– relating to Civil Liability of Farmers

On Tuesday, April 1st, SB 1138, relating to Civil Liability of Farmers, by Senator Greg Evers (R-Crestview) unanimously passed the Senate Committee on Judiciary. AIF stood in support of this bill during the committee. The bill now heads to the Senate floor.

The bill exempts a farmer from civil liability if he gratuitously allows a person to come onto his/her land to remove farm produce or crops at any time. Presently the exemption applies only when that activity takes place after harvesting.

AIF supports legislation that will reduce the number of frivolous lawsuits brought against Florida's business owners.

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.

IT Governance

SB 1524 – relating to Security of Confidential Personal Information

On Wednesday, April 2nd, SB 1524, relating to Security of Confidential Personal Information, by Senator John Thrasher (R-St. Augustine) unanimously passed the Senate Committee on Rules. **Tammy Perdue, AIF's General Counsel**, testified in the committee and expressed appreciation for the amendment and the issues it clarified as well as for the diligent collaboration the Attorney General exerted with AIF along with our members to develop a strong bill. The bill now heads to the Senate floor.



View Mrs. Perdue's testimony on SB 1524 at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ytY_iKfcXA

On Friday, April 4th, HB 7085, by House Civil Justice Subcommittee and Representative Larry Metz (R-Groveland) unanimously passed the House Judiciary Committee. **Tammy Perdue, AIF's General Counsel**, stood in support of the bill during the committee. The bill now heads to the House floor.

These bills create new Florida requirements for various notifications a company must make in the event of a data breach. This measure was originated by Attorney General Pam Bondi. AIF and our members across all industries and areas of the state have worked with General Bondi and Senator Thrasher over the past several weeks to find a way to provide the consumer safeguards needed while avoiding unintended consequences that create costly regulatory burdens on businesses. At today's committee a significant amendment was adopted which addresses the business community's concerns and provides further clarity for how the notification process will be implemented. AIF salutes Attorney General Pam Bondi and Senator John Thrasher for their diligent leadership in protecting consumer information in a manner that is fair and not burdensome to Florida businesses.

AIF supports this important legislation because it provides clear direction to companies for handling data and security challenges in a timely and consistent manner.

Taxation & Budget

SB 712 – relating to Taxes on Prepaid Calling Arrangements

On Wednesday, April 2nd, SB 712, relating to Taxes on Prepaid Calling Arrangements, by Senator Bill Galvano (R-Bradenton) unanimously passed the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Finance and Tax. **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 its last stop before the Senate floor in the Senate Committee on Appropriations.



The bill revises the definition of the term "prepaid calling card" for purposes of the Communications Services Tax (CST) and the sales tax. The primary effect of the bill is to include mobile communications services that meet specified conditions. The bill also provides that if a purchaser of a prepaid calling arrangement has paid sales tax on the sale or recharge of such arrangement, no additional sales tax or CST tax is due or payable if the purchaser applies one or more units of the prepaid calling arrangement to obtain communications services that are provided to or through the same handset or other electronic device that is used by the purchaser to access mobile communications services, other services that are not communications services, or products.

AIF supports clarification that prepaid calling arrangements, such as wireless phones purchased at retail stores, should be taxed as tangible personal property.

HB 1237/SB 1632 – relating to Special Districts

On Tuesday, April 1st, HB 1237, relating to Special Districts, by Representative Larry Metz (R-Groveland) unanimously passed the House Finance & Tax Subcommittee. AIF stood in support of the bill during the committee. The bill now heads to its last stop before the House floor in the House State Affairs Committee.

Also on Tuesday, April 1st, SB 1632, by Senator Kelli Stargel (R-Lakeland) unanimously passed the Senate Committee on Community Affairs. 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 bills seek to reorganize chapter 189, F.S., relating to special districts, into eight parts; revises duties of Legislative Auditing Committee; specifies applicability of procedures regarding suspension & removal of member of governing body of special district; revises when special district may be declared inactive; prohibits special districts declared inactive from collecting taxes, fees, or assessments; and provides for costs of litigation & reasonable attorney fees under certain conditions. These bills also require each special district to update and maintain an internet website on which the district must publish extensive information. In addition, the legislation clarifies a special district declared inactive on the unanimous vote of its governing body may be dissolved without a referendum and repeals a part of the Community Improvement Authority Act due to its irrelevance throughout the Act's duration in statute.

AIF supports common-sense and transparent policy in regards to the creation and enforcement of special districts. In addition, AIF supports legislation that reduces uncertainty and red tape for Florida's business community.

SB 156 – relating to Motor Vehicle and Mobile Home Taxes, Fees, and Surcharges

On Tuesday, April 2nd, SB 156, relating to Motor Vehicle and Mobile Home Taxes, Fees, and Surcharges, by Senator Joe Negron (R-Palm City) was signed into law by Governor Rick Scott. The law will take effect on September 1st, 2014.

AIF released the following press release on April 2nd regarding SB 156.

Tallahassee, Fla. – *The Associated Industries of Florida (AIF) today released the following statement attributed to its President & CEO Tom Feeney regarding Governor Rick Scott (R-FL) signing Senate Bill 156 by Senator Joe Negron (R-Stuart), relating to Motor Vehicle Licenses Taxes, into law.*

“AIF applauds the Governor for signing this tax reduction legislation into law and commends Senator Negron for championing this good public policy.

“Not only will this \$395 million reduction deliver relief to Florida businesses and their families by putting more money back in their pockets, it translates to job creation and incentives.

“AIF supports making Florida a more attractive place for companies looking to relocate or start a business, and this law will encourage growth in our state.”

The bill reduces some of the fees required to register a motor vehicle, vessel or mobile home, and returns them to the amount required prior to September 1, 2009. The fee reductions result in a \$12 per year savings in the amount paid to register a motor vehicle, \$2.00 to register a vessel, and either \$4.50 or \$9.00 to register a mobile home. The total result of this bill is a \$395 million tax reduction for Florida's residents.

AIF supports the roll back in fees and surcharges imposed on motorist when they buy, replace or transfer a license plate or register their vehicle with the state.

SB 134 – relating to Tax-exempt Income

On Wednesday, April 2nd, SB 134, relating to Tax-exempt Income, by Senator Dorothy Hukill (R-Port Orange) passed the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Finance and Tax by a 10-1 vote. AIF stood in support of the bill during the committee. The bill now heads to the Senate Committee on Appropriations.

The bill increases the level of income that is exempt from the Florida corporate income tax. Florida imposes a 5.5 percent tax on the net income of corporations doing business in Florida. Currently the first \$50,000 of a corporation's income that is subject to Florida tax is exempted from the corporate income tax. This bill increases the exemption from \$50,000 to \$75,000.

AIF supports Governor Scott's proposed increase of the exempt income amount from the current \$50,000 to the proposed \$75,000. This allows a great incentive for small businesses to expand in Florida and for companies looking to relocate here.

SB 362 – relating to Hurricane Preparedness

On Wednesday, April 2nd, SB 362, relating to Hurricane Preparedness, by Senator Rob Bradley (R-Orange Park) unanimously passed the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Finance and Tax. AIF stood in support of the bill during the committee. The bill now heads to the Senate Committee on Appropriations.

The bill establishes a sales tax exemption for specified items related to hurricane preparedness beginning on June 1, 2014, and ending on June 12, 2014. These items include flashlights, radios, first-aid kits, batteries, small coolers, generators and various other items.

AIF supports sales tax holidays for hurricane supplies. This tax holiday is a win-win for customers and the state as sales tend to increase more than they would without the tax holiday.

SB 596 – relating to Defense Contracting

On Wednesday, April 2nd, SB 596, relating to Defense Contracting, by Senator Greg Evers (R-Crestview) unanimously passed the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Finance and Tax. 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 provides tax breaks to prime defense contractors who use Florida-based subcontractors. The bill would allow a prime contractor to reduce its taxable income 4 percent for each subcontract it awards.

AIF supports this bill because reducing the corporate tax liability would likely encourage prime contractors to award more subcontracts to small businesses in Florida.

SB 898 – relating to Communications Services Tax

On Wednesday, April 2nd, HB 898, relating to Communications Services Tax, by Senator Joseph Abruzzo (D-Wellington) unanimously passed the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Finance and Tax. 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, brought to the attention of the legislature by the hotel and lodging industry, intends to relieve hoteliers, both large and small, from erroneous application of the Communications Services Tax (CST) by the Florida Department of Revenue on hotels, their franchises and properties. Specifically, the bill provides clarification that certain communications over the internet do not make a hotel a provider of communications services and thus those communications are not subject to the CST.

AIF supports this bill because the impact of the state's tourism industry, along with the lodging industry, affects every corner of the state and further and erroneous taxation of the hotel and lodging industry can only harm local economies.