



DAILY BRIEF

From March 13, 2017

EDUCATION

HB 859-Relating to Postsecondary Distance Education

On Monday, March 13th, **HB 859**, relating to Postsecondary Distance Education, by **Representative Amber Mariano (R-Port Richey)** was heard by the **House Post-Secondary Education Subcommittee** and passed unanimously by a vote of 14 yeas to 0 nays. **AIF's Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs, Brewster Bevis stood in support of this bill.**

This legislation seeks to authorize Florida's participation in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement known as "SARA" created by the Southern Regional Education Board and the National Council on State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements. This would allow for Florida's postsecondary institutions to voluntarily participate in what is a multi-state reciprocity agreement allowing them to offer online education without excessive fees and regulatory compliance processes. This reciprocity offers student's greater access to more distance education, enhances oversight of distance education offerings to Florida students by another state, and expands experiential learning opportunities across state lines. Not only is this good for students but it also helps lessen the burden on Florida businesses and taxpayers to fund construction and facility costs.

HB 859 will move on to the **House Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee** for its second hearing.

AIF SUPPORTS our state university system's continued efforts to address the growing challenges that comes with increased enrollment.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SB 600-Relating to Rural Economic Development Initiative

On Monday, March 13th, **SB 600**, relating to Rural Economic Development Initiative, by **Senator Denise Grimsley (R-Lake Placid)** was heard by the **Senate Committee on Commerce and Tourism** and passed. **AIF stood in support of this bill.**

Currently, Florida's rural communities are experiencing additional challenges compared to their urban counterparts in many quality of life indicators. The state has an opportunity to improve the economic competitiveness of Florida's rural communities by reforming the Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI). This legislation accomplishes this by:

- Focusing the mission of REDI on challenges rural communities face in the areas of workforce development and education, infrastructure, and access to healthcare;
- Streamlining REDI membership to ensure decision makers are at the table; and
- Making REDI a real tool for rural communities as they navigate through the red tape of state government.

SB 600 will now go to the **Senate Committee on Agriculture** for its second hearing.

AIF SUPPORTS efforts to increase economic development in Florida's rural areas by increasing job growth.