

INTERIM UPDATE



From January 20, 2016

WORKFORCE

SB 104-Relating to Computer Coding Instruction

On Monday, February 6th, **SB 104**, relating to Computer Coding Instruction, by **The Honorable Jeff Brandes (R-St. Petersburg)**, was heard by the **Senate Committee on Education** and passed unanimously by a vote of 8 yeas to 0 nays. **AIF stood in support of this bill.**

Starting with the 2019-2020 school year, SB 104 would allow high school students the option of taking computer coding courses along with a related industry certification to satisfy the foreign language requirement currently in place. Under this bill high schools will provide students the opportunity to substitute two credits in computer coding and a related industry certification for two credits sequential foreign language courses (i.e. Spanish I and Spanish II; Latin I and Latin II; French I and French II; etc.). Furthermore, SB 104, would require the Florida College System institutions and state universities to acknowledge computer coding course credits as foreign language credits.

SB 104 will now go to its second and final committee stop in the **Senate Committee on Rules**.

AIF SUPPORTS legislation that will provide Florida's students the opportunity to become proficient in computer coding, which will in turn prepare our states next generation for a technology driven economy.

HEALTH CARE/INSURANCE

SB 182-Relating to Consumer Protection from Non-medical Changes to Prescription Drug Formularies

On Tuesday, February 7th, **SB 182**, relating to Consumer Protection from Non-medical Changes to Prescription Drug Formularies, by **The Honorable Debbie Mayfield (R-Melbourne)**, was heard by the **Senate Committee on Banking and Insurance** and passed with a vote of 6 yeas to 1 nay. **AIF's Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs, Brewster Bevis, spoke in opposition to this bill.**

This bill addresses the ability to move or shift prescription drugs within drug formularies by health plans. Currently, health plans have the authority to move prescription drugs to different tiers within the drug formulary, or add/remove certain drugs all together. Health plans use this system if, for instance, a drug has been found to be unsafe for patients or a more cost efficient alternative has become available. Removing this ability from health plans would not only cause the cost of healthcare to rise but could put patients at risk of taking potentially harmful medications.

SB 182 will now go to the **Senate Committee on Health Policy**, its second of three committee stops.

AIF OPPOSES taking away the leverage health plans have to add, remove, or shift drugs within the formulary system as it will increase the cost of health care and pharmaceuticals for Florida's employer community.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

PCB 1701-Relating to Economic Programs

On Wednesday, February 8th, **PCB 1701**, relating to Economic Programs, sponsored and heard by the **House Careers & Competition Subcommittee**, passed by a vote of 10 yeas to 5 nays. **AIF's Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs, Brewster Bevis, stood in opposition of this bill.**

This legislation threatens to eliminate ALL incentive programs that help many of Florida's businesses and economy thrive, specifically incentives for;

- Enterprise Florida,
- VISIT FLORIDA,
- Qualified Defense and Space Contractors tax refund,
- Qualified Target Industry business tax refund,
- the research and development tax credit,
- the Quick Action Closing fund and,
- Office of Film & Entertainment and entertainment industry tax programs.

Enacting this legislation would be detrimental to not only our state's economy but our tourism industry, an industry that sets Florida apart from the rest.

PCB 1701 is currently not assigned to another committee of reference.

AIF OPPOSES removing agency incentives as it would result in an economic downfall for Florida.

Please see below statement from our President & CEO, Tom Feeney, released Wednesday, February 8th, regarding PCB 1701:

AIF Statement Regarding Economic Programs Legislation

Tallahassee, Fla. – The **Associated Industries of Florida (AIF)** today released the following statement on behalf of its President & CEO Tom Feeney regarding the opposition to PCB 1701 relating to Economic Programs that was today heard in the House Careers & Competition Subcommittee.

“As a voice for Florida's business community, AIF opposes PCB 1701, which would take away Enterprise Florida and VISIT FLORIDA. These two public-private partnerships are good for Florida, as they are significant contributors to our state's economy.

“We cannot emphasize enough just how instrumental these two agencies have been in helping build a business-friendly environment in the Sunshine State. Because of these agencies, job growth and prosperity has accelerated considerably, having a positive impact on Florida's employers and employees.

“Transparency and accountability measures are always a good idea, but we simply cannot put Florida at a huge disadvantage by getting rid of these successful economic development programs.”

Known as “The Voice of Florida Business” in the Sunshine State, AIF has represented the principles of prosperity and free enterprise before the three branches of state government since 1920. A voluntary association of diversified businesses, AIF was created to foster an economic climate in Florida conducive to the growth, development, and welfare of industry and business and the people of the state.

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TRANSPORTATION

HB 221-Relating to Transportation Network Companies (TNC's)

On Wednesday, February 8th, **HB 221**, relating to Transportation Network Companies, by **Representative Chris Sprowls (R-Clearwater)** and **Representative James Grant (R-Tampa)** was heard by the **House Transportation & Infrastructure Subcommittee** and was reported favorably by a vote of 14 yeas to 1 nay. **AIF stood in support of this bill.**

This bill aims to establish a regulatory framework for transportation network companies and how they operate throughout communities in Florida. HB 221 defines what constitutes as a “TNC vehicle”, sets in place insurance requirements and preempts authority to the state, which will allow for a streamlined set of rules to be followed throughout the state.

HB 221 will now go to the **House Government Accountability Committee**, its second and final committee hearing.

AIF SUPPORTS statewide digital transportation service policies to create price competition, promote consumer choice, enhance customer experience, create jobs and remove anti-competitive local regulations.