

INTERIM UPDATE



From November 7, 2017

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SB 170-Relating to Rural Economic Development Initiative

On Monday, November 6th, [SB 170](#), by [Senator Denise Grimsley \(R-Lake Placid\)](#) was heard by the [Senate Committee on Commerce and Tourism](#) and passed by a vote of 8 yeas to 0 nays. **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:

- Reducing the number of specified agencies and organizations that are required to designate REDI representatives;
- Clarifying which individuals from specified agencies and organizations must be designated as REDI representatives;
- Providing for the appointment of five additional members from the private sector:
 - Three of the private sector members are to be appointed by the executive director of the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), one appointed by the President of the Senate, and one appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;
- Authorizing the creation of ad hoc committees and provides guidance for the organization of ad hoc committees;
- Modifying the definition and designation criteria for a rural area of opportunity (RAO);
- Updating the annual reporting requirements; and
- Make conforming changes to address cross-references in numerous sections of the Florida Statutes.

SB 170 will go on to the [Senate Committee on Agriculture](#) to be heard.

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