

INTERIM UPDATE



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SB 178 – Florida Tourism Marketing

On Monday, February 11, 2019, SB 178, Florida Tourism Marketing, by Senator Joe Gruters was heard in the Senate Commerce and Tourism Committee and was voted favorably with 3 yeas and 0 nays.

This bill removes the scheduled repeal date for the Florida Tourism Industry Marketing Corporation, doing business as VISIT FLORIDA, and the scheduled repeal date for Division of Tourism Marketing within Enterprise Florida, Inc.

The bill does not affect state revenues or expenditures.

SB 178 will now move to the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Tourism, and Economic Development.

AIF supports investment in building a world-class marketing engine with top talent, analytics, and funding that develops and executes data-driven branding strategies.

SB 298 – Rural Businesses

On Monday, February 11, 2019, SB 298, Rural Businesses, by Senator Bill Montford was heard in the Senate Commerce and Tourism Committee and was voted favorably with 3 yeas and 0 nays.

This bill creates s. 288.062, F.S., the Florida Rural Job and Business Recovery Act (Act or Program). The Act encourages investment in rural communities by allowing investors to earn state insurance premium tax credits equal to their investment in certified growth funds. In turn, the growth funds will invest in qualified growth businesses located in Florida's non-urbanized areas. The Act caps investment at a level that will result in no more than \$15 million in tax credits cumulatively claimed under the Program each year. The Department of Economic Opportunity will administer the Act by certifying growth funds, granting tax credits to investors, and if necessary, revoking the fund's tax credits and authority. The bill provides ongoing requirements for the growth funds to meet while participating in the Act, allows growth funds to reinvest their rural growth investments, and outlines steps for a growth fund to withdraw from the program.

The Revenue Estimating Conference has not yet determined the fiscal impact of the bill.

SB 298 will now move to the Senate Finance and Tax Committee.

AIF supports this bill which updates and improves Florida's Rural Economic Development programs which allows rural communities to get assistance for economic development projects designed to create jobs and improve our rural communities.

LEGAL & JUDICIAL

SB 180 – Lost or Abandoned Personal Property

On Monday, February 11, 2019, SB 180, Lost or Abandoned Property, by Senator Kelli Stargel was heard in the Senate Commerce and Tourism Committee and was voted favorably with 3 yeas and 0 nays.

This bill allows an owner or operator of a theme park, entertainment complex, zoo, museum, aquarium, public food service establishment, or public lodging establishment to elect to dispose of or donate lost or abandoned property found on its premises. Under the bill, an owner or operator who elects to dispose of or donate lost or abandoned property must first take charge of the property, maintain a record of the property, and hold the property for at least 30 days. The bill prohibits the owner or operator from selling the property. If the property remains unclaimed after 30 days, the owner or operator must dispose of or donate the property to a charitable institution. If a charitable institution accepts certain electronic devices, the bill requires the charitable institution to make a reasonable effort to delete all personal data from the device before its sale or disposal. The bill also provides that the rightful owner of the property may reclaim the property at any time before its disposal or donation.

SB 180 will now head to the Senate Rules Committee.

AIF supports the right of property owners to hold and donate lost or abandoned property thereby eliminating the burden of contacting law enforcement for lost personal belongings.