



DAILY BRIEF

For the 2019 Legislative Session

From March 7, 2019

LEGAL & JUDICIAL

SB 180 – Relating to Lost or Abandoned Personal Property

On Thursday, March 7, **SB 180** by Senator Kelli Stargel (R-Lakeland) was read for a third time on the Senate floor and passed by a vote of 38 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 is in House messages.

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.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

HB 671 – Relating to Regional Rural Development Grants

On Thursday, March 7, **HB 671** by Representative Chuck Clemons (R-Jonesville) was heard in the House Workforce Development & Tourism Subcommittee and was voted favorably with 13 yeas and 2 nays. **AIF stood in support of this legislation.**

The bill makes changes to how the Regional Rural Development Grant program and the Rural Infrastructure Fund operate. Specifically, the bill amends the Regional Rural Development Grant Program to:

- Increase the maximum annual grant amount to \$250,000 from \$150,000 that three regional economic development organizations that serve the entire region of a rural area of opportunity may receive;
- Increase the amount of funds the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) may expend for the program to up to \$1 million annually (from up to \$750,000 annually);
- Reduce the required match the regional economic development organizations must contribute in non-state resources from 100 percent to 25 percent of the state's contribution; and
- Allow the use of grant funds to build the professional capacity of regional economic development organizations. The bill amends the Rural Infrastructure Fund program to:
 - Increase the grant awards to 50 percent of infrastructure project costs (up from 30 percent);
 - Clarify that eligible infrastructure projects include access to broadband Internet service, and projects that improve service and access must be through a partnership that was publicly noticed and competitively bid; and
 - Require the DEO to review the grant program application and award procedures by September 1, 2020.

HB 671 will now move to the House Transportation & Tourism Appropriations Subcommittee.

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