



DAILY BRIEF

For the 2019 Legislative Session

From March 12, 2019

LEGAL & JUDICIAL

SB 432 – Relating to Employment Conditions

On Tuesday, March 12, **SB 432** by Senator Joe Gruters (R-Sarasota) was heard before the Senate Governmental Oversight and Accountability Committee and was reported favorably with 3 yeas and 0 nays. **AIF stood in support of this legislation.**

This bill amends s. 218.077, F.S., regarding state preemption of conditions of employment. The bill:

- Expressly prohibits a county, city, district, or other public body created by state law from requiring an employer from paying a minimum wage other than the state or federal minimum wage or to offer other conditions of employment;
- Expressly preempts to the state the right to regulate any requirements imposed upon employers relating to a minimum wage and conditions of employment;
- Defines “conditions of employment” to include preemployment screening, job classification, job responsibilities; hours of work; scheduling and schedule changes, wages, payment of wages, leave, paid or unpaid days off for holidays, illness, vacations, and personal necessity, and employee benefits;
- Voids any ordinance, regulation, or policy currently in existence which is now preempted.

SB 432 will now move to the Senate Community Affairs Committee.

AIF supports legislation that allows Florida businesses to adhere to state or federal wage requirements, thus eliminating onerous regulations set by municipalities.

HB 261 – Relating to Beverage Law

On Tuesday, March 12, **HB 261** by Representative Josie Tomkow (R-Auburndale) was heard before the House Government Operations and Technology Appropriations Subcommittee and was reported favorably with 11 yeas and 0 nays. **AIF’s Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs, Brewster Bevis, stood in support of this legislation.**

Florida's Tied House Evil Law prohibits a manufacturer or distributor of alcoholic beverages from having a financial interest in the establishment of a licensed vendor, and prohibits a manufacturer or distributor from giving gifts, loans, property, or rebates to retail vendors. This bill amends and clarifies certain exemptions granting manufacturers the right to partner with vendors, so long as the manufacturer's agreement does not impose on sales of other manufacturers' brands.

HB 261 will now move to the House Commerce Committee.

AIF supports legislative efforts to clean up laws imposing burdens and restrictions on manufacturer and vendor partnerships.

SB 962 – Relating to Malt Beverages

On Tuesday, March 12, **SB 962** by Senator Manny Diaz (R-Hialeah Gardens) was heard before the Senate Innovation, Industry, and Technology Committee and was reported favorably with 9 yeas and 0 nays. **AIF's Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs, Brewster Bevis, stood in support of this legislation.**

This bill creates a process for returns of malt beverages by a vendor to a distributor for an exchange of product, a refund, or a credit. A vendor may return malt beverages to a distributor if the malt beverages are a "damaged product," an "out-of-code" product," or an "undamaged product." An "out-of-code product" is a malt beverage that has exceeded the manufacturer's code date indicating the product's freshness and availability for purchase at retail. A distributor is not required to accept a return request. A product may not be returned because it is overstocked or slow-moving or because there is only limited or seasonal demand for the product. Under the bill, a vendor may request return of undamaged product to a distributor only for exchange of product or for credit and an out-of-code product may be returned to a distributor only for an exchange of product.

SB 962 will now move to the Senate Commerce and Tourism Committee.

AIF supports legislative efforts to clean up outdated laws imposing burdens and restrictions on vendors and distributors of malt beverages.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SB 596 – Relating to Regional Rural Development Grants

On Tuesday, March 12, **SB 596** by Senator Ben Albritton (R-Bartow) was heard before the Senate Innovation, Industry, and Technology Committee and was reported favorably with 9 yeas and 0 nays. **AIF's Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs, Brewster Bevis, 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.

SB 596 will now move to the Senate Appropriations Committee.

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

TAXATION

SB 1000 – Relating to Communication Services Taxes

On Tuesday, March 12, **SB 1000** by Senator Travis Hutson (R-Palm Coast) was heard before the Senate Innovation, Industry, and Technology Committee and was reported favorably with 9 yeas and 0 nays. **AIF's Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs, Brewster Bevis, stood in support of this legislation.**

This bill reduces the state tax on general communications services from 4.92% to 3.92%, and on direct-to-home satellite services from 9.02% to 8.07% and also revises the authority for municipalities and counties to impose permit fees on communications providers that use municipal or county roads or right-of-ways. This bill eliminates all the current provisions on local governments electing whether to require and collect permit fees and effectively freezes local government elections on collection of permit fees, providing that a municipality or county that chose to impose permit fees on or before January 1, 2019, may continue to impose such fees, while a municipality or county that did not impose permit fees as of January 1, 2019, may not impose such fees.

SB 1000 will now move to the Senate Finance and Tax Committee.

AIF supports legislation that will reduce the communications services tax and have a positive financial impact on all consumers in Florida who pay for cable or satellite service.