



# DAILY BRIEF

For the 2019 Legislative Session

**From April 1, 2019**

## **ENERGY**

### **HB 797 – Relating to Public Utility Storm Protection Plans**

On Monday, April 1, **HB 797** by Representative Randy Fine (R-Palm Bay) was heard in the House Government Operations and Technology Appropriations Subcommittee and was reported favorably with 11 yeas and 0 nays. **AIF stood in support of this legislation.**

This bill aims to harden Florida’s utilities grid against tropical storm and hurricane damage with proposed under-grounding of electric infrastructure. The bill would require public utility companies (Florida Power and Light, Duke Energy Florida, Gulf Power Company, Tampa Electric Company, and the Florida Public Utilities Corporation) to submit a transmission and distribution storm protection plan to the Public Services Commission, with updates required at least every three years. Data collected after Hurricane Irma showed that underground lines suffered minimal outages during storms.

HB 797 will now move to the House Commerce Committee.

**AIF supports actively seeking ways to harden our state’s infrastructure and more effectively prepare for hurricanes and tropical storms to ensure that power is quickly restored.**

## **LEGAL & JUDICIAL**

### **HB 1161 – Relating to Malt Beverages**

On Monday, April 1, **HB 1161** by Representative Spencer Roach (R-North Fort Myers) was heard before the House Government Operations and Technology Appropriations Subcommittee and was reported favorably with 12 yeas and 0 nays. **AIF 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.

HB 1161 will now move to the House Commerce Committee.

**AIF supports legislative efforts to revise outdated laws that impose burdens and restrictions on any sector of the business community, including vendors and distributors of malt beverages.**

### **SB 7096 – Relating to Constitutional Amendments**

On Monday, April 1, **SB 7096**, sponsored and heard by the Senate Judiciary Committee, was reported favorably with 4 yeas and 2 nays. **AIF’s Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs, Brewster Bevis, stood in support of this legislation.**

This bill changes the process for amending the constitution by citizen initiative by:

- Requiring petition gatherers to be Florida residents and registered with the Secretary of State;
- Disqualifying petitions collected by unregistered petition gatherers from counting toward the number of petitions required for an initiative amendment to appear on the ballot;
- Prohibiting compensation to petition-gatherers on a per-signature basis; and
- Requiring the ballot for an initiative amendment include:
  - A bold-font, capitalized statement regarding the financial impact to the state if the Financial Impact Estimating Conference determines that the measure will increase costs, decrease revenue, or have an indeterminate fiscal impact;
  - A “yes” or “no” determination by the Florida Supreme Court as to whether the policy in the amendment could instead be accomplished by the Legislature instead of through the initiative amendment; and
  - The name of the amendment’s sponsor and the percentage of contributions received by the sponsor from in-state contributors.

**AIF supports legislation that adds transparency and accountability to amending the Florida constitution by citizen initiative.**