



DAILY BRIEF

For the 2020 Legislative Session

From February 17, 2020

ENVIRONMENT

SB 1656 – Relating to Reclaimed Water

On Monday, February 17, SB 1656 by Senator Ben Albritton (R-Bartow) was heard by the Senate Governmental Oversight and Accountability Committee and was reported favorable with 4 yeas and 0 nays. **AIF stood in support of this legislation.**

The bill, which is based off the recommendations of the Potable Reuse Commission, recognizes reclaimed water as a potential source of drinking water, recognizes potable reuse water as an alternative active water supply, establishes specific water quality criteria for potable reuse, and prohibits certain utilities from discharging reuse, effluent, or reclaimed water via surface water discharges.

SB 1656 will now move to the Senate Appropriations Committee.

AIF supports legislation which increases Florida’s water supply by encouraging greater utilization of reclaimed water, direct and indirect potable technology, and other alternative water supplies that are both technologically and economically feasible. States with an adequate water supply will have a head start on future economic development and job creation.

SB 1350 – Relating to Brownfields

On Monday, February 17, SB 1350 by Senator Dennis Baxley (R-Lady Lake) was heard by the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee and was reported favorable with 4 yeas and 0 nays. **AIF’s Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs, Brewster Bevis, stood in support of Amendment 181564 and then the overall legislation.**

A brownfield is a property of which the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. Unsafe levels of environmental contamination on a brownfield may result from past or current industrial, commercial, residential, agricultural, or recreational uses and practices. Contaminants may be found in soil, water or air.

The bill makes the following changes pertaining to Florida’s brownfield program:

- Provides sales tax exemptions for building materials for construction projects abutting designated brownfield areas that set aside certain portions of the project for affordable housing.

- Revises a corporate income tax credits for the total rehabilitation costs and waste removal costs for a brownfield site.
- Adds to the liability protection in the brownfield program relief from statutory causes of action arising under s. 376.313(3), F.S., which impose strict liability for damages from pollution for certain sites.
- Provides the liability protection in the brownfield program to any subsequent property owner of a brownfield site.

SB 1350 will now move to the Senate Finance and Tax Committee.

AIF supports the efforts contained in this bill to promote thorough and incentivized remediation of brownfields to allow further job creation and economic development opportunities on land otherwise useless while protecting Florida businesses from vicarious liability.