

DAILY BRIEF

For the 2021 Legislative Session



FROM MARCH 30, 2021

AGRICULTURE

HB 1601 – Relating to Farming Operations

On Tuesday, March 30, [HB 1601](#) by Representative Jayar Williamson (R-Pace) was heard by the House Environment, Agriculture and Flooding Subcommittee and was reported favorable with 14 yeas and 4 nays. **AIF's Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs, Brewster Bevis, stood in support of this legislation.**

The bill amends and strengthens the Florida Right to Farm Act, which is intended to protect reasonable agricultural activities conducted on farmland from nuisance lawsuits. The bill provides stronger liability protections to farms that comply with best management practices and environmental regulations, and:

- Adds Agritourism to the list of practices protected by the Right to Farm Act;
- Institutes parameters regarding punitive and compensatory damages; and
- Limits eligibility to file a lawsuit to individuals located within one half mile of the activity.

HB 1601 will now go to the House Judiciary Committee.

AIF supports legislation that protects Florida's farmers and helps to eradicate bad faith litigation which drives up the cost of doing business, insurance rates, and negatively affects those providing food and resources to the state.

LEGAL & JUDICIAL

HB 557 – Relating to Payments to Clerks of the Circuit Court

On Tuesday, March 30, [HB 557](#) by Representative Chip LaMarca (R-Lighthouse Point) was heard by the House Justice Appropriations Subcommittee and was reported favorable with 11 yeas and 3 nays. **AIF's Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs, Brewster Bevis, stood in support of this legislation.**

The bill requires clerks of court to establish uniform payment plans for court-related fees, service charges, costs, and fines for persons who apply for a payment plan. When a person seeks to be enrolled in a payment plan, the clerk must require the person to set up automatic withdrawals, if the person has such capability. If the person is unable to comply with the payment plan terms, a court may modify the plan or convert the outstanding amount to community service. The bill provides a 30-day grace period for certain payments prior to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles being notified to suspend a person's driver license. The bill also removes the clerk's authority to suspend a driver license based on a failure to pay fines or fees if the underlying offense is not driving-related. The bill allows a person whose driver license is suspended for nonpayment of such fines and fees to reinstate his or her license upon payment of a reinstatement fee.

HB 557 will now go to the House Judiciary Committee.

AIF supports legislation that clarifies regulations and helps protect jobs by preventing employees from losing their means to get to and from work.

SB 1876 – Relating to Relief from Burdens on Real Property Rights

On Tuesday, March 30, [SB 1876](#) by Senator Ben Albritton (R-Bartow) was heard by the Senate Community Affairs Committee and was reported favorable with 6 yeas and 3 nays. **AIF's Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs, Brewster Bevis, stood in support of this legislation and Amendment 296194.**

The bill amends the Bert J. Harris, Jr., Private Property Rights Protection Act and the Florida Land Use and Environmental Dispute Resolution Act. Both acts provide procedures and remedies to landowners whose property is inordinately burdened by a local government regulation.

SB 1876 will now go to the Senate Rules Committee.

AIF supports legislation that protects the rights of Florida property owners and the businesses unnecessarily burdened by government overreach.

TRANSPORTATION

SB 566 – Relating to Motor Vehicle Rentals

On Tuesday, March 30, [SB 566](#) by Senator Keith Perry (R-Gainesville) was heard by the Senate Transportation Committee and was reported favorable with 8 yeas and 0 nays. **AIF's Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs, Brewster Bevis, stood in support of this legislation.**

A person renting a car in Florida is levied a \$2 per day rental car surcharge. The 6% sales tax is also due on the transaction. Peer-to-peer car sharing programs are app-based platforms where owners list and rent out their personal vehicle. However, these businesses are not collecting the rental car surcharge or the 6% sales tax which is already due in Florida. The proceeds from the rental car surcharge paid by consumers who rent vehicles builds and maintains the state's infrastructure, which is very important to Florida businesses statewide.

The bill clarifies that rental transactions made on peer-to-peer car sharing platforms are subject to the surcharge and sales taxes. It also establishes operational and insurance requirements for peer-to-peer vehicle sharing programs to protect consumers.

SB 566 will now go to the Senate Appropriations Committee.

AIF supports the proposed measures in this bill to hold all rental car services accountable, regardless of how the vehicle is accessed.