

DAILY BRIEF

For the 2021 Legislative Session



FROM APRIL 27, 2021

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

HB 1239 & SB 1592 – Relating to Broadband Internet Infrastructure

On Tuesday, April 27, [HB 1239](#) by Representative Josie Tomkow (R-Auburndale) was substituted for [SB 1592](#) by Senator Danny Burgess (R-Zephyrhills) on the Senate floor, was amended, and passed with 40 yeas and 0 nays.

The amended bill provides a procedure for access by broadband providers for attachments to utility poles of municipal electric utilities. It directs the Florida Office of Broadband to create a strategic plan to increase broadband Internet services in the state. Additionally, the bill provides a grant program for providers who seek to expand broadband Internet services to unserved areas of the state. The amendment provides for a geographic information system map of broadband Internet service availability throughout the state.

HB 1239 will now go back to the House floor for consideration.

AIF supports increased access to broadband internet as quality connectivity has become imperative to business operations across the state, especially during a time when so many businesses are operating remotely.

EMPLOYERS

SB 912 – Relating to Tolling and Extension of Permits and Other Authorizations During States of Emergency

On Tuesday, April 27, [SB 912](#) by Senator Ben Albritton (R-Bartow) was read a third time on the House floor and passed with 116 yeas and 0 nays.

The bill adds certain permits and development agreements, including consumptive use permits and local government development agreements, to the current emergency tolling statute. The tolling statute allows for the tolling of the time of the state of emergency plus an additional six months. For example, if a state of emergency is declared for a hurricane that lasts for two months,

at the end of the state of emergency, a permit holding entity can exercise the tolling option and receive those two months back to the permitted time allotment and add on an additional six months. The bill is retroactive to include the entirety of the COVID-19 state of emergency.

SB 912 will now go back to the Senate floor for consideration.

AIF supports legislation that prevents Florida businesses from being penalized on permitted time due to a state of emergency that is out of their control. Economic recovery after an emergency is imperative and businesses drive recovery via employment and production, none of which is possible if an operating permit has expired.

INSURANCE

SB 76 - Relating to Property Insurance

On Tuesday, April 27, [SB 76](#) by Senator Jim Boyd (R-Bradenton) was read a second time on the House floor, was amended, and was rolled to third reading.

The bill makes various changes to address issues related to property insurance policies, claims, and litigation. The bill:

- Provides federal standard for award of contingency fee multipliers under property insurance policies;
- Adjusts the claim filing deadline to 2 years after the date of loss; applies to hurricanes and other perils; and
- Requires a pre-suit notice of intent to initiate litigation be served at least 10 days before filing suit and requires the notice to specify the reason for the suit, the demand, and the amount of reasonable attorney fees incurred by the claimant.

SB 76 will now be read a third time on the House floor and receive votes.

AIF supports legislative efforts that prevent unscrupulous actors from taking advantage of property insurance disputes which keeps insurance rates low and allows growth in Florida businesses.

TRANSPORTATION

SB 100 – Relating to Highway Projects

On Tuesday, April 27, [SB 100](#) by Senator Gayle Harrell (R-Stuart) was read a third time on the House floor and passed with 115 yeas and 0 nays.

The bill repeals the Multi-use Corridors of Regional Economic Significance (M-CORES) Program but retains the associated funding within the State Transportation Trust Fund. The bill draws on the recommendations of the M-CORES task forces and prioritizes strategic improvements to existing highway facilities. The bill builds on a primary focus of the M-CORES task forces to maximize the use of existing facilities to evaluate existing roadways or portions of existing roadways for development, upgrades, and improvements.

SB 100 will now go to the Governor.

AIF supports efforts to reassess and update Florida’s existing roadway infrastructure that businesses rely on to move products and resources which further drives economic development in the state.

SB 566 – Relating to Motor Vehicle Rentals

On Tuesday, April 27, [SB 566](#) by Senator Keith Perry (R-Gainesville) was read a second time on the House floor and was rolled to third reading.

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 a \$1 per day 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 be read a third time on the House floor and receive votes.

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