

DAILY BRIEF

For the 2022 Legislative Session



FROM FEBRUARY 16, 2022

BUSINESS REGULATION

HB 403 – Relating to Local Ordinances

On Wednesday, February 16, [HB 403](#) by Representative Mike Giallombardo (R-Cape Coral) was heard by the House Civil Justice and Property Rights Subcommittee and was reported favorable with 12 yeas and 6 nays. **AIF's Vice President of Governmental Affairs, Adam Basford, stood in support of this legislation.**

The bill

- Requires counties and municipalities to prepare a “business impact statement” before the adoption of any proposed ordinance, which statement must be published on the local government’s website and contain specified information;
- Provides for expedited court review of challenged ordinances; and
- Establishes criteria for courts to consider when determining if an ordinance is arbitrary or unreasonable.

HB 403 will now go to the House State Affairs Committee.

AIF supports legislation bolstering the rights of businesses to recoup undue losses at the hands of local governments to maintain a prosperous business climate in Florida.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

HB 1543 – Relating to Broadband Infrastructure

On Wednesday, February 16, [HB 1543](#) by Representative Josie Tomkow (R-Auburndale) was heard by the House Infrastructure and Tourism Appropriations Subcommittee and was reported favorable with 14 yeas and 0 nays. **AIF's Vice President of Governmental Affairs, Adam Basford, stood in support of this legislation.**

The bill creates the Broadband Pole Replacement Program, to be administered by the Office. The program will reimburse fixed, wireline broadband service providers for their costs incurred for the removal and replacement of existing utility poles in areas of Florida that are unserved by broadband Internet service. Reimbursements under the program are limited to 50 percent of the broadband Internet service provider's eligible pole replacement cost or \$5,000, whichever is less, in addition to their administrative costs related to the preparation and submission of the application for reimbursement.

HB 1543 will now go to the House Commerce Committee.

AIF supports efforts to increase economic development in Florida's rural areas by expanding access to broadband internet which allows residents to connect with employers and educators which in turn strengthens the workforce and access to high wage jobs.

HB 1545 – Relating to Trust Funds/Broadband Pole Replacement Trust Fund/DEO

On Wednesday, February 16, [HB 1545](#) by Representative Josie Tomkow (R-Auburndale) was heard by the House Infrastructure and Tourism Appropriations Subcommittee and was reported favorable with 14 yeas and 0 nays. **AIF's Vice President of Governmental Affairs, Adam Basford, stood in support of this legislation.**

The bill creates the Broadband Pole Replacement Trust Fund within the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) and provides that the trust fund is established as a depository for funds appropriated by the Legislature, federal funds received from the Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund, funds transferred by DEO, interest earnings, grants, gifts, and other contributions made directly to the fund. The bill is linked to HB 1543 which creates the Broadband Pole Replacement Program within the Department's Office of Broadband.

HB 1545 will now go to the House Commerce Committee.

AIF supports efforts to increase economic development in Florida's rural areas by expanding access to broadband internet which allows residents to connect with employers and educators which in turn strengthens the workforce and access to high wage jobs.

INSURANCE

HB 1529 – Relating to Applicability of Payments for Nonpreferred Provider Services

On Wednesday, February 16, [HB 1529](#) by Representative John Snyder (R-Stuart) was heard by the House Finance and Facilities Subcommittee and was reported favorable with 17 yeas and 1 nay.

AIF's Vice President of Governmental Affairs, Adam Basford, spoke in opposition to this legislation.

Most health plans have a list of doctors, hospitals, and other providers that have agreed to participate in the plan's network. In-network providers have a contract with a plan that limits the amount of money a provider may charge insureds. The bill requires an individual health insurer to apply an insured's payments to an out-of-network, nonpreferred provider to the deductible and out-of-pocket maximum obligations under a health insurance policy.

Of great concern to AIF is the lack of oversight or vetting that can occur with out-of-network providers. Doctors are vetted for quality to be included in a health insurer's network and with quality providers comes a lower cost of high-quality care. While some doctors may have low costs, they may also provide low quality care.

HB 1529 will now go to the House Health Care Appropriations Subcommittee.

AIF opposes legislation that leads to higher costs to individuals and in turn an increase in health care costs and insurance rates to the businesses that offer health coverage to their employees.

SB 1728 – Relating to Property Insurance

On Wednesday, February 16, [SB 1728](#) by Senator Jim Boyd (R-Bradenton) was heard by the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Environment and General Government and was reported favorable with 10 yeas and 0 nays. **AIF's Vice President of Governmental Affairs, Adam Basford, stood in support of this legislation.**

The bill addresses contractor solicitations related to property insurance roof claims, the type of homeowners' insurance coverage that insurers must offer for roof losses, and various aspects of Citizens Property Insurance Corporation. The bill allows contractors to make written or electronic communications to potential consumers to contact a contractor or public adjuster for the purpose of making an insurance claim for roof damage only if the following disclosures are included:

- The consumer is responsible for payment of any insurance deductible;

- It is insurance fraud punishable as a felony of the third degree for a contractor to pay, waive, or rebate all or part of an insurance deductible applicable to payment to the contractor for repairs to property covered by a property insurance policy; and
- It is insurance fraud punishable as a felony of the third degree to intentionally file an insurance claim containing any false, incomplete, or misleading information.

SB 1728 will now go to the Senate Appropriations Committee.

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