

2019 WRAP-UP

Regular Session of the Florida Legislature

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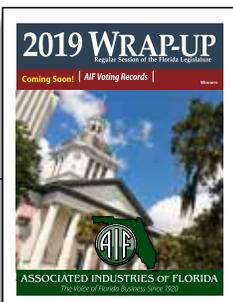
2019 Legislative Session Wrap-Up



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The annual legislative session has ended after eight weeks of hearings and debates on thousands of bills and hundreds of issues. Like any session after an election year, there were many new faces in the Capitol. This year, there were more than 40 new Legislators in the House and Senate, as well as new leadership in the form of a new Senate President, Senator Bill Galvano (R-Bradenton), and a new House Speaker, Representative Jose Oliva (R-Miami).

With 160 Legislators, over 50 committees, 3,500 bills filed, close to 4,000 registered lobbyists and countless special interest groups all crammed in to 8 weeks of work, it makes for a whirlwind of activity.

At Associated Industries of Florida (AIF) our goal is simple—to support the efforts of the men and women who are the employers in our great state, so that they can continue to build their business, employ people and remain a strong cog in Florida’s economic engine. In order to do that, we are on the front lines in the legislative process; examining every bill, every amendment, and every debate to support those issues that help and support employers and to strongly oppose those pieces of legislation that will cause harm and weaken our business community.

Look Carefully and Connect the Dots

At first glance, it may seem easy to determine which bills will affect you and your business. In many cases, however, while the initial aspects of a bill may not be directly tied to your industry or the product you provide, it often has a root cause and effect that ripples across all companies and industries.

For example, you may not be concerned about a bill dealing with regulatory or legal issues pointed at a specific industry. Yet when you get to the core of the issue, it often has a ripple effect that eventually harms all businesses. When the door is opened on one segment of our business community to be unfairly sued or overly regulated, it is generally just a matter of time before all companies are targeted. In the end, it ends up raising the cost of doing business in Florida and making it a less business friendly state.

What Happens Next?

While reading the summaries provided, you will see many bills have been passed by the House and Senate that have now been sent to the Governor. Governor DeSantis has the option of approving or vetoing the bill. If approved, it becomes a new law; and if vetoed, it will go back to the Legislature for their response. AIF will continue to communicate our support on behalf of our members until the bills are approved.

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The Issues

Below you will find a summary of the top issues for the business community during the 2019 Legislative Session. These do not represent all the bills and issues we followed. (Please visit our webpage at AIF.com for more information and reports on various other issues.) Some of the issues discussed here have passed the House and Senate and are awaiting the Governor's action to possibly become new law; while others failed to get passage, they represent important issues for which the business community should continue to stay engaged.

Seeking Judicial Fairness for Employers in the Tort System

Lessor Tort Liability Under Special Mobile Equipment Leases

Florida's Dangerous Instrumentality Doctrine (DID) was created in the early 20th Century—a time where automobiles began traveling on public roads. Its purpose was to allow for the liability of a driver in the event of an accident. However, the doctrine has been expanded far beyond the borders of its original intent and now applies to off-highway vehicles such as tractors and construction equipment.

As an example: "Company A" leases a tractor to an individual who, while in the use of the equipment, causes damage to another person or property. The current law would allow "Company A" to be sued for the damages even though they were not in control of the equipment at the time of the accident. Florida is the only state in the country where this doctrine is applied in this manner.

SB 862, by Sen. Kelli Stargel (R), & HB 355 by Rep. Tom Leek (R) provides that lessors of special mobile equipment are not liable for the acts of the lessee if the lease agreement requires the following:

- Documented proof of insurance coverage containing limits of at least \$250,000 per person and up to \$500,000 per incident for bodily injury liability, and
- Up to \$100,000 for property damage liability, or at least \$750,000 for combined property damage liability and bodily injury liability.

AIF supported legislation and has a long history of fighting unfair tort liability brought against Florida's businesses. These types of unbalanced tort laws are a major impediment to the growth of our business community which, in turn, affects our state's economy and employment growth. SB 862 was passed by the House and Senate and is awaiting action by the Governor.



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Tort Damages

Currently, Florida has the highest tort system costs among the states as a percentage of state GDP, at 3.6%. In 2016, the total amount paid in costs and compensation within Florida's tort system averaged \$4,442 for each Florida household.

A flawed tort system generates exorbitant damages and unpredictability, causing adverse actions such as increased economic costs and risks of doing business, higher insurance premiums and deterrence of economic development, as well as job creation activities.

HB 17, by Rep. Tom Leek (R), was an excellent bill that would prevent juries from awarding plaintiffs more than \$1 million for "pain and suffering" in lawsuits, a move that could affect anyone killed or injured by a company or product.

The bill passed two major House committees but did not make it through the House chamber before the end of session. **AIF will continue to support** such legislation as these revisions to our tort system are badly needed. These types of reforms have the potential to greatly reduce the cost of doing business in Florida.

Businesses and Local Governments

Minimum Wage and Preemption of Conditions of Employment

Two bills, HB 847 by Rep. Bob Rommel (R) & SB 432 by Sen. Joe Gruters (R), sought to clarify conditions of employment for Florida's employers. Employment issues are easily one of the most important issues for the business community. Among the most critical of these issues deals with minimum wage, which is being heavily debated at the federal, state and local levels.

These bills would prohibit a county, city, district, or other public body created by state law from requiring an employer to pay a minimum wage other than the state or federal minimum wage. They also would preempt to the state the right to regulate any requirements imposed upon employers relating to a minimum wage and conditions of employment.

While both bills did not make it through the Legislature, **AIF will continue to support** such efforts that will allow Florida businesses to adhere to state or federal wage requirements, thus eliminating onerous regulations set by municipalities.

Attorney Fees and Costs When Suing Local Government

Often one of the biggest hurdles that a business owner must face is local government ordinances that are overburdensome and, in some cases, unfair.

Currently, local governments have broad authority to legislate on any matter not consistent with federal or state law. However, if the Legislature preempts an area of regulation to the state, local governments are prohibited from exercising authority in that area. If a local government enacts an ordinance on a matter preempted to the state, a person or business may file a lawsuit asking the court to declare the ordinance void.

HB 829, by Rep. Anthony Sabatini (R), and SB 1140, by Sen. Travis Hutson (R), entitles the person or business who are suing to claim attorney fees and costs if they prevail in the court case against the local government.

However, attorney fees and costs may not be awarded if the local government:

- Receives written notice that an ordinance or proposed ordinance is expressly preempted; and
- Within 21 days of receiving the notice, repeals or withdraws the ordinance.

This bill passed the House and Senate and is awaiting action from the Governor. **AIF supported** this bill because

businesses that are forced to sue a local government because of an issue already in the state's purview should not be liable for the costs associated with that suit.

Preemption of Local Business Regulations

Both big and small businesses must abide by the rules and regulations set in place by their local governments, regardless if that rule or regulation differs from city to city, or county to county. This circumstance often causes those who conduct business in multiple cities or counties to abide by a myriad of rules that are inconsistent and must be complied with in order to continue their business.

HB 3, by Rep. Michael Grant (R), sought to preempt authority to the state and away from local governments when it comes to business regulations. While the bill did not make it through the Legislature, **AIF continues to support** preempting business regulation to the state as it will allow for a streamlined system that businesses (old and new, small and large) can easily follow throughout the state of Florida.

Finding Ways to Curb Health Care Costs

Health Insurance Savings Program

Affordable health care, in whatever form, is of paramount importance to both employers and employees alike. AIF works with legislators each session to promote ideas that will help keep costs under control.

HB 1113, by Rep. Paul Renner (R), and SB 524, by Sen. Manny Diaz (R), creates the Patient Savings Act, which allows health insurers to voluntarily create a shared savings incentive program to encourage insured individuals to shop for high quality, lower cost health care services. The bill directs those health insurers that choose to offer the program to collectively develop a website outlining the range of shoppable health care services available to insureds.

This shared website must provide insureds with an inventory of participating health care providers and an accounting of the combined savings incentives available for each shoppable service. When an insured obtains a health care service for less than the average price for the service, HB 1113 requires the savings to be shared between health insurer and the insured.

AIF supported this legislation because it incentivized health plans to provide lower cost plans since they will share in the savings with the insured. This will allow for high quality health care to be accessible to Floridians and employers at a lower cost. HB 1113 was passed by both the House and Senate and is now awaiting action from the Governor.



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Consumer Protections from Non-Medical Prescription Drug Formularies

A major driver of health care costs continues to be the rising cost of medicines. Drug companies raise the prices of both new and old medicines at will. No government body has rules or laws that dictate or restrict the price a pharmaceutical company can set for a drug; and in most cases, there's nothing that restricts how much a drug company can raise that price later on.

Currently, if an insurance company does not like the pricing of a drug, they can decide to drop it from their coverage. However, HB 1363, by Rep. Ralph Massullo (R), sought to eliminate the insurance companies' ability to drop the drug from their coverage. **AIF opposed** this bill because the threat of losing insurance coverage helps push back on arbitrary price hikes by the drug companies.

Through AIF's effort, the bill was amended on the House floor with good language that would level the playing field by requiring that a pharmaceutical company must lock in their prices up front—like any other industry—and in return, the insurance company can't drop the drug (except for safety reasons).

Despite the final version of the bill taking a big step to control the cost of drugs, it was unable to pass the Legislature in the final days.

AIF will continue to support legislation that maintains cost controls and prevents increased health care costs for Florida businesses.

Telehealth Services

With AIF's support, the 2016 Florida Legislature created a new health care delivery method called telehealth. Telehealth is defined as the remote delivery of telecommunications technology (simultaneous video and audio services via a computer, skype, etc.) by a telehealth provider to provide specific health care services.

HB 23, by Rep. Clay Yarborough (R), and SB 1526, by Sen. Gayle Harrell (R), authorizes Florida licensed health care professionals to use telehealth to deliver health care services within their scope of practice. The bill also authorizes out-of-state health care professionals to use telehealth to deliver health care services to Florida patients if they register with the Department of Health or the applicable board, meet certain eligibility requirements, and pay a fee. While an out-of-state registered provider may use telehealth to provide health care services to Florida patients, they are prohibited from opening an office or providing in-person services in Florida.

AIF supported this bill as it allows all Floridians the

opportunity to access health care services at lower costs. HB 23 passed the House and Senate and is now awaiting action from the Governor.

Medical Malpractice by the House Civil Justice Subcommittee

The term "medical malpractice" is commonly understood; however, many employers may not understand that an area of tort law can drive up the cost of health care in Florida. Anything that attributes to an increase in the cost of health care makes it more difficult for businesses to provide coverage for their employees.

Flaws in the medical malpractice system are expensive, costing the United States \$55.6 billion annually. A 2017 study reported that Florida's loss rate is the highest among all 50 states and more than double the national average. HB 7077, by the House Civil Justice Subcommittee, sought to revise medical malpractice laws by doing the following:

- Establish a cap on noneconomic damages,
- Require accuracy in medical damages admissible before a jury in a medical malpractice claim,
- Allow pre-suit communication with treating physicians, and
- Create an optional communication and resolution program.

Though the bill did not make it through the Legislature, **AIF will continue to support** legislation that creates transparency and ensures accuracy in damages throughout the medical malpractice system, thereby reducing the cost of health care and increasing access to care for all Floridians.

Prescriptions for Drugs; From Paper to Electronic Prescribing

In the fight to control spiraling health care costs, efforts made to reduce fraud and abuse can provide stability to the system and lower costs in the process.

One such example is electronic prescribing (e-prescribing). This is a method by which an authorized health care practitioner electronically transmits a prescription to a pharmacy using a secure software system. Efforts have been made at the state and federal level to increase the use of e-prescribing software. HB 831, by Rep. Amber Mariano (R), and SB 1192, by Sen. Aaron Bean (R), requires prescribers to generate and transmit all prescriptions electronically unless in the instance of certain circumstances beginning January 2, 2020.

AIF supports this legislation because it provides for improved prescription accuracy, increased patient safety, reduced opportunities for fraud and abuse, and reduced

overall costs. Improving and streamlining the overall process will further enable Florida employers to provide health care coverage for our citizens.

HB 831 was passed by the House and Senate and is now awaiting action by the Governor.

Finding Tax Relief for Employers

New Tax Reductions

A top priority for AIF is to work with our members and the Legislature to identify ways to reduce taxes, thereby fostering the growth of Florida businesses.

AIF was pleased to support two bills from the House Ways & Means Committee that take positive steps in this direction.

HB 7123 provides for several tax reductions and other tax-related modifications designed to directly impact both families and businesses. Specifically, this bill provides for:

- A reduction in the tax rate for commercial property rentals from 5.7% to 5.5%,
- A three-day “back-to-school” holiday for certain clothing, school supplies, and personal computers, and
- A seven-day “disaster preparedness” holiday for specified disaster preparedness items.

Meanwhile, HB 7127 is a great piece of legislation that seeks to reduce the corporate income tax.

The bill decouples from global intangible low-taxed income (GILTI) and extends the refund and rate cut mechanisms for two years, attempting to minimize the impact of the corporate income tax base increases brought on by federal changes.

Both HB 7123 and HB 7127 were approved by the full House and Senate and is now awaiting action by the Governor. **AIF will continue to support** all legislative actions that reduce taxes on businesses which further allows for growth and employment opportunities for Floridians.

Lower Communication Services Taxes Results in Expanded Services

Currently, local municipalities and counties can prohibit the use of right of way by communication providers. This stifles the ability of these providers from expanding their service to those communities, including businesses. This would include services such as 5G wireless networks or expanded cable services.

SB 1000, by Sen. Travis Hutson (R), and HB 693, by Rep. Jason Fischer (R), will reduce the state’s communications services tax and restrict the ability of local governments to

collect fees from the communication providers that need to use the public roads or right of way.

According to Florida TaxWatch, the proposed decrease in the communications services tax rate from 4.92 % to 3.92 % and a reduction in direct to home satellite services tax from 9.07 % to 8.07 % would save consumers and businesses \$128 million annually.

AIF supports legislation that will include both tax decreases and reduce the communications services permitting process which will have a positive financial impact on Florida’s consumers, many of whom are businesses that pay for cable or satellite service. The bill was approved by the House and Senate and is awaiting action by the Governor.

Controlling Insurance Rates

Insurance Assignment Agreements

One of the hot issues this legislative session was “assignment of benefits,” commonly referred to as “AOB.” With assignment of benefits, property owners in need of repairs sign over their benefits (payments from their insurance company) to contractors, who then pursue payments from insurance companies.

Fraud and litigation are now running rampant with this practice. In fact, this problem has created a relatively new



A graphic for the Florida U.S. Capitol Summit. It features a white outline of the state of Florida on a blue background. The text "FLORIDA U.S. CAPITOL SUMMIT" is written in white on a red banner across the middle of the state outline. Below that, "SEP 23 - 24" is written in white on a blue banner. In the background, there is a photograph of the U.S. Capitol building. At the bottom left, there is a circular logo with the letters "AIF" in a stylized font. To the right of the logo, the text "BRINGING FLORIDA BUSINESS LEADERS AND CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS TOGETHER" is written in white on a blue background.

form of litigation over things such as auto glass repairs and property damage. These legal abuses are perpetrated by a handful of lawyers and vendors who work together to strip benefits away from policyholders and then force higher settlements from insurers. There have been many instances where the insurance company was sued in the name of the policyholder without the policyholder's consent.

HB 7065, by Rep. Bob Rommel (R), and SB 122, by Sen. Doug Broxson (R), contains language that will take steps in preventing future abuse of AOBs by:

- Limiting an assignee's ability to recover certain costs from the insured,
- Requiring the assignee to give the insurer notice of the assignee's intent to file a lawsuit,
- Requiring the insurer to respond to the assignee's notice, and
- Setting the formula that will determine which party, if any, receives an award of attorney fees should litigation related to an assignment agreement result in a judgment.

This bill was a top priority for AIF. Supporting reforms that will limit fraud and abusive litigation is a cornerstone of our efforts on behalf of Florida's employers.

HB 7065 passed both the House and Senate and is now awaiting action by the Governor.

Once it passed the Legislature, Governor DeSantis released a statement that in part said, *"The exponential growth in AOB abuse has contributed to mounting insurance costs for Floridians for far too long. In recent years, there have been calls for reform and today, the Legislature took action. I thank them for their efforts in getting this done and I look forward to signing this meaningful legislation into law."*

Workers Compensation

There are very few issues, if any, that affect the direct bottom line for every employer like workers' compensation. AIF has a long and proud history of being at the forefront of the workers' compensation issue due to its importance to all businesses.

The workers' compensation system should be self-executing and should "assure the quick and efficient delivery of disability and medical benefits to an injured worker and to facilitate the workers return to gainful reemployment at a reasonable cost to the employer."

SB 1636, by Sen. Keith Perry (R), and HB 1399, by Rep. Cord Byrd (R), sought to make changes to the workers' compensation law and address the delivery of benefits and system cost drivers, but unfortunately HB 1399 did not adequately address the real cost driver—litigation.

Though SB 1636 did not make it through the Legislature,

AIF will continue to promote workers' comp reform that attacks the real cost drivers, such as litigation, and hope that future legislation will be similarly strengthened to provide marketplace certainty in response to the Florida Supreme Court *Castellanos* case.

Sweeping Insurance Package

Not only is insurance an important part of running a business, but it is also generally a major cost driver. There are many types of insurance that are all wrapped up in various areas of regulations and oversight. AIF has long been a champion on insurance issues because we recognize that even the slightest tweak in state law one way or the other can have serious ramifications to an employer.

This session, a sweeping insurance package containing a multitude of insurance issues was brought forward.

HB 301, by Rep. David Santiago (R), was dubbed an omnibus bill because it included several insurance-related provisions, including:

- Increases reimbursements from the Florida Hurricane Catastrophe Fund for loss adjustment expenses from 5% to 10 % of reimbursed losses beginning with contracts issued after June 1, 2019,
- Provides that workers' compensation insurance applicants and their agents are not required to have their sworn statements notarized,
- Prohibits an insured from filing a civil remedy notice within 60 days after an appraisal is invoked,
- Expands the allowance of multiple policy discounts in certain circumstances, and
- Reduces the minimum amount of premium that must be collected for motor vehicle insurance at the initial issuance of a policy.

AIF supported this bill because, along with modernizing Florida's insurance laws, it also promotes increased options for consumers and a prosperous Florida economy.

HB 301 was passed by both the House and Senate and is awaiting action by the Governor.

A Better Workforce Equals Stronger Companies

Workforce Development

Florida's growing labor market will need to fill an additional 1.7 million vacancies by 2030. In order to meet this demand, Florida's PreK-20 education system must have the capacity to produce graduates who are ready to fill high-growth, high-demand careers.

To help meet the growing workforce demand, HB 7055, by the PreK-12 Innovation Subcommittee, would have:

- Revised the school grades formula to recognize career certificate clock hour dual enrollment and established formal career dual enrollment agreements between high schools and career centers,
- Required the Department of Education to aid in increasing public awareness of apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeship opportunities, and
- Required the elimination of industry certifications that are not aligned to industry needs.

Though the bill did not make it through the Legislature, **AIF supports** adopting the PreK-to-Job model of the future to improve the organic talent pipeline and create a strategy that addresses these gaps, including training the talent required for the future in our PreK-to-Job system today.

High School Graduation Requirements

One of the most critical challenges facing employers is getting a sufficient level of qualified workforce from our high schools. One of the ways to achieve this is to ensure that the subjects that are being taught can help students graduate with the necessary skillsets our businesses need.

HB 7071 by the House Education and Career Readiness Subcommittee provides that the number of social studies credits needed to earn a standard high school diploma to be three credits and in the 2019-2020 school year, all districts must include financial literacy as at least a one-half credit elective course.

This bill was passed by both the House and Senate and is awaiting action by the Governor. **AIF supported** this legislation because it gives students the tools to learn about relevant, real-life subjects that will prepare them for the workforce in the future.

Sustained Growth Is Needed for Florida

Regulations for Property Development

Florida continues to be a growing state and property development is a big part of that. The rules and regulations that govern this area need to be constantly monitored and tweaked to ensure that sustainable and appropriate growth isn't stifled due to a faulty regulatory process.

AIF supported HB 7103, by the House Commerce Committee, because it took specific steps to keep the regulatory process for both the Community Planning Act and the Florida Building Code in check.

This bill modified property development regulations by

doing the following:

- Restricting counties and municipalities from adopting or imposing certain mandatory affordable housing ordinances,
- Reducing the time period building departments must review a permit application when a private provider approves the plans,
- Prohibiting a local jurisdiction from charging fees if a private provider is hired, and
- Amending how a local government may impose impact fees.

This good bill was passed by the House and Senate and is now awaiting action by the Governor.

Improving Florida's Roadways Through Better Transportation Laws

Department of Transportation Process and New Programs

Businesses working within the process of state agencies can often stifle progress and growth. Therefore, efforts to keep the process from becoming overburdensome for employers is important.

HB 905, by Rep. Alex Andrade (R), will streamline certain Florida Department of Transportation (DOT) regulations such as prohibiting local governments from adopting standards for the permissible use of aggregates that are contrary to DOT's standards and requires any contractor desiring to bid on DOT contracts in excess of \$50 million to have satisfactorily completed two projects in excess of \$15 million prior to being eligible to bid.

AIF supported this bill because, by streamlining DOT regulations, it can provide quality infrastructure for the businesses operating on our roads. HB 905 passed by the House and Senate and is awaiting action by the Governor.

SB 7068, by the Senate Infrastructure and Security Committee, creates the Multi-Use Corridors of Regional Economic Significance Program within the DOT. The program is designed to advance construction of regional corridors that will accommodate multiple modes of transportation and multiple types of infrastructure. The specific purpose of the program is to revitalize rural communities, encourage job creation in those communities, provide regional connectivity while leveraging technology, enhance quality of life and public safety, and protect the environment and natural resources.

AIF supports SB 7068 because it will revitalize rural communities and allow Florida businesses to create jobs and enhance the quality of life in the state. SB 7068 was passed



by both the House and Senate and was signed into law by the Governor.

Texting While Driving

Smartphones are now an integral part of everyone's daily life, and texting on these devices is common to almost everyone. Yet this has caused problems on our roads as more and more drivers are texting while driving.

The current Florida Ban on Texting While Driving Law prohibits a person from texting, emailing, and instant messaging while driving, but is considered a secondary offense, meaning law enforcement cannot stop a driver solely for any of these offenses.

HB 107, by Rep. Emily Slosberg (D)/Rep. Jackie Toledo (R), and, SB 76 by Sen. Wilton Simpson (R), expands current law and makes the use of a wireless communication device while driving a primary offense, allowing law enforcement to stop individuals for wireless device usage while behind the wheel.

Along with the overall increased safety for all citizens, **AIF also supports** this legislation because it increases safety for the many businesses who use our state roadways to transport goods around our state.

HB 107 was passed by both the House and Senate and signed into law by the Governor.

Protecting the Constitution

Amending the State Constitution

AIF supported several bills this session that sought to change the process of amending or revising our state Constitution. Adding a revision or clause to Florida's Constitution has serious consequences because it: (1) takes the matter out of the hands of our elected representatives; and (2) increases the burden on an already obese constitution.

Florida's Constitution should empower the representative government to achieve its purpose—"to ensure domestic tranquility, maintain public order, and guarantee civil and political rights to all." Taking this freedom and flexibility away should only be done with utmost care.

HB 57, by Rep. Rick Roth (R), and SB 232 by Sen. Dennis Baxley (R), sought to increase the threshold needed for approval of an amendment to the constitution from the current level of 60% of electoral votes to 66 2/3%.

HB 5, by Rep. Nick DiCeglie (R), changes the process for amending the Constitution by citizen initiative by formalizing the process of gathering petition signatures and putting mandates in place such as requiring a study from the Financial Impact Estimating Conference to assess the amendment's effect on the state and local economy.

While HB 57 and SB 232 did not pass, AIF will continue to work with the legislators to increase the threshold by which the Constitution can be amended and the process by which our state Constitution is revised.

Meanwhile HB 5 did get approval by the House and Senate and is awaiting action by the Governor.

Fighting Unfair Business Practices

Renting or Leasing Vehicles

Currently, rental car companies and car sharing services collect the required rental car surcharge and sales tax from persons renting the vehicle. These taxes assist to build and maintain the state's infrastructure, which is very important to Florida businesses statewide.

App-based car rental services called "peer to peer car sharing companies," are growing throughout the country and AIF supports newer ways that Floridians can access transportation. However, the peer to peer companies are not currently required to remit either of these taxes to the state.

HB 1111 by Rep. Chris Latvala (R) and SB 1148 by Sen. Keith Perry (R) sought to require the new app-based entities renting vehicles in the state of Florida to start collecting both the surcharge and sales tax that other businesses collect.

AIF strongly supports the effort to hold all rental car services accountable, regardless of how the vehicle is accessed. Not only is it an issue of fairness, but it is an important part of the funding of our state's infrastructure.

Though the bills did not make it through the Legislature, AIF will continue to work to correct this unfair business practice.

Preparing for Natural Disasters

Enhancing Florida's Utility Grid

Some of the greatest challenges that our citizens and businesses face each year are the massive storms that hit our state. Keeping businesses open and operating during these times is of the utmost importance.

Working with our members from the utility industry, AIF supported SB 796, by Sen. Joe Gruters (R), because it takes a very important step in making our state more prepared going forward.

This bill aims to strengthen Florida's utilities grid against tropical storm and hurricane damage by moving electric infrastructure underground. It also requires public utility companies (Florida Power & 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 Service Commission, with updates required at least every three years.

AIF supports actively seeking ways to harden our state's infrastructure and more effectively prepare for storms to ensure that power is quickly restored. Both the House and Senate agreed with AIF's position on this important issue and passed the bill. It is currently awaiting action by the Governor.

Recycling Efforts

AIF has long supported efforts to achieve the statewide 75% recycling goal to help keep Florida clean, create jobs, and maintain our strong tourism industry.

AIF was proud to support HB 771, by Rep. Toby Overdorf (R), and SB 816 by Sen. Keith Perry (R), which aids in this effort. It requires local governments to work with residential recycling collectors and material recovery facilities to reduce contamination of curbside recycling. As Florida continues to move toward the statewide 75% recycling goal, this legislation is specifically designed to improve the capture rate of clean recyclable material.

The bill was passed by the House and Senate and now awaits action by the Governor. ■

Online Voting Records — *a one-of-a-kind tool*



This unique software created by AIF provides you with a multitude of options when viewing voting records online. You can choose to see votes by year, legislator's name, subject and party affiliation.

Have one particular legislator in mind? You can view their voting record by year or by subject matter, and then go even further and see the exact votes that led to the percentage they received. Full transparency ... from a legislator's vote percentage to the very bills and votes that were used that session.

How robust is this program? It includes over 200,000 votes, more than 2,000 bills, and over 800 legislators over the span of 40 plus years — a one-of-a-kind tool available at **AIF.com/VotingRecords**.



ASSOCIATED INDUSTRIES OF FLORIDA

The Voice of Florida Business Since 1920

Councils bring together unique sectors of the business community in order to develop and promote issues vital to those respective industries. These Councils are the backbone of policy making at AIF as the member companies of each Council voice their issues, concerns and ideas and help develop the policies that are presented to our Board of Directors for approval.

Want to Participate?

Membership is required to participate on AIF's Councils and to receive our member communications.

Not a Member?

To learn more about AIF membership services and/or apply for membership,

Please Contact:

Brewster Bevis,
Senior Vice President –
State and Federal Affairs at
850.224.7173 or bbevis@aif.com

POLICY COUNCILS



Environmental Sustainability & Agriculture Council (ESAC)

Addressing recycling, water quality, product stewardship, and other environmental issues important to the business community.



Florida Energy Council (FEC)

Developing resources to meet Florida's future energy needs—producers, suppliers, storage facilities, marketers, retailers, wholesalers and users.



Financial Services Council (FSC)

Insurance and financial industries, working in concert with other interested parties, to secure a stable fiscal climate for Florida.



Florida Transportation & Maritime Council (FTMC)

Ensuring their continued economic prowess in a global marketplace for businesses that operate or support operations at any of Florida's 14 deep water ports.



Information Technology Council (ITC)

Promoting Florida's move to the cutting edge of technology—to meet the demands of a diverse, fast-growing population, while balancing the needs of the state and private sector.



Manufacturing, Aerospace & Defense Council (MAD)

Advancing the interests of Florida's manufacturing community to help Florida diversify its economy and provide more high-wage and high value-added jobs in the state.

What's in a Name? Everything.



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Led by former Speaker of the Florida House and Congressman Tom Feeney, along with the most talented lobby team in Florida, AIF can help your company achieve a greater level of success in the State Capitol.

Tools of AIF:

- State & Federal Legislative Advocacy
- Legislative Session Issue Briefing
- Issue Advocacy Campaigns; State-wide & Local
- Industry Centric Council Advocacy
- Issue & Campaign Related Polling; Statewide & Local
- Political Candidate Interviews
- Issue-Oriented Focus Groups
- Business Centric Publications
- Issue-Based Statewide Conferences

ASSOCIATED INDUSTRIES OF FLORIDA

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Your company's bottom line can be decimated by lawmakers who lack a pro-business philosophy.



Coordinating
Business for
Florida's Political
Future.

Staying in the know on Florida politics is no longer an every other year effort. New data, shifting demographics, and Special Elections all require Florida businesses to be educated on the very latest information all year, every year. Through the efforts of the AIF Political Council (AIFPC)—members are more informed and better prepared for Florida elections.

Is your company ready?

AIFPC provides members with comprehensive data and broad access on election analyses, candidates, and the overall political environment in Florida. It does not engage in endorsements, electioneering communication, polling or focus groups.

For more information about AIF's political operations and to experience the benefits of being a Political Council member, please contact Drew Preston, Vice President – Corporate Relations, at 850.224.7173 or email him at dpreston@aif.com.



ASSOCIATED INDUSTRIES OF FLORIDA POLITICAL COUNCIL