



# ASSOCIATED INDUSTRIES OF FLORIDA

*The Voice of Florida Business Since 1920*



## 2009 SESSION PRIORITIES



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## COUNCILS



The Councils of Associated Industries bring together unique sectors of the business community in order to develop and promote issues vital to those respective industries. The following pages represent the 2009 Legislative Agendas for each of the eight councils within AIF.

## Florida Energy

**A**IF has and will continue to support conservation, efficiency, all fossil fuels, all alternative fuels, and nuclear energy because Florida needs diverse energy sources. Likewise, we support conceptually the idea of moving to a greener economy, but not unilaterally. For the past three years, AIF and its Florida Energy Council (FEC) have provided a voice for Florida's business community as it relates to energy policy. With the passage of last year's landmark energy bill, policymakers in Tallahassee are poised to make some very important and long lasting decisions relating to Florida's energy and climate change policies. A number of administrative rules are currently being considered by their respective state agencies or will be taken up by the Legislature for ratification. These rules are the byproduct of a series of Executive Orders signed by Governor Charlie Crist in 2007 and include such policy proposals as the adoption of California Lower Emission Vehicle (CA-LEV) standards, a renewable portfolio standard, and a "cap-and-trade" program for Florida.

Last year's omnibus energy bill also included the creation of the new Florida Energy and Climate Change Commission (FECC). This new entity has been charged with setting energy policy for the state and to provide consultation to the Public Service Commission and other policy-making bodies in a number of energy related areas such as energy grants, the new renewable portfolio standards, and conservation and efficiency goals. The business community needs to pay very close attention to the decisions of this newly created commission as it will undoubtedly play a large role in determining Florida's future energy policies, and the impact on energy costs and on Florida's economy.



House Energy & Utilities Policy Committee Chair Rep. Paige Kreegel (R-Punta Gorda) attends a FEC meeting in Tallahassee.

## Council Priorities

**T**he FEC will concentrate their efforts in 2009 **on the passage of a Memorial to Congress encouraging increased exploration and production of oil and natural gas in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico.** Not only will increased exploration and production assist in decreasing our country's dependence on foreign oil, it represents a future source of revenue for Florida in the form of royalty payments during a time when dollars for the state coffers are scarce. Florida's employers depend on access to affordable and reliable energy to run their businesses. They are also affected by higher energy costs, which increase their prices while reducing customers' purchasing power. **Thus the Council will pay close attention to the various climate change rules being considered, which have the potential to drive up the cost of energy and durable goods and decrease the profitability and viability of Florida's businesses.** The goals established in these rules (although worthy) could cause an economic disadvantage for goods and services produced in Florida with the effects being an undesirable economic climate for the creation of jobs and slowing business activity in an already challenging economic period.

## Council Position

The FEC recognizes the importance energy plays in keeping Florida's economy healthy and vibrant. Any recommendations, rules, or legislation should allow for reasonable implementation, should support efficiencies and should ensure that undue mandates and costs are not placed on Florida's businesses and consumers, thereby creating a unilateral economic disparity. Florida should insure that every effort is made to undertake a balanced approach that avoids unrealistic requirements on energy producers and suppliers, while planning for the state's future energy needs. It is imperative that Florida not be alone in this arena, but that it needs to be a collective effort by other Southeastern states. Otherwise, we could become the east coast version of California.

*Florida Energy Council Lobbyist: Jim Rathbun*