



# 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 Hospital

**B**ecause a strong health care system is important to attracting and keeping businesses in Florida, AIF formed the Florida Hospital Council (FHC) in 2007. The group is made up of representatives from hospitals across the state and continues to be chaired by Robert Broadway, Vice President of



*Florida Hospital Council  
Lobbyist: **Bob Asztalos***

Bethesda Healthcare System. With AIF as the backbone of the Council, this group feels the Florida Legislature and Executive Branch will hear its collective voice. Its purpose is to bring attention to those concerns and the special issues hospitals face as major providers of health care in the state. As stated earlier in this document, health care is not a commodity or a retail business; but to survive, hospitals must follow various business models while providing high quality care to their patients. Hospitals strive to provide the best health care possible despite burdensome and duplicative regulations and providing uncompensated care to a growing number of uninsured persons in Florida.

Health care is the largest consumer of Florida's budget, but the Legislature has not been able to meet existing needs in light of state budget deficits. Emergency rooms and trauma centers are becoming the source of health care for the poor. Florida's number of uninsured is growing and with ever-shrinking sources of revenue, hospitals must work together to ensure the quality of care is not compromised. Floridians believe there is a crisis in the future, and we as industry leaders must address these issues.

## Council Priorities

**T**he FHC has discussed health care issues facing Florida's hospitals in preparation for the regular session.

- **Medicaid Funding:** Medicaid, the payer of last resort, currently reimburses hospitals for care of Medicaid patients at the rate of 60 percent of Medicare. In the 2007-2008 budget, 18 percent of Medicaid funding was provided by the state of Florida through general revenue. The Council supports a steady funding stream for Medicaid programs and providers including the Medically Needy and Meds AD programs that provide critical services to low income Floridians. Florida should pursue the maximum federal match for its Medicaid program.
- **Regulatory Relief:** Currently, hospitals and other health care providers face a myriad of regulations and duplicative enforcement by various government agencies who do not always coordinate enforcement standards and actions. The Council supports the creation of a panel, consisting of business community members, to review and recommend the sunset of those regulations that are found to be outdated, unnecessary or duplicative.
- **Additional Mandates on Hospitals:** Appropriate care standards should be determined by the doctors and local hospital officials, not legislators in Tallahassee. For example, we oppose HB 241 which would create staffing ratios for registered nurses in Florida hospitals

## Council Position

**AIF and the Florida Hospital Council support full funding of Medicaid to take full advantage of federal matching dollars. We support the elimination of duplicative and unnecessary regulations and oppose additional mandates on care provided in hospitals.**