



# ASSOCIATED INDUSTRIES OF FLORIDA

*The Voice of Florida Business Since 1920*



## 2009 SESSION PRIORITIES

# Water

**F**or several years now, AIF has placed a priority on the funding of **alternative water supply programs**. This year will be no different. AIF will stay actively involved with the *Florida Water Alliance* and seek beneficial ways to fund the programs. But funding is going to be hard to find as the Florida's economy has slowed. Thanks to SB 444 passed in the 2005 session, money was previously set aside in the Water Protection and Sustainability Trust Fund (WPSTF) to fund different water projects. Unfortunately, with general revenue dollars declining, so is the revenue going to the trust fund.

Florida needs to be serious about its water resources as we expect 21.8 million residents by 2025. As Florida continues to grow, we need a reliable source of water, and we need to make sure we have that source by planning for it now. You cannot build roads, schools or hospitals without water. In the Century Commission's Second Annual Report, they focus on five important strategic areas for their recommendations. The first one listed is "Ensuring an adequate and reliable water supply for current and future generations."

Our policy leaders need to prioritize water needs and coordinate a comprehensive long-term plan on water use and supply including conservation, re-use, and alternative water supply programs, especially in these economic times. By funding alternative water supply programs, we can help the economy as well since the return on investment is 5 to 1.

With water supply at a crisis level, the Century Commission convened the state's first Water Congress last September in Orlando. AIF was asked to participate in the Water Congress to represent the business community. Approximately 100 people were chosen as delegates to discuss the problems facing Florida today and make recommendations on how we need to plan for future water needs.

**Four final recommendations were approved by the Water Congress, all of which will be supported by AIF.**

## Funding for Alternative Water Supply Programs

**AIF SUPPORTS efforts to reinstate the annual state funding for alternative water supply development and water quality improvements (i.e., SB 444 funding to be matched by Water Management Districts and local governments/utilities).** Lawmakers should make SB 444 funding a recurring source of



annual state funding for alternative water supply development and reinstate original funding levels at a minimum.

## Regional Partnerships

**AIF SUPPORTS efforts to encourage regional partnerships, incentives and cooperative approaches to address long-term water sustainability for Florida.** The Water Management Districts, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and local governments should aggressively identify opportunities and develop incentives for establishing multi-jurisdictional utility arrangements or water supply authorities and engage in other areas where such partnerships should be beneficial and cost effective to the public.

## Statutory Definitions

**AIF SUPPORTS efforts to amend (as necessary) any statute, rule or policy so that quantifiable water conservation best management practices are considered as an "alternative water supply" and are equally as eligible for funding as capital facility expansion proposals.**

## Water Usage Goals

**AIF SUPPORTS efforts to set a per capita target or goal for water use and quantifiable best management water practices and provide a stable funding base for the Conserve Florida program directed by Section 373.227, F.S., including the statewide water conservation clearinghouse for public water supply.**



**AIF Lobby Team Members  
Assigned to the Area of Water:**

Keyna Cory