



# LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

The following is a listing of all the issues that AIF will be involved in (as of February 1, 2010) for the upcoming 2010 Session. These issues and our positions can change based on amendments. When our position does change, it will be noted in both the *Daily Brief* and *Weekly Update* Reports that AIF provides to members and legislators throughout the session.

## Contracting

- Support legislation to ensure consistent, streamlined and fair contract elements for entities providing health and human services to the State of Florida by incorporating national accreditation standards into the existing health and human services framework; allowing the use of a centralized document vault, and allowing agencies to designate a lead agency to ensure that monitoring is coordinated.

## Economic Development

- Support efforts to reduce regulatory burdens that inhibit businesses ability to establish and expand in Florida
- Support efforts to further expedite permitting processes within state agencies
- Support reestablishing funding levels of Enterprise Florida's economic development "Tool Kit," including the Innovation Incentive program designed to entice world class research centers like Scripps, Torrey Pines, Burnham, SRI and Marx Planck Society as well as hi-tech companies to the state
- Support legislation aimed at providing tax credits for venture capitalists that invest in Florida's emerging businesses
- Support efforts to broaden the reach of Florida's Growth Fund to reach more emerging businesses
- Support efforts to expand the film and entertainment tax credit program

## Education

- Support increasing access to rigorous coursework and increased high school graduation standards, particularly in STEM subject areas: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math; so that students can compete globally in the 21st century
- Support efforts to increase education in the arts, multilingualism, multi culturalism, and technology literacy to assure the workforce is prepared for the creative economy
- Advocate flexibility in plans to fulfill the mandates of the class-size constitutional amendment
- Support the continuation of the Banner Centers for Workforce Development and Ready-to-Work programs

## Elections

- Support efforts to re-establish Florida's signature revocation process
- Support reforms to the process for amending the state constitution by citizen initiative
- Support efforts to change the life span of petition signatures for citizen initiatives from the current 4 years to 2 years
- Support legislation designed to protect the secret ballot process in Florida.

## Energy

- Encourage the exploration, production and storage of petroleum and natural gas in an environmentally safe manner while ensuring a continuous supply and reasonable cost of fuel for all of Florida's needs
- Support incentives for the use of hydrogen fuel and the future expansion of alternative fuels and clean coal technologies
- Support environmental and economic regulatory policies that create a stable investment climate so that electric utilities can build more fuel diverse generation systems to meet Florida's growing energy needs, and continue to maintain and enhance the transmission and distribution system

- Oppose government mandates that will unnecessarily drive up the cost of essential energy services for businesses in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Support the expansion and building of future nuclear facilities in Florida

## Environmental

- Support "Incentive Based Permitting" for those companies who are good stewards of Florida's natural resources
- Support the environmental self-audit privilege
- Support the expansion of the Environmental Litigation Reform Act (ELRA)

## General Business

- Support legislation providing for personal identity-theft protection and for protection of personal and business data held by state and local governments while at the same time balancing the needs of commercial entities to have access to such information to service their customers and promote commerce
- Oppose legislation that requires businesses to rely on flawed federal verification systems for immigration status of employees
- Support efforts to create statewide regulation of fertilizer sales
- Support constitutional amendment protecting Floridians' right to a secret ballot
- Support efforts to require important corporate information to be published in our newspapers and not just on the internet

## Growth Management

- Support legislation to streamline the plan amendment process at the DCA level during the "sunset" review of the agency by the Legislature
- Provide for a "savings clause" for Developers making use of SB 360 provisions, should current litigation hold the bill unconstitutional due to drafting problems.
- Provide for the "fast track" of any project deemed to be economic development

## Health Care

- Support proposals that encourage employers to provide health insurance benefits to their employees.
- Continue to support proposals to inject market-based solutions into the Medicaid Program to ensure appropriate high quality and cost effective care is provided to our state's elderly, poor and disabled.
- Support proposals that allow insurers more flexibility to ensure the health care products they offer to employers and individuals are tailored to their needs and resources
- Oppose proposals that would inject the government into the private contracting process between insurers and providers

## Insurance

- Continue efforts to bring about affordability and availability of commercial and residential property insurance utilizing sound business principles
- Support legislation requiring a 10 percent rate increase for all Citizens policyholders each year until its rates are actuarially sound
- Support continued funding of the My Safe Florida Home mitigation grants as well as home inspection programs
- Oppose burdensome restrictions on health insurers, such as "any willing provider" and provider contract restraints, that drive up the cost of health care

- Support proposals to expand access to uninsured Floridians using market-based solutions which allow health plans to offer benefits tailored to consumers' needs and allow them to reduce the number of mandates they must provide
- Oppose legislation that would place additional mandates on health insurance policies
- Support the Insurance Commissioner's efforts to pass legislation to eliminate abuses associated with stranger originated life insurance (STOLI) arrangements.

## Legal & Judicial

- Oppose the weakening or repeal of any of the 2005-06 legal reform law
- Support the right of parents to waive liability on behalf of their minor children
- Support adequate funding of judicial branch
- Preserve the rights of parties to settle cases independently without interference from their attorneys
- Continue support for existing caps on non-economic damages arising from medical malpractice lawsuits
- Support legislation that offers basic protection from unnecessary litigation to business owners who offer their services to first responders during natural disasters

## Space

- Support giving Space Florida the flexibility to allocate any of the unobligated Launch Complex (LC) 36 funds for any purpose determined to have the greatest benefit to the commercial space industry in Florida
- Support the creation of a Commercial Launch Zone or CLZ
- Support enhanced funding for space workforce training
- Support legislation to reorganize the board structure of Space Florida — the state's aerospace development organization

## Taxation

- Support legislation to adopt the 2010 version of the IRS code so that Florida businesses do not have to keep two sets of records
- Support legislative ideas that would help to lower the rising cost of property tax for both homeowners and businesses across the state
- Support legislation to reduce the communications services tax currently on all communications devices (except residential lines)
- Support a resolution to Congress that would place Florida alongside other states in implementing the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement
- Fight the efforts to divert money from trust-fund revenue streams to general revenue
- Support sales tax holidays, such as exemptions from sales tax on items to be used for hurricanes supplies, school readiness, and energy efficient products
- Support statutory efforts to review Florida's sales tax exemption, but oppose any mandated review or sunset provision associated with this review
- Support passage of Amendment 6 implementing bill
- Oppose the enactment of combined reporting or an "Unitary Tax" in Florida or increases in excise taxes

## Technology

- Encourage the enhanced government spending on IT in order to provide better services to citizens and businesses and to ensure that Florida's state government remains at the cutting edge of IT
- Support funding for redesign of legacy or outdated agency IT systems
- Support increasing compensation and competency requirements for state CIOs
- Support the creation of an "Innovation Fund" in order to incentivize state agencies to be more novel in their service delivery
- Monitor and influence any bill filed on the Agency for Enterprise Information Technology (AEIT), or data consolidation efforts
- Codify IT definitions in statute pursuant to AEIT direction

## Transportation

- Support the transfer of new revenues from tag and title fee increases to the Transportation Trust Fund
- Strongly support legislation that allows for aggregate rock materials to be mined without obstruction from irresponsible interest groups or ill intended county/municipal moratorium
- Support raising the weight limit on commercial truck using state and local roadways to weight limits that equal those of our surrounding states
- Support legislation exempting Auxiliary Power Units (APUs) from commercial truck weight restrictions

## Unemployment Compensation

- For 2010 and 2011, establish a quarterly payment plan that lets employers spread out their unemployment compensation payments over the whole year without penalties or interest
- Reduce the amount of each employee's taxable wages – from \$8,500 back down to \$7,000 for 2010 and 2011
- For 2010 and 2011, eliminate all provisions in last year's legislation that would have allowed the state to replenish the Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund balance more quickly
- Oppose extending number of weeks unemployment benefits are paid with no additional funding or other incentives to employers to cover such expenses
- Oppose any uniform or arbitrary benefit amount increases
- Oppose enactment of permanent benefit expansion provisions
- Oppose funding ancillary programs unrelated to unemployment compensation programs, since this increases the cost of doing business while undermining the purpose for which the unemployment benefits program was created
- Oppose any increases to costs, including but not limited to defining additional beneficiaries
- Support strengthening program restrictions prohibiting benefits receipt by individuals voluntarily abandoning available employment
- Oppose expansion of mandatory leave benefits for non-work related activities
- Oppose any new reporting requirements that employers provide certain data or information to employees or governmental agencies regarding use of or eligibility for accrued leave time

## Workers' Compensation

- Oppose any efforts to erode the savings experienced by all Florida employers as a result of the AIF-supported 2003 Workers' Compensation Reform Act which resulted in savings now of over 50%
- Oppose the creation of a state fund or other state risk bearing entity
- Continue support for increased funding for state fraud investigations
- Oppose any efforts to statutorily establish procedures, guidelines or other provisions that are currently available through administrative action for which statutory authority already exists
- Oppose any raid on the Workers' Compensation Trust Fund without first giving back money to employers

## Workforce Development

- Support the establishment of career academies in Florida's schools that will prepare Florida's students with industry certifications to compete with students from around the world, not just other states
- Continue support for Florida's Banner Centers for Workforce Development
- Support the "Ready to Work" program

## Workforce Housing

- Support full funding of Florida's housing trust monies solely on housing
- Repeal the cap on the Sadowski Housing Trust Fund