



Rep. Dana Young (R-Tampa) is presented a 2011 Champion for Business Award for her work on the passage of port security legislation. Rep. Young is the first House Freshman to receive this distinction.

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Florida Maritime

In 2006, AIF formed the Florida Maritime Council (FMC) in response to the critical economic needs that Florida's maritime businesses continue to face. Over the past several years, the private-sector businesses that comprise Florida's maritime industry have positioned the state to be an international leader in exports to the Caribbean and beyond. The currently underway expansion of the Panama Canal offers unlimited future opportunities for which the state must begin preparing now. State funding for ports is almost non-existent when compared to our neighboring, competitor states. Florida's 14 deep-water ports are more than a segment of Florida's transportation system. They are a vital economic development engine, and legislators and state policymakers must place ports at the top of their funding priorities.

AIF Maritime Council members, who represent more than 80 companies with operations covering the state, have identified serious problems that threaten their ability to compete with other port facilities located in other states such as duplicative security regulations, arbitrary harbor pilot fees, competing land uses and property taxes. The Council also plays a vital role in maintaining and advancing Florida's economic position in the country. A focus on short-term problems must be addressed to ensure that these businesses survive long enough to benefit from strategic and long-term financial planning.

Council Priorities

Maritime businesses in Florida have built the economic prowess of the state's ports into a major revenue producer and a critical component of the state's economy. Specifically, the Council will advocate for the following important legislative changes:

- Support innovative proposals for economic development funding for Florida's ports.
- Restrict encroachment of alternative land uses on or near port property.
- Support funding to deepen ports in Florida so that the state can take full advantage of the bigger ships that will use the newly expanded Panama Canal.

Council Position

The FMC supports efforts to establish better lines of communication between regulators and port tenants. The maritime industry deserves additional recognition and support to fulfill the economic rewards it has cultivated for the state.

Chair: Phillip A. Buhler, Esq. • Lobbyist: Tamela Perdue