

ASSOCIATED INDUSTRIES OF FLORIDA
**LEGISLATIVE
DAILY BRIEF**



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FROM MAY 20, 2003

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Today, the Senate Banking and Insurance Committee was the location of one of this year's most heated debates on workers' compensation reform. The line was clearly drawn in the sand between the proponents and opponents of this legislation, both in the audience and among the senators serving on the committee.

SB 50A is sponsored by Senators Charlie Clary (R-Destin), JD Alexander (R-Winter Haven), and Jeff Atwater (R-Palm Beach Gardens). A press conference was held at the Capitol by the bill's sponsors to promote its benefits for injured workers' and employers alike.

To view Senator Clary's, Senator Alexander's and Senator Atwater's remarks please go to <http://www.aif.com/taxmedia.htm>

While the original schedule allowed a two-hour hearing this morning to discuss SB 50A, an afternoon session had to be added to accommodate debate on numerous amendments and public testimony.

A total of 33 amendments were filed but none were adopted. Mary Ann Stiles, General Counsel for Associated Industries of Florida, testified before the committee stressing that she has worked on this issue for several years and truly believes that passage of this legislation will bring relief for Florida's employers.

At the end of the day, the committee voted favorably to pass this bill on an eight to four vote count.

Pro-business votes:

JD Alexander (R-Winter Haven)
Jeff Atwater (R-Palm Beach Gardens)
Alex Diaz de la Portilla (R-Miami)
Paula Dockery (R-Lakeland)
Tom Lee (R-Brandon)
Gwen Margolis (D-Miami Beach)
Durell Peaden (R-Pensacola)
Al Lawson (D-Tallahassee)

Anti-business votes:

Walter Campbell (D-Tamarac)
Mandy Dawson (D-Ft. Lauderdale)
Bill Posey (R-Rockledge)
Debbie Wasserman-Schultz (D-Pembroke Pines),

At this point SB 50A now moves to the Senate special order calendar. It is scheduled to be heard tomorrow morning on the Senate floor.

AIF can not stress enough to our members and others in the business community the importance of urging your senators to vote for the workers' compensation bill without any amendments. For additional information about this legislation, please see yesterday's report.

AIF supports legislation that controls medical expenses, reduces litigation, and corrects inefficiencies in the workers' compensation system. Above all, AIF supports remedial legislation that will provide fairer benefits to injured workers and lower costs to employers.

Meriting the special thanks of the business community are Senators Alexander, Atwater, and Clary. Each gentleman has taken the time to educate himself on this issue, and without each one's efforts in the committee, the opportunity for passage of true workers' compensation reform would have died.

To send a thank you e-mail to Senators Alexander, Atwater, and Clary, please use the following email addresses:

Senator Alexander; alexander.jd.web@flsenate.gov
Senator Atwater; atwater.jeff.web@flsenate.gov;
Senator Clary; clary.charlie.web@flsenate.gov

Please send your comments or suggestions to us at aif@aif.com or call the Governmental Affairs department at (850)224-7173.

- For more information on all of the important legislative information concerning the business community, go to our "members only" Florida Business Network web site at <http://fbnnet.com>
- Send us your E-mail address and we will begin to send this report to you automatically via E-mail.