

ASSOCIATED INDUSTRIES OF FLORIDA
**LEGISLATIVE
DAILY BRIEF**



P.O. Box 784 • Tallahassee, FL 32302 • Phone: (850) 224-7173 • Fax: (850) 224-6532 • Internet: <http://aif.com> • fbnnet.com

APRIL 28, 2004

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Today the House took up two workers' compensation bills that have been a priority for AIF throughout the session.

HB 1251 relating to the Workers' Compensation Joint Underwriting Association (WCJUA) by Representative Kim Berfield (R-Clearwater) was amended on the House floor to reflect the agreement made between the Senate and House (details coming soon) which addresses all of AIF's concerns with this piece of legislation. The bill's intent is to create solutions to the potential deficits in Subplan D of the WCJUA.

The bill is currently on third reading and will be available for final passage before both the Senate and the House on Friday.

AIF supports the proposals in this legislation which addresses solutions to the deficit in Subplan D of the WCJUA.

SB 1926 relating to Workers' Compensation Rate Reform by Senator Jeff Atwater (R-North Palm Beach), which had been substituted for its House companion (HB 1241 by Representative Berfield) was unanimously passed by the House today. This bill is the work product of the Joint Select Committee on Workers' Compensation Rate Reform which was chaired by Senator Atwater and met during the interim, prior to session.

This bill will allow the Office of Insurance Regulation (OIR) greater flexibility when approving rate deviations by insurers. This should make coverage available to more employers by private workers' compensation carriers. It also provides incentives for carriers to write coverage for policyholders in the Joint Underwriting Association (JUA or more commonly referred as an "insurer of last resort") so that those employers have additional options for coverage in the voluntary market. The bill also requires the OIR to submit an annual report to the legislature evaluating competition in the workers' compensation market in Florida.

This legislation is now available for final passage in the Senate.

You may view a video clip of Senator Atwater's comments on the bill at <http://www.aif.com/taxmedia.html>

AIF supports legislation addressing the concerns outlined by SB 1926 and its companion HB 1241.

OTHER BILLS OF INTEREST:

HJR 41- Homestead/Assessed Value/Elderly

Today the House unanimously passed HJR 41 relating to Prohibiting an Increase in the Assessed Value of Homestead Property for Some Senior Citizens by Representative Juan Zapata (R-Miami). This proposed amendment to the Constitution would authorize legislation that would permit counties to enact ordinances that would prohibit an increase in the assessed value of homestead property owned by certain persons who are 65 years of age or older.

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.