



From November 20, 2015

AGRICULTURE

SB 304- Relating to Agritourism

On Tuesday, November 17th, **SB 304**, relating to Agritourism, by **Senator Kelli Stargel (R-Lakeland)** passed unanimously through the **Senate Community Affairs Committee** with 7 yeas and 0 nays. **AIF stood in support of this bill.**

The bill prohibits local governments from enforcing any local ordinance, regulation, rule, or policy that prohibits, restricts, regulates, or otherwise limits an agritourism activity on land classified as agricultural land under Florida's greenbelt law. An "agritourism activity" is any agricultural related activity consistent with a bona fide farm or ranch or in a working forest that allows members of the general public, for recreational, entertainment, or educational purposes, to view or enjoy activities, including farming, ranching, historical, cultural, or harvest-your-own activities and attractions.

Agritourism is one of the many methods farmers use to diversify and increase their income.

SB 304 will now head to the **Senate Fiscal Policy Committee.**

AIF supports any legislation that allows Florida farmers to safely expand their businesses through the use of Agritourism.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

HB 415 & SB 402- Relating to Point-of-sale Terminals

On Tuesday, November 17th, **HB 415**, relating to Point-of-sale Terminals, by **Rep. Holly Raschein (R-Key Largo)** was heard in the **House Business & Professions Subcommittee** and passed with 8 yeas and 3 nays. **AIF's Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs, Brewster Bevis, stood in support of this bill.**

On Tuesday, November 17th, **SB 402**, relating to Point-of-sale Terminals, by **Senator Garrett Richter (R-Naples)** passed through the **Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government** with 5 yeas and 1 nay. **AIF's Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs, Brewster Bevis, stood in support of this bill.**

This bill would allow limited use of "Point-of-sale Terminals" for the sale of lottery tickets or games. A "Point-of-sale Terminal" is a charge card reader, like those used at a retail counter, self-service fuel pump or self-service checkout line. The bill authorizes the Department of the Lottery, approved vendors, and approved retailers to use point-of-sale terminals to facilitate sales of lottery tickets or games, provided that the purchaser is verified to be 18 years of age or older and the terminal does not dispense lottery winnings.

A point-of-sale terminal does not reveal winning numbers and may not be used to redeem a winning ticket. Lottery ticket sales revenue generated from point-of-sale terminals must be used to enhance instructional technology resources for students and teachers in Florida.

The next hearing for HB 415 will be in the **House Government Operations Subcommittee.**

The next hearing for SB 402 will be in the **Senate Fiscal Policy Committee.**

AIF supports innovative means to help fund Florida's education system. In addition, enactment of this legislation would create more manufacturing jobs in the State.

ENERGY

SB 90- Relating to Natural Gas Rebate Program

On Tuesday, November 17th, **SB 90**, relating to the Natural Gas Rebate Program, by **Senator Wilton Simpson (R-Trilby)** passed through the **Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government** unanimously with 6 yeas and 0 nays. **AIF's Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs, Brewster Bevis, stood in support of this bill.**

Since 2013 there has been a Natural Gas Fuel Fleet Vehicle Rebate Program (program) created within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS) to "help reduce transportation costs in this state and encourage freight mobility investments that contribute to the economic growth of the state." Beginning with Fiscal Year 2013-2014 and continuing through Fiscal Year 2017-2018 (five years), DACS is required to award rebates, to those eligible, for the costs of converting a diesel- or gasoline-powered motor vehicle to a natural gas fuel-powered motor vehicle on or after July 1, 2013. An applicant is eligible to receive a maximum rebate of \$25,000 per vehicle up to a total of \$250,000 per applicant per fiscal year, on a first-come, first-served basis.

The changes in this bill would now allow DACS to use any unencumbered funds, if any, that remain after June 30th of each fiscal year to award additional rebates.

SB 90 will now head to its last committee week hearing in the **Senate Appropriations Committee.**

AIF supports the natural gas fuel fleet vehicle rebate program, specifically the authorization of DACS to award additional rebates to applicants from unencumbered funds after each fiscal year.

ENVIRONMENTAL

HB 7005 & SB 552- Relating to Environmental Resources

On Wednesday, November 18th, **HB 7005**, relating to Environmental Resources, by the **House State Affairs Committee** and **Rep. Matt Caldwell (R-Lehigh Acres)** passed through the **House Agriculture & Natural Resources Appropriations Subcommittee** with 11 yeas and 1 nay. **AIF's Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs spoke in support of HB 7005.**

On Thursday, November 19th, **SB 552** relating to Environmental Resources, by **Senator Charlie Dean (R-Inverness)** passed through the **Senate Appropriations Committee** with 15 yeas and 0 nays. **AIF's Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs, Brewster Bevis, stood in support of this bill.**

The Department of Environmental Protection projects a water shortage of 1.3 billion gallons of water per day by 2030. This bill comprehensively addresses this shortage and other water issues in our state. SAC1 revises policies relation to Florida's environmental resources including, but not limited to:

- Creating the Florida Springs and Aquifer Protection Act to expedite protection and restoration of the water flow and water quality in the aquifer and Outstanding Florida Springs.
- Ensuring that the appropriate governmental entities continue to develop and implement uniform water supply planning, consumptive water use permitting, and resource protection programs for the area encompassed by the Central Florida Water Initiative.
- Updating and restructuring the Northern Everglades and Estuaries Act to reflect and build upon the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) completion of basin management action plans (BMAP) for Lake Okeechobee, the Caloosahatchee Estuary, and the St. Lucie River and Estuary, DEP's continuing development of a BMAP for the inland

portion of the Caloosahatchee River watershed, and Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' implementation of best management practices in the three basins.

- Modifying water supply and resource planning documents and processes in order to provide more robust representations of the state's water needs and goals.
- Requiring the Office of Economic and Demographic Research to conduct an annual assessment of water resources and conservation lands.
- Requiring DEP to publish an online publicly accessible database of conservation lands on which public access is compatible with conservation and recreation purposes.
- Requiring DEP to conduct a feasibility study for creating and maintaining a web-based, interactive map of the state's waterbodies as well as regulatory information about each waterbody.

SB 552 will now head to the Senate Floor for a vote.

AIF supports efforts to address Florida's major water challenges by developing sound, comprehensive science-based water policy.

INSURANCE

HB 467- Relating to Insurance Guaranty Association Assessments

On Wednesday, November 18th, **HB 467**, relating to Insurance Guaranty Association Assessments, by **Rep. Doug Broxson (R-Milton)** was heard in the **House Insurance & Banking Subcommittee** with 12 yeas and 0 nays. **AIF stood in support of this bill.** HB 467 creates a new method for the Florida Workers' Compensation Insurance Guaranty Fund (FWCIGA) to collect assessments on an installment basis, thus preventing the advancement of funds by member companies, as well as separating the assessment amount from premium rates, effectively eliminating premium taxes on FWCIGA assessments. The next stop for HB 467 is in the **House Finance & Tax Committee.**

AIF supports this bill as it makes sensible adjustments to Florida's guaranty programs to ensure that claimants of insolvent companies can be made whole without undue burden on existing workers' compensation carriers and their policyholders.

PROPERTY RIGHTS

SB 416-Relating to Location of Utilities

On Thursday, November 19th, **SB 416**, relating to the Location of Utilities, by **Senator Anitere Flores (R-Miami)** unanimously passed through its last committee week stop in the **Senate Fiscal Policy Committee** with 9 yeas and 0 nays. **AIF's Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs, Brewster Bevis, stood in support of this bill.**

SB 416 will address who is the responsible party for the cost of relocating utility facilities in a public easement. Easements dedicated to the public for utilities are typically located along existing road or highway rights-of-way and are available for use by a variety of utility providers. The bill flips the responsibility to bear relocation costs from the utility owner to the state or local government requiring the facilities to be relocated. The owner of a utility that requires relocation will be liable for relocation costs only if their lines and facilities are across, on or "within" the right-of-way, rather than "along" any right-of-way. SB 416 will now head to the Senate floor for a vote.

AIF supports protecting the private property rights of Florida businesses.