

DAILY BRIEF

For the 2021 Legislative Session



FROM MARCH 17, 2021

AGRICULTURE

HB 1601 – Relating to Farming Operations

On Wednesday, March 17, [HB 1601](#) by Representative Jayer Williamson (R-Pace) was heard by the House Civil Justice & Property Rights Subcommittee and was reported favorable with 14 yeas and 4 nays. **AIF’s Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs, Brewster Bevis, stood in support of this legislation.**

The bill amends and strengthens the Florida Right to Farm Act, which is intended to protect reasonable agricultural activities conducted on farmland from nuisance lawsuits. The bill provides stronger liability protections to farms that comply with best management practices and environmental regulations, and:

- Adds Agritourism to the list of practices protected by the Right to Farm Act;
- Institutes parameters regarding punitive and compensatory damages; and
- Limits eligibility to file a lawsuit to individuals located within one half mile of the activity.

HB 1601 will now go to the House Environment, Agriculture and Flooding Subcommittee.

AIF supports legislation that protects Florida’s farmers and helps to eradicate bad faith litigation which drives up the cost of doing business, insurance rates, and negatively affects those providing food and resources to the state.

HEALTH CARE

SB 1132 and HB 485 – Relating to Personal Care Attendants

On Wednesday, March 17, [SB 1132](#) by Senator Aaron Bean (R-Jacksonville) was heard by the Senate Health Policy Committee and was reported favorable with 8 yeas and 1 nay. **AIF’s Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs, Brewster Bevis, stood in support of this legislation.**

On Wednesday, March 17, [HB 485](#) by Representative Sam Garrison (R-Orange Park) was heard by the House Finance & Facilities Subcommittee and was reported favorable with 18 yeas and 0 nays. **AIF's Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs, Brewster Bevis, stood in support of this legislation.**

The bills will allow nursing homes to employ personal care attendants (PCA) and to allow a PCA to work as a nursing assistant (and count as a certified nursing assistant (CNA) for the purposes of staffing requirements) for a period of up to four months if the PCA is participating in the PCA training program established by the Agency for Health Care Administration in consultation with the Board of Nursing. The training program must consist of at least 16 hours of education which will lead to a PCA becoming a CNA. The bills define a PCA as a person who provides care to and assists residents with tasks related to the activities of daily living and prohibits a PCA from performing any task that requires clinical assessment, interpretation, or judgment, or from working as a PCA for more than one nursing home before becoming a CNA.

The House bill, HB 485, specifies that a PCA must complete the 16 hours of education prior to having any direct contact with a resident.

SB 1132 will now go to the Senate Children, Families, and Elder Affairs Committee.

HB 485 will now go to the House Health Care Appropriations Subcommittee.

AIF supports legislative efforts that expand access to care and keep health care costs low for Florida businesses.

TRANSPORTATION

HB 223 – Relating to Marina Evacuations

On Wednesday, March 17, [HB 223](#) by Representative Rene Plasencia (R-Titusville) was heard by the House State Affairs Committee and was reported favorable with 23 yeas and 0 nays. **AIF's Senior Vice President of State and Federal Affairs, Brewster Bevis, stood in support of this legislation.**

This bill prohibits, upon the issuance of a hurricane watch that affects marinas located in a deep-water seaport, vessels under 500 gross tons from remaining in the waters of marinas that have been deemed not suitable for refuge during a hurricane. The bill requires that vessel owners promptly remove their vessels from the waterways upon issuance of an evacuation order by the deep-water seaport. Additionally, the bill grants the marina owner, operator, employee, or agent

the right to remove vessels that have not been removed by the vessel owner. The bill also shields the marina from liability concerning the movement of the vessel.

HB 223 will now go to the House State Affairs Committee.

AIF supports legislative efforts that protect Florida's seaport operators in the event of a hurricane. Florida's seaports are vitally important to economic development in the state and abroad and derelict vessels must not burden business operations in our ports.