



Associated Industries of Florida

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*Champions
for
Business*

The Champion for Business Award is presented to legislators who display exemplary efforts on behalf of the business community — providing leadership in support of free-market principles.



Champions for

What is a **Champion for Business** award? Simply put, it symbolizes our gratitude for extraordinary efforts by legislators on behalf of the business community.

For more than three decades, Associated Industries of Florida (AIF) published **Voting Records**, an analysis of every vote cast by every legislator on major business issues. The votes each legislator actually casts provides tangible evidence of whether or not that legislator upholds the ability of Florida companies to operate free of overly burdensome state regulation and taxation. It is a valuable tool used by AIF and the business community to determine which legislators running for re-election deserve our support. Yet, voting records only tell part of the story.

AIF also helps its member companies detect what bills and amendments are filed by whom, and who is taking part in behind-the-scene efforts and debates on behalf of the business community. These intangible forms of support through non-voting actions are also of vital importance and merit recognition.

AIF instituted the **Champion for Business** award to acknowledge law-makers who do more than vote for business by providing leadership on key legislation. A **Champion for Business** is a legislator who takes risks for their belief in the free-enterprise system, who defies the status quo when it is harmful to our state's competitive climate, and who faces down the opponents to the growing prosperity of Florida's citizens.

The **Champion for Business** is evidence that, in our efforts to let our members and their legislators know who has been good for business and who has been bad, we leave no stone unturned.

This year, the AIF Legislative Team selected those legislators who we deem are strong and forceful advocates for the business community. In our collective wisdom, these fifteen legislators and Gov. Jeb Bush are the epitome of what a **Champion for Business** should be. Whether they proposed an important bill, authored a key amendment, or toiled behind-the-scenes, these legislators are the ones who made a difference this session.

Throughout the 60 days of lawmaking, these were the senators and representatives we turned to when we needed someone on whom we could depend. They all deserve to be singled out for their dedication to our free-market economy.

Maybe they are the exception, rather than the rule. But that's why we want to recognize them, because we need more of them in the Florida government.

Business

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Governor Jeb Bush (R-Florida) is



considered one of the most pro-business Governors the state has seen in years. His many priorities this year included: tort

reform, tax relief for all Floridians, and an innovative energy plan for Florida. Thanks to his perseverance, the Florida Legislature passed legislation abolishing the doctrine of joint and several liability, reforming class action lawsuits, and reducing the statute of repose. These were some of the high priority issues that AIF and the Florida Coalition for Legal Reform (FCLR) actively supported this session. In addition, Governor Bush finally abolished the intangible personal property tax and the sales tax on machinery and equipment used for manufacturing. His energy plan is a bold first step in planning for our state's future energy needs. AIF applauds Governor Bush for all of his accomplishments during his two terms as Governor and proudly honors him with his second Champion for Business Award.

House Speaker Allan Bense



(R-Panama City) is receiving his third Champion for Business Award for his leadership during the 2006 legislative session.

He made the repeal of joint and several liability his number one priority, so much so that he got his wish half way through the 2006 session. AIF appreciates all that

Speaker Bense has done during his tenure as Speaker of the House, especially with regards to tort reform and tax relief for Florida's citizens and businesses. Speaker Bense is truly a Champion for Business!

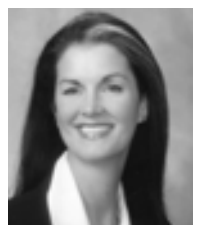
Senate President Tom Lee



(R-Brandon) emphasized the importance of tort reform early in the 2006 session and the Senate followed his leadership. He was

successful in passing legislation to abolish the doctrine of joint and several liability as well as legislation reforming class action lawsuits in Florida. His belief that a person should only pay for their fair share of damages echoed the pleas of the business community. AIF applauds President Lee for his leadership in pursuing this priority issue for the state of Florida and proudly present him with a Champion for Business Award.

Representative Marty Bowen



(R-Winter Haven) continued to show her leadership as State Resource Council Chair and her continuous commitment to the

agricultural industry. Second only to tourism, the agricultural industry accounts for much of Florida's economic diversity. Rep. Bowen successfully guided through the legislative process a sales tax exemption for fuel and electricity used for farming. This will be a big help to the agricultural

community, especially after all of the devastation they suffered due to the past two hurricane seasons. AIF proudly presents the Champion for Business Award to Rep. Bowen.

Representative Don Brown



(R-Defuniak Springs), with more determination than ever, filed another bill this session to repeal joint and several liability. In

2005, he passed major tort reform legislation in the House only to see it die in the Senate. However, this year Rep. Brown was successful in his quest to alter the unfair tort system in Florida. Rep. Brown sponsored HB 145, which removes exceptions in Florida law that permit "joint and several liability" rather than liability based on percentage of fault. The passage of this legislation moves Florida law to a doctrine of fairness, establishing that defendants are only responsible for damages proportionate to their share of liability. AIF is proud to honor Rep. Brown with his second Champion for Business Award.

Representative Fred Brummer



(R-Apopka) understands the value of being persistent. In his last year as a legislator, he was finally able to pass his number one goal

of eliminating the intangible personal property tax. The Florida House has led the way ever since 1998 to repeal this anti-competitive tax. Rep.

Brummer tried last year to abolish this tax, but the Senate would only reduce the millage rate to 0.5. AIF thanks Rep. Brummer for his continued, long-held stance against new taxes and his pursuit to eliminate those anti-competitive taxes. We proudly present him with his second Champion for Business Award.

Representative Mike Davis



(R-Naples), concerned with the high price of homes, set out to find a way to provide affordable housing for Floridians. Rep. Davis

passed HB 1363, which addresses the issue of affordable housing in Florida by creating the Community Workforce Housing Innovation Pilot Program (CWHIPP) and by providing financial and regulatory incentives for affordable housing. The CWHIPP will encourage affordable rental and home ownership projects that target high-cost and high-growth counties, certain public-private partnerships, workforce housing essential for service personnel, and innovative projects. AIF applauds the innovation of the bill's sponsor and his willingness to work with all parties involved on this important legislation. We congratulate Rep. Davis on his second Champion for Business Award.

Representative Adam Hasner



(R-Delray Beach) stepped up to the tough task of sponsoring legislation to develop a statewide energy strategy intended to

stimulate long-term solutions for the state's energy needs. This legislation ensures that energy supplies will be readily available and affordable for Floridians in the long-term. It will also help develop renewable technologies, promote economic growth, and bring much needed

diversity to the state's fuel supply. Rep. Hasner and the House of Representatives stood strong to pass their version of the energy bill. The House bill contained many of the recommendations resulting from the 2005 Energy Forum sponsored by the Governor's office. AIF applauds Rep. Hasner for his leadership and courage in tackling this all-important issue for Florida and proudly presents him with a Champion for Business Award.

Representative Matt Meadows



(D-Lauderhill) passed legislation to eliminate the sales tax for industrial machinery and equipment used in expanding facilities

engaged in spaceport activities or for use in an expanding manufacturing facility. AIF has supported this concept for years and has achieved reductions in the amount of taxes applied to the purchase of machinery and equipment. However, prior to the passage of Rep. Meadows' bill, Florida was at a disadvantage due to this sales tax. The elimination of the sales tax will help Florida compete for businesses and jobs in the manufacturing sector. AIF is proud to present Rep. Meadows with a Champion for Business Award and salutes him for his leadership on this important economic development issue.

Representative Dennis Ross



(R-Lakeland), as Chairman of the House Insurance Committee, was the prime sponsor of the House Property Insurance Bill. At the

end of the 2006 session, the Senate appeared ready to continue the State's failed policy of relying on governmental entities and debt to provide hurricane insurance coverage for many Florida home-owners. How-

ever, Rep. Ross and the House of Representatives stood strong to include provisions in the final bill which, over time, will make the rates offered by Citizens Property Insurance Company (the state's property insurer of last resort) self-sustaining. Of particular consequence, this legislation decreases the likelihood of future premium assessments against all property owners to fund Citizens' deficits. Also, the House provisions will relax the regulatory environment to entice private insurers to write more property insurance in Florida and will provide \$250 million in state matching grants for homeowners to install storm shutters or otherwise harden their homes against damage from future storms. For his determination and leadership in handling this issue so vital to Florida's economy, AIF is proud to honor Rep. Ross with this Champion for Business Award.

Representative Marco Rubio



(R-Miami) took on the enormous task, as Chair of the House Select Committee to Protect Private Property Rights, of

drafting legislation relating to eminent domain takings by local governments. After months of meetings with every stakeholder, Rep. Rubio guided his Select Committee in crafting legislation to protect the private property rights of Floridians and prevent government from unjustifiably taking Floridians' property. Last summer's *Kelo vs. City of New London, Connecticut* decision by the U.S. Supreme Court opened the door to eminent domain proceedings motivated by economic development. In response, Speaker Allan Bense created the Select Committee to review Florida's Constitution as well as relevant statutes, rules and ordinances relating to eminent domain. AIF congratulates Speaker Designate

Rubio on a job well done and presents him with a Champion for Business Award.

Representative Trey Traviesa



(R-Tampa) is receiving his AIF Champion for Business Award for two demanding legislative issues: growth management and increasing competition in the state's cable market. Most freshmen would shy away from such controversial issues, but not Rep. Traviesa. He studied the issues and was prepared every step of the way. By being prepared, important growth management legislation passed the Legislature including changes to the Development of Regional Impact (DRI) statutes. On the cable competition issue, he brought an important subject to light, and though he was not successful this session, we expect him to return with even more resolve next session. AIF proudly honors Rep. Traviesa as a Champion for Business.

Senator Jeff Atwater



(R-North Palm Beach) is receiving his second Champion for Business Award. He has continued his work on tax relief for Florida's citizens and businesses by sponsoring the repeal of the intangible personal property tax and the Florida Manufacturing Global Competitiveness Act, which broadens an

existing sales tax exemption for industrial machinery and equipment purchased for use in expanding facilities. The effect of this legislation is to provide a full, rather than partial, sales tax exemption for industrial machinery and equipment purchases when a business can demonstrate that the items will be used to increase productive output at the facility by at least 10 percent. Congratulations to Sen. Atwater for his second Champion for Business Award!

Senator Mike Bennett



(R-Bradenton), as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Community Affairs, Sen. Bennett was faced with many growth management issues. One of the issues he has worked on over the past few years is making the Development of Regional Impact (DRI) process more streamlined and less costly to the business community. Finally, he was able to bring all of the parties together and passed meaningful legislation to address not only the DRI issue, but Florida's growth and affordable housing. AIF commends Sen. Bennett for continuing his fight to help the business community with all of the regulatory requirements they must face to supply Floridians with homes and infrastructure needs. It is this type of commitment that warrants his second Champion for Business Award.

Senator Jim King



(R-Jacksonville) has long been a strong supporter of the business community. Throughout his legislative career, he has always been able to look at the "big picture" when it comes to Florida's ever-changing economy. This year as Chair of the Commerce and Consumer Services Committee, Sen. King led the way on economic development issues such as enterprise zone incentives including tax credits, the state's aerospace industry, and workforce development programs. AIF applauds his efforts to guide good business bills through the process and is proud to recognize him as a Champion for Business Award recipient.

Senator Daniel Webster



(R-Winter Garden) is receiving his second Champion for Business Award. Sen. Webster did not shy away from the big issues as he was the sponsor of the repeal of joint and several liability, limitations on Super-sedeas bond amounts, sales tax holiday for school supplies and clothing, and a local option sales tax adding a \$2.00 surcharge to rental car agreements to help with transportation problems. Being a seasoned veteran in the legislative process, he was able to guide these important issues through the Senate successfully. AIF salutes Senator Webster for his exemplary leadership in the Senate.

The 2006 Legislative Session is over and now everyone's asking: **What exactly happened?**

Do you know about the new laws that will affect you as a business owner? What about how the performance of your senator and representative on bills that affect your bottom line?

Not to worry. The new editions of *Employer Advocate* and *Voting Records* are your guide to who voted for which bill and what it all means.

Employer Advocate has been the main source of analysis of the major issues that affect the Florida business community for many years. In the coming edition, you will read about what really happened in the battle for Legal Reform in Florida. What bills passed and why didn't the one bill that would have made a huge difference in our legal system not even get debated in the Senate? On the positive side, what tax bill did Associated Industries champion through to passage that will save Florida between \$200 and \$500 million dollars a year? All of this and more will be outlined in the 2006 Summer Edition of the *Employer Advocate*.

For more than 30 years, Associated Industries of Florida has compiled *Voting Records* on major business issues facing the Florida Legislature. This publication has become the touchstone for employers who want to know how their senators and representatives vote on bills that promote the free enterprise system. The 2006 *Voting Records* digs deep, relying on 132 bills and 456 votes to gauge the ratio of each legislator's support for the positions advocated by the Florida business community.

And watch out for *Employer Advocate* and *Voting Records* coming on-line to a computer near year.

