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# 2022 WRAP-UP

Regular Session of the  
Florida Legislature



**ASSOCIATED INDUSTRIES OF FLORIDA**

*The Voice of Florida Business Since 1920*

# 2022 Legislative Session Wrap-Up



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The annual legislative session has ended after nine weeks of hearings and debates on thousands of bills and hundreds of issues – all while navigating the lasting effects of a global pandemic. With 160 legislators, more than 60 committees, 3,735 bills filed and close to 2,000 registered lobbyists and countless special interest groups all crammed in to nine weeks of work, it makes for a whirlwind of activity.

At Associated Industries of Florida (AIF) our goal is simple – to support the efforts of the men and women who are the employers in our great state, so they can continue to build their business, employ people, and remain the driving force powering Florida’s economic engine. To do that, we are on the front lines in the legislative process – examining every bill, every amendment, and every debate – to advocate for those issues that help and support employers and to strongly oppose those pieces of legislation that will cause harm and weaken our business community.

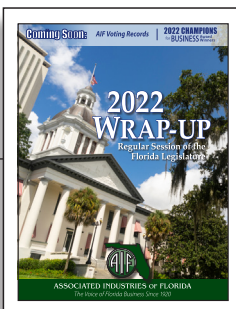
## Look Carefully and Connect the Dots

At first glance it may seem easy to determine which bills will affect you and your business. In many cases, however, while the initial aspects of a bill may not be directly tied to your industry or the product you provide, it often has a root cause and effect that ripples across all companies and industries.

For example, you may not be concerned about a bill dealing with regulatory or legal issues. Yet when you get to the core of the issue, it often relates to the ability of others to cherry-pick who they can sue in an accident. In many cases, it is the business owner who gets sued, even if they are not directly at fault, but because they are deemed to have deep pockets. It is these types of issues that raise the cost of doing business for all companies.

## What Happens Next?

Many of the bills highlighted in the 2022 Wrap-Up have been passed by the House and Senate and are now in the process of being sent to the Governor for his consideration. AIF will continue to communicate with the Governor’s office in support of beneficial legislation.



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# The Issues

The 2022 Wrap-Up provides a summary of the top issues for the business community during the 2022 Regular Legislative Session. These represent a small portion of all the bills and issues we followed. For more information and to view reports on various other issues, please visit our website at [AIF.com](http://AIF.com).

## Consumer Data Protections

### Consumer Data Privacy

Every day, businesses collect data on consumers. From email addresses to send out warranty reminders to phone numbers and birthdays, businesses have more consumer data than ever. As responsible Florida companies, protecting consumers' data is of the utmost importance to AIF and our members.

HB 9 by Rep. Fiona McFarland (R-Sarasota) was written to give consumers certain rights related to personal information collected by a business. It would allow the Department of Legal Affairs to enforce these rights by bringing an action against and collecting civil penalties from violators. Consumers would also be able to bring a private cause of action—with no attorney fee limits—if their personal information was sold or shared after opting-out or after a request to delete or correct.

Although a priority bill for the Speaker of the House, AIF worked tirelessly for our members to ensure this bad piece of legislation did not pass. As written, HB 9 would have decimated businesses with more than \$21 billion in compliance costs and the threat of endless frivolous litigation. While AIF supports commonsense protections for consumer data, HB 9 was a huge step in the wrong direction.

As HB 9 worked through the committee process, AIF provided the legislature with multiple amendments to drastically improve the bill. Unfortunately, the amendments failed along partisan lines. If passed, these amendments would have helped to resolve some of the most significant issues that we brought to light and would have made this bill significantly better.



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Through the efforts of AIF, HB 9 died in the Senate.

**AIF will continue to oppose** legislation that imposes onerous mandates with significant financial burdens on private businesses. Additionally, **AIF will continue to oppose** the private right of action without a right to cure as it will open a Pandora's box of costly lawsuits for the business community who create the jobs that drive Florida's economy. AIF supports the privacy of consumers, but this must be done at the federal level to avoid a patchwork of regulations across every state.

### Telephone Solicitation

In 2021, SB 1120 was passed and prevented telephonic sales calls using automated systems that select numbers **OR** the usage of automated systems that dial the numbers. SB 1564 by Sen. Travis Hutson (R-Palm Coast) further clarified that telephonic sales calls may not be made using automated number generators **AND** automated dialers, i.e., robocalls. The bills allowed telephonic sales calls with human interaction and therefore clarifies the intent of the original 2021 bill to prevent robocalls to parties that have not made an inquiry. Its companion measure, HB 1095 by Rep. Mike Beltran (R-Lithia), was amended to take a different approach.

While SB 1564 and HB 1095 both died, **AIF will continue to support** legislative efforts that address some of the issues created by the 2021 passage of SB 1120 dealing with telephone solicitation to allow businesses to use certain systems to conduct legitimate telephone solicitation.

## Protecting Agricultural Producers and the Environment

### Nutrient Application Rates

Florida is a vast state, and each corner requires a unique environmental approach. Fertilizer rates in North Florida may differ greatly than those needed in South Florida. SB 1000 by Sen. Ben Albritton (R-Wauchula) addresses the nutrient application disparity from farm to farm and works to tailor application rates based on the needed levels for any specific region.

The bill provides a mechanism for citrus producers to

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utilize “rate tailoring” fertilizer application rates developed in concert with a 4R Certified Crop Advisor. To utilize the rate tailoring option, the producer has to be enrolled in the commodity appropriate Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Best Management Practices (BMP) manual. In addition, the legislation maintains the Presumption of Compliance for growers who are enrolled in the BMP program and utilizing rate tailoring. Rep. Lawrence McClure (R-Dover) sponsored the House companion bill, HB 1291.

**AIF supported this legislation** because it protects agricultural producers enrollment in the Best Management Practices program while providing the ability to specifically tailor nutrient rates based upon variables such as crop variety, site-specific conditions, meteorological events, or pest and disease pressures. SB 1000 is awaiting action by the Governor.

### **Pollution Control Standards and Liability**

As a matter of common practice in real estate transactions and other permitting, environmental assessments are conducted to ensure there are not any environmental contamination issues. In a vast majority of transactions on agricultural lands, a relatively simple “phase 1” assessment suffices. However, some municipalities have recently implemented new criteria which presume all agricultural lands are contaminated. As such, they must complete a “phase 2” assessment which includes taking Rep. samples throughout the entire parcel for analysis.

HB 909 by Rep. Bobby Payne (R-Palatka) specifies that the Secretary of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) has exclusive jurisdiction in setting standards or procedures for evaluating environmental conditions and assessing potential liability for the presence of contaminants on land that is classified as agricultural and is being converted to a nonagricultural use. The bill prohibits the FDEP Secretary from delegating such authority to a city, a county, or another unit of local government through a local pollution control program. Sen. Ben Albritton (R-Wauchula) sponsored the Senate companion bill, SB 1210.

**AIF supported this legislation** because it protects the normal and customary procedures for environmental assessments on agricultural lands. Further, AIF supported unifying regulatory authority over site assessments for current or former agricultural lands by making the FDEP

the sole authority for evaluating environmental conditions and assessing potential liability for the presence of contaminants on these properties. HB 909 is awaiting action by the Governor.

## **Water Quality Accountability**

### **Environmental Resources**

As a peninsular state, water matters. In the past two years, the Florida Legislature has provided over \$1.1 billion to the South Florida Water Management District (District). This level of investment by the State in Everglades restoration and water resource development requires additional accountability. SB 2508 by the Senate Committee on Appropriations provides a framework for ensuring that the District continues to fulfill each of its statutory responsibilities of flood control, water supply, water quality, and natural systems while implementing large scale ecosystem restoration projects.

**AIF supported this legislation** as it addresses existing water quality and quantity issues. Florida’s businesses and citizens alike rely on access to clean, uncontaminated water. SB 2508 is awaiting action by the Governor.

## **Local Government Overreach**

### **Local Business Protection Act**

Far too often, local government mandates directly affect business operations—whether intentional or not. For Florida to maintain the status of the best state in the nation to do business, we must address these barriers to success.

HB 569 by Rep. Lawrence McClure (R-Dover) and SB 620 by Sen. Travis Hutson (R-Palm Coast) allows businesses a process to recover losses from a local government when the enactment or amendment of an ordinance or charter provision causes at least a 15% loss of profits to the business, if the business has been legally operating for at least 3 years preceding the ordinance.

**AIF supported this legislation** because it grants businesses the right to challenge in court unjust and arbitrary local ordinances that create barriers to business which leads to jobs lost and a decelerated economy. Business is the lifeblood of Florida, and owners deserve the right to protect their livelihood. SB 620 is awaiting action by the Governor.

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## Local Ordinances

In the same vein as the Local Business Protection Act, HB 403 by Rep. Mike Giallombardo (R-Cape Coral) sought to grant businesses more protections by:

- Requiring counties and municipalities to prepare a “business impact statement” before the adoption of any proposed ordinance, which must be published on the local government’s website and contain specific information;
- Providing for expedited court review of challenged ordinances; and
- Establishing criteria for courts to consider when determining if an ordinance is arbitrary or unreasonable.

Unfortunately, HB 403 and SB 280, the Senate companion by Sen. Travis Hutson (R-Palm Coast), failed to get through the committee process. However, AIF will continue to support legislation that bolsters the rights of businesses to recoup undue losses at the hands of local governments to maintain a prosperous business climate in Florida.

## Preemption of Local Government Wage Mandates

HB 943 by Rep. Joe Harding (R-Williston) prohibited local governments from enacting, maintaining, or enforcing any wage mandates in an amount greater than the state minimum wage rate calculated pursuant to the state’s Constitution, and provided that any wage mandates in conflict with the state minimum wage are void.

Although HB 943 died in the committee process, **AIF will continue to support** legislation that allows Florida businesses to adhere to state or federal wage requirements, thus eliminating onerous regulations set by municipalities.

## Employee Organizations Representing Public Employees

The Florida Constitution forbids an employer from denying citizens the right to work based on membership or non-membership in any employee organization. HB 1197 by Rep. Scott Plakon (R-Longwood) required a public employee who wants to join an employee organization to sign a membership authorization form that contains the following acknowledgement:

*I acknowledge and understand that Florida is a right-to-work state, and that union membership is not required as a condition of employment. I understand that union membership and payment of union dues and assessments are voluntary and that I may not be discriminated against in any manner if I refuse to join or financially support a union.*

The bill required an employee organization to revoke a public employee’s membership upon receipt of the employee’s written request. If the public employee must complete a form to request revocation, the form may not require the public employee to provide a reason for membership revocation.

While HB 1197 died in the Senate, **AIF will continue to support** legislation that helps Florida compete for and protect workers and further enhance the economic development in the state.

## Driving Economic Recovery

### Florida Tourism Marketing

It is no secret that Florida is a hotspot tourism destination. From the miles of coastline, the amusement parks and the weather, tourism dollars are a massive economic driver in the state. VISIT FLORIDA is the name for the Florida Tourism Industry Marketing Corporation, a non-profit that serves as Florida’s statewide destination marketing organization and represents the state’s tourism industry. Under SB 434 by Sen. Ed Hooper (R-Clearwater), the scheduled repeal date for VISIT FLORIDA and the Division of Tourism Marketing is extended from October 1, 2023, to October 1, 2028. Rep. Linda Chaney (R-St. Petersburg) sponsored the House companion bill, HB 489.

**AIF supports** investment in building a world-class marketing engine with top talent, analytics, and funding that develops and executes data-driven branding strategies to bolster tourism and further the economic growth of Florida. SB 434 is awaiting action by the Governor.

### Rural Development

Florida has a variety of economic grant and loan programs to aid the development of rural and otherwise economically distressed regions of the state. HB 685 by Rep. Brad Drake (R-DeFuniak Springs) reduced the required non-state match amount for the Regional

Rural Development Grants Program from 25% to 15% and allowed in-kind contributions to count toward this threshold. The bill removed the requirement that repaid funds from the Rural Community Development Revolving Loan Fund be matched to be retained to fund future loans. Finally, the bill revised the uses of the Rural Infrastructure Fund to remove the requirement that grants be linked to financing specific projects. It increased the proportion of an infrastructure project that may be covered by the grant from 50% to 75% and increased the maximum grant for infrastructure feasibility studies, design and engineering activities, or other infrastructure planning and preparation activities, to \$300,000 for all projects.

HB 685 died in the House; however, **AIF continues to support** legislative efforts to increase economic development in Florida's rural areas by increasing job growth and access to well-paying jobs.

## Energy: Maintaining a Robust Industry

### Net Metering

Net metering is a metering and billing methodology where customer-owned renewable generation (such as rooftop solar panels) is allowed to offset the customer's

electricity consumption from utility providers. Under net metering, customers are credited for excess energy produced which flows back to the grid. A meter is used to record both electricity drawn from the grid and excess electricity that flows to the grid from the customer. HB 741 by Rep. Lawrence McClure (R-Dover) addresses issues in the current net metering framework to better allow utility providers to serve businesses and consumers alike. Sen. Jennifer Bradley (R-Orange Park) sponsored the Senate companion bill, SB 1024.

**AIF supported this legislation** because it allows Florida's utility providers to best serve the state and the businesses located here while reducing the financial burden passed on to the general customer base. HB 741 is waiting on action by the Governor.

### Electric Vehicle Transportation Electrification Plan

HB 737 by Rep. David Borrero (R-Sweetwater), which died in the committee process, required the Florida Public Service Commission (Commission) to adopt rules for an electric vehicle (EV) transportation electrification plan to facilitate the deployment of EV charging infrastructure and prohibits investor-owned utilities (IOUs) from using rate base investment in the ownership and operation of EV charging stations.

Staying in the know on Florida politics is no longer an every other year effort.



## Is Your Company Ready?

New data, shifting demographics, and special elections all require Florida businesses to be educated on the very latest information all year, every year. Through the efforts of the **AIF Political Council (AIFPC)**, members are more informed and better prepared for Florida elections.

AIFPC provides access to information and insight on candidates, exclusive data and analyses, and reports on the overall political environment in Florida.

For more information about AIF's political operations and to experience the benefits of being a Political Council member, please contact AIF President & CEO Brewster Bevis at 850.224.7173 or at [bbevis@aif.com](mailto:bbevis@aif.com).

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The bill authorized intervention in certain Commission proceedings by EV charging station providers. Specifically, any entity that provides EV charging stations to the public may intervene and participate in any IOUs rate-making or other Commission proceeding involving rates, terms, or conditions. Such proceedings include the rate structure paid by or proposed to be paid by customers for EV charging offered to the public.

Of great concern to AIF, there was no qualifier that the intervenor be a customer in the IOU's service territory, which would normally be required to prove standing. For example, an EV charging station based in California, with no charging stations in Florida, could intervene in a proceeding in Florida. It is unclear what the purpose of this intervention is if an IOU is prohibited from including EV charging stations in its rate base.

**AIF will continue to oppose** legislation that burdens businesses with unnecessary regulations in introducing EV charging stations while simultaneously asking the Florida Public Service Commission to regulate an entire industry over which it has no jurisdiction.

## Addressing the Staffing Shortage

### Clinical Laboratory Testing

As we have all seen, there is a major staffing shortage amongst the health care community. SB 1374 by Sen. Ana Maria Rodriguez (R-Doral) addresses those shortages by allowing nurses to provide clinical testing outside of a central laboratory or hospital. AIF proudly supported this bill to ensure Floridians have greater access to high-quality care.

Currently, advanced practice registered nurses, registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, and licensed clinical laboratory personnel are permitted to perform testing at alternate sites (lab testing under control of a hospital but not onsite) which allows for bedside, ER and operating room testing. A freestanding emergency department (FED) is a facility that receives individuals for emergency care and is structurally separate from a hospital. Only licensed clinical laboratory personnel may perform clinical laboratory testing in a FED. The bill exempts individuals who perform alternate-site testing outside of a central laboratory of a hospital or at a hospital-based, off-campus emergency department from clinical laboratory personnel licensure requirements. This allows all

individuals, not just licensed clinical laboratory personnel, to perform alternate site testing within a hospital or in a FED. Rep. Lawrence McClure (R-Dover) sponsored the House companion bill, HB 931.

**AIF supported this legislation** because permitting registered nurses to perform moderately complex lab tests outside of a clinical lab, but within a hospital department or an off-site hospital-based emergency department, will ensure greater access to quality care. SB 1374 is awaiting action by the Governor.

### Criminal History Information

The staffing shortage is widespread and is affecting every industry and every business. Unfortunately, SB 1302 by Sen. Danny Burgess (R-Zephyrhills), which addressed an underlying factor of this shortage, died in the Senate. The bill revised the process by which a regulatory board within the Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR) may consider the criminal background of license applicants. The bill revised the process for a court-ordered sealing of a criminal record to allow a criminal history record to be sealed if the record has been automatically sealed by the State of Florida. Rep. Spencer Roach (R-Fort Myers) sponsored the House companion bill, HB 1259.

**AIF will continue to support** legislative efforts that allow individuals with sealed records at the state level to petition local governments to further seal their records. Businesses in Florida drive the economy and employers need employees. A sealed record at the state level is indicative of amends made, and therefore, these subjects should have access to well-paying jobs that keep Florida moving forward.

## Controlling Insurance Rates & Frivolous Litigation

### Property Insurance

SB 1728 by Sen. Jim Boyd (R-Bradenton) addressed issues in the property insurance market but, unfortunately, it died in the House. This bill was an AIF priority, and we will continue to advocate for meaningful insurance reform to lower rates and foster a great business climate in Florida.

The bill addressed contractor solicitations related to property insurance roof claims, the type of home-

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owners' insurance coverage that insurers must offer for roof losses, and various aspects of Citizens Property Insurance Corporation. The bill allowed contractors to make written or electronic communications to potential consumers to contact a contractor or public adjuster for the purpose of making an insurance claim for roof damage only if the following disclosures were included:

- The consumer is responsible for payment of any insurance deductible;
- It is insurance fraud punishable as a felony of the third degree for a contractor to pay, waive, or rebate all or part of an insurance deductible applicable to payment to the contractor for repairs to property covered by a property insurance policy; and
- It is insurance fraud punishable as a felony of the third degree to intentionally file an insurance claim containing any false, incomplete, or misleading information.

Although SB 1728 died, **AIF will continue to support** legislative efforts that prevent unscrupulous actors from taking advantage of property insurance disputes which keeps insurance rates low and allows growth in all Florida businesses.

### **Applicability of Payments for Nonpreferred Provider Services**

Most health plans have a list of doctors, hospitals, and other providers that have agreed to participate in the plan's network. In-network providers have a contract with a plan that limits the amount of money a provider may charge insureds. HB 1529 by Rep. John Snyder (R-Stuart) required an individual health insurer to apply an insured's payments to an out-of-network, nonpreferred provider to the deductible and out-of-pocket maximum obligations under a health insurance policy.

HB 1529 died in the committee process, but of great concern to AIF was the lack of oversight or vetting that can occur with out-of-network providers. Doctors are vetted for quality to be included in a health insurer's network and with quality providers comes a lower cost of high-quality care. While some doctors may have low costs, they may also provide low quality care.

**AIF will continue to oppose** legislation that leads to higher costs to individuals and in turn an increase in

health care costs and insurance rates to the businesses that offer health coverage to their employees.

### **Motor Vehicle Insurance**

SB 150 by Sen. Danny Burgess (R-Zephyrhills) and HB 1525 by Rep. Erin Grall (R-Vero Beach) would have repealed the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law which requires every owner and registrant of a motor vehicle in this state to maintain Personal Injury Protection (PIP) coverage. By repealing PIP, the bill removed PIP's tort liability limitation, making drivers at fault in an accident fully liable for any damages they caused.

While both SB 150 and HB 1525 died in the committee process, **AIF will continue to oppose** future legislation in this form as it simply shifts insurance costs—much like squeezing a balloon—rather than comprehensively lowering them. AIF believes it is critical that any discussions to repeal PIP and move to Bodily Injury coverage be deliberative, thoughtful, and involve all stakeholders from the outset.

### **Injured or Deceased Employee/Department of Financial Services**

Prior to the passage of this public records exemption in 2017, the Division of Workers' Compensation would receive approximately 90 requests monthly—from law firms—for the names and contact information of injured or deceased workers reported in the previous month. These law firms would then use the information to solicit the nearly 5,000 employees per month that are injured on the job. Such solicitation violated the privacy of injured workers for the sole and exclusive purpose of driving litigation. In 2017, AIF spearheaded the effort to protect this information. This year's SB 7018, signed into law by the Governor, now makes these protections permanent. HB 7013, the House companion bill, was sponsored by the House Government Operations Subcommittee.

**AIF supported this legislation** protecting the private information of injured or deceased employees. Employees and employers deserve to be treated fairly in the workers' compensation process, and keeping this loophole closed avoids unnecessary interference by those seeking to exploit the system.

### **Hurricane Catastrophe Fund**

SB 468 by Sen. Keith Perry (R-Gainesville) aimed to



amend several statutes to better clarify intent and fix insurance-industry issues. Specifically addressed, the Florida Hurricane Catastrophe Fund is a state-run program that provides reinsurance coverage. Its capable management over the last decade has allowed Florida to benefit from this reinsurance backup without the need to resort to assessments on private insurance policies. This bill strengthened those protections to help avoid further disruptions to the insurance market.

Despite unanimously passing all three Senate committee assignments, SB 468 ultimately died after being amended by the House. **AIF will continue to support** maintaining the stability of the Florida Hurricane Catastrophe Fund which acts as a safety net for all Floridians.

## Business Notices

### Legal Notices

In 2021, the Florida Legislature passed legislation that modernized public notice. It was a collective piece of legislation that took input from a variety of stakeholders, including the business community, and, importantly, ensured businesses and individuals would not lose access to critical information gained from public notice—most

especially regarding private property rights, including judicial notice of sale.

HB 7049 by the House Judiciary Committee gives a governmental agency the option to publish legal notices on a publicly accessible website instead of in a print newspaper, essentially repealing and replacing the legislation from last year, which will negatively impact businesses.

**AIF will continue to oppose** internet-only public notice, as it eliminates the wide net created by print media and the internet combined. Webpages are present one day and gone the next; the internet is an inherently unreliable platform for critical information. HB 7049 is awaiting action by the Governor.

## Shielding the Health Care Community from Frivolous Lawsuits

### COVID-19-Related Claims Against Health Care Providers

SB 7014, sponsored by the Senate Judiciary Committee and signed into law by the Governor, extends the length of time that health care providers receive liability protections from COVID-19-related claims.

# What's in a Name? Everything.



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With the most talented lobby team in Florida, AIF can help your company achieve a greater level of success in the State Capitol.

#### Tools of AIF:

- State & Federal Legislative Advocacy
- Legislative Session Issue Briefing
- Issue Advocacy Campaigns; Statewide & Local
- Industry Centric Council Advocacy
- Issue & Campaign Related Polling; Statewide & Local
- Political Candidate Interviews
- Issue-Oriented Focus Groups
- Business Centric Publications
- Issue-Based Statewide Conferences

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According to legislation passed during the 2021 Legislative Session, liability protections from COVID-19-related claims apply to claims accruing within one year after the effective date of the act, which was March 29, 2022. The bill extends the application period of the liability protections, making them applicable to claims accruing before June 1, 2023. The net result of the bill is to extend the liability protections for about 14 months, from March 29, 2022, to June 1, 2023.

**AIF supported this legislation** because it protects the Florida health care community, who has been on the frontline during the pandemic, from frivolous and costly litigation by plaintiffs suing to settle.

## Tax Relief for Florida's Job Creators

### Corporate Income Tax

Each year, Florida adopts the federal Internal Revenue Code for purposes of the state corporate income tax code. SB 1090 by Sen. Joe Gruters (R-Sarasota) updated Florida's Corporate Income Tax Code and:

- Adopted the changes originally made in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 to section 174 of the Internal Revenue Code, relating to the treatment of research and development expenditures;
- Allowed taxpayers to use the bonus depreciation deduction for property placed in service in taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2023; and
- Revised the calculation of the business interest expense deduction for Florida tax purposes for taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2023, to allow taxpayers to deduct the amount that would have been allowed prior to the federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017.

Regrettably, SB 1090 died in the committee process which will lead to an increase in the corporate income tax rate for Florida businesses. **AIF will continue to support** legislation that decouples Florida's Corporate Income Tax from provisions enacted in late 2017 by the federal government to support job and business growth.

Please visit our webpage at [AIF.com](http://AIF.com) for more information and reports on various other issues.

## Expansion of Broadband Internet Infrastructure

### Broadband Infrastructure & Broadband Pole Replacement Trust Fund

The pandemic brought with it a new age of working from home and remote learning. While inconsistent internet coverage in rural areas is not a new problem, the reliance on broadband for work and school helped reiterate the need to expand quality access.

Several bills were filed to help address this issue but did not make it through the committee process. SB 1800 by Sen. Jim Boyd (R-Bradenton) and HB 1543 by Rep. Josie Tomkow (R-Polk City) created the Broadband Pole Replacement Program. The program would reimburse eligible broadband internet service providers for their costs incurred for the removal and replacement of existing utility poles in areas of Florida that are unserved by broadband internet service.

Two additional casualties of the process, SB 1802 by Sen. Jim Boyd (R-Bradenton) and HB 1545 by Rep. Josie Tomkow (R-Polk City), created the Broadband Pole Replacement Trust Fund to ensure funding for the broadband expansion program.

**AIF will continue to support efforts** to increase economic development in Florida's rural areas by expanding access to broadband internet which allows residents to connect with employers and educators and, in turn, strengthens the workforce and access to high wage jobs.

## Revising Antiquated Regulations

### Recreational Off-Highway Vehicles Weight Limits

As technology progresses, so too should industry regulations. SB 474 by Sen. Keith Perry (R-Gainesville) increases the dry weight allowed for recreational off-highway vehicles (ROV) from 2,500 lbs. to 3,500 lbs. This increase is necessary to allow for the development of electric powered ROVs because the battery components often weigh significantly more than internal combustion vehicles. Rep. Brett Hage (R-Oxford) sponsored the House companion bill, HB 145.

**AIF supported this legislation** because it encourages revisions to outdated regulations that bolster the business climate and drives competition for new and better products for Florida's businesses and consumers. SB 474 is awaiting action by the Governor.



# Associated Industries of Florida (AIF) Policy Councils & Coalition

Councils bring together unique sectors of the business community in order to develop and promote issues vital to those respective industries.

These Councils are the backbone of policy making at AIF as the member companies of each Council voice their issues, concerns and ideas and help develop the policies that are presented to our Board of Directors for approval.

## Want to Participate?

As a member, you can take a leadership role in the public policy issues that affect your company. Membership is required to participate on AIF's Councils and to receive our member communications.

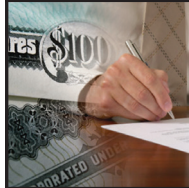
To learn more about AIF membership services and/or apply for membership, please contact:

**Adam Basford, Vice President  
of Governmental Affairs at  
850.224.7173 or  
abasford@aif.com**



### **Environmental Sustainability & Agriculture Council (ESAC)**

Addressing recycling, water quality, product stewardship, and other environmental issues important to the business community.



### **Financial Services Council (FSC)**

Insurance and financial industries, working in concert with other interested parties, to secure a stable fiscal climate for Florida.



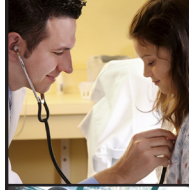
### **Florida Energy Council (FEC)**

Developing resources to meet Florida's future energy needs—producers, suppliers, storage facilities, marketers, retailers, wholesalers and users.



### **Florida Transportation & Maritime Council (FTMC)**

Ensuring their continued economic prowess in a global marketplace for businesses that operate or support operations at any of Florida's 14 deep water ports.



### **Health Care Council (HCC)**

Working to craft a more functional and sustainable health care delivery system for Florida, incorporating the core principles of access, quality and affordability.



### **Information Technology Council (ITC)**

Promoting Florida's move to the cutting edge of technology to meet the demands of a diverse, fast-growing population, while balancing the needs of the state and private sector.



### **Manufacturing, Aerospace & Defense Council (MAD)**

Advancing the interests of Florida's manufacturing community to help Florida diversify its economy and provide more high-wage and high value-added jobs in the state.



### **Taxation Council (TC)**

State tax revenues are necessary to fund essential state services and programs, but those needs must be balanced against the impact of taxation on Florida's businesses.



### **H2O Coalition**

Supporting science-based solutions and adequate funding to address Florida's water quality and water capacity issues.



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