



2024

A Year in Review



The Voice
of Florida
Business
Since 1920



ABOUT AIF

Known as “The Voice of Florida Business” in the Sunshine State, Associated Industries of Florida (AIF) has represented the principles of prosperity and free enterprise before the three branches of state government since 1920. A voluntary association of diversified businesses, AIF was created to foster an economic climate in Florida conducive to the growth, development, and welfare of industry and business and the people of the state.

A not-for-profit association, AIF is owned by its members, which hail from every corner of the state and represent every segment of Florida’s private sector. Through AIF, they join together to ensure that the principles of economic liberty get a fair hearing before the state’s elected officials, Supreme Court justices, and executive agencies.

Every project undertaken by AIF is guided by one simple idea: **The good fortune of our state hinges on the**

prosperity of our state’s employers. AIF works to lessen the burdens government would place on employers, while seeking solutions to conditions that threaten their success.

OUR MISSION

Every employee and our Board of Directors work every day to achieve these objectives for our members:

- **To promote and support policies that protect and support Florida employers.**
- **To vigorously protect our members from harmful policies that inhibit their ability to run their businesses.**
- **To be forward-thinking and in constant pursuit of new and innovative ideas that will continue to move the business community toward success to enhance the general welfare and prosperity of the common wealth of Florida as a whole.**



A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

As Chairman of the AIF Board of Directors, it has been my honor to help lead this organization in its mission to continue to be the most impactful voice in the state capital for employers in Florida. The Board is made up of some of the finest business minds in the state. The men and women who volunteer their time as a Board member do so because, like me, they believe and support the efforts of AIF.



Why is AIF considered the leader in Florida on advocating for the business community for over 100 years? Because it stays true to its original mission that the founders set in 1920. A no-nonsense fearless voice that draws a line in the sand defending its members regardless of whether it is popular or not. No fluff, no half-way efforts, no seeking the easy way out on tough issues to appease those that disagree with our position.

When you are a member of AIF you can count on these things:

- AIF's efforts are impactful to the success of your business.
- AIF relishes standing on the front line and defending Florida's employers.
- AIF's reputation is second to none when it comes to on the ground battles in the Capitol.
- AIF also is heavily involved in Florida politics to ensure that support is given to those candidates who support Florida's employers

If you are a member, thank you for being part of this great organization. If you are not a member, I encourage you to ask around to those who know who is really effective and those who aren't. Then come sit down with AIF leadership and find out how you can be part of the exciting things going on at AIF.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gordon Bailey'.

Chairman
Gordon Bailey
Vice President, Public Affairs and Community Engagement
Florida Blue

AIF convenes important voices in Florida to discuss critical topics within the business community. We are proud to be part of such a distinguished group.

Melissa Seixas, Duke
Energy's state president in Florida



A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

As we review our efforts from 2024, I am proud of the great work that our staff, Board of Directors and partners have accomplished. At the same time, I am full of excitement about where AIF is headed and what we can accomplish for our members.

I hope you will take a few moments and review this publication as we walk through the myriad of activities and efforts we took on behalf of our members. You will notice that everything we do is member centric and our priority is to always ensure that every effort supports the employers in Florida. After all, it is their stellar effort, day in and day out, that keeps our economy going.

We engage with our members through advocacy, politics and our Foundation. We do this through various meetings and events throughout the year, as this publication outlines.

You will read about the major business issues that our advocacy team tackled during the legislative session.

Our team is the finest in the state capitol, representing the business community with many decades of experience. It is our policy councils, made up of our members, that push the final agenda that we will support during the legislative session.

As 2024 was a big election year with many state and federal races, the efforts of our Center for Political Strategy were a smashing success. Along with numerous polling and focus group events throughout the year, The Center was also heavily involved in “on the ground” efforts in several key races around the state. I am pleased to report that we, along with the support of some of our members, were successful in those efforts. Ensuring that candidates understand and support the efforts of the men and women that make up the business community is our top priority.

Meanwhile, our Foundation was involved in several important efforts including recycling projects, various business roundtables and assisting AIF with the implementation of the new Coalition on Artificial Intelligence which is a growing concern for everyone’s business in the coming years.

Finally, all of these projects and efforts are supported by our annual events throughout the year. These events bring together business leaders, legislators and other stakeholders to have meaningful discussions on the challenges facing our state. These events include the Session Briefing, Summer Political & Policy Retreat, Candidate Interviews, Fall Policy & Political Retreat and the Florida Water Forum.

When you review this report, I believe that you will get a good understanding of how AIF spends every day supporting our members with all of these efforts.

Brewster B. Bevis
President & Chief Executive Officer

OUR 2024 SPONSORS

On the following pages, you will see information on all the various meetings and events we held throughout the year. **These events would not be possible without the support of our partners and sponsors.**

Our sponsors' commitment helps to further support AIF's mission on behalf of our members across the state.

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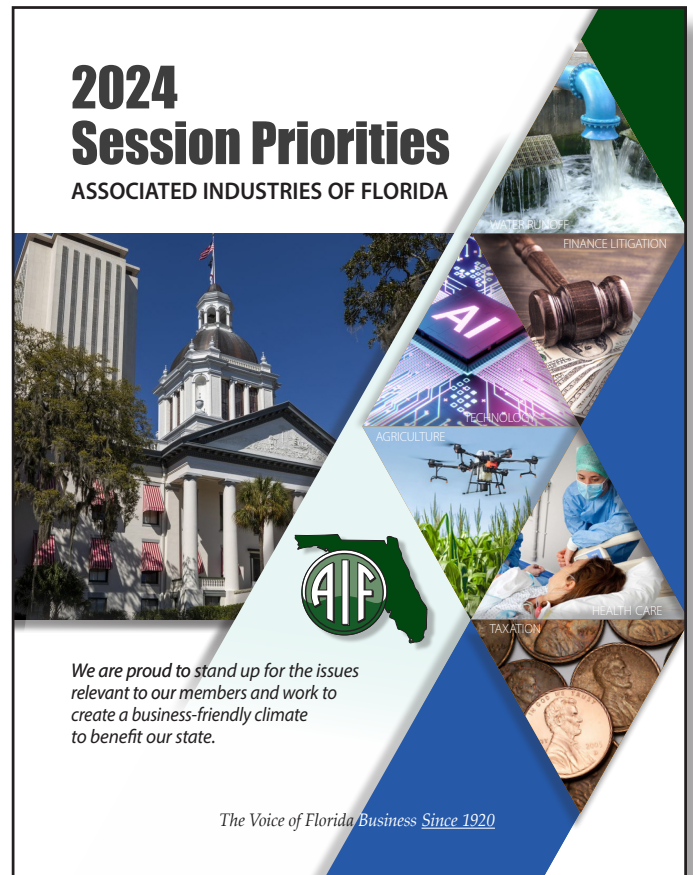
RELEASING OUR PRIORITIES

In January, after collaboration with our policy councils and Board of Directors, we released our *2024 Session Priorities*.

The issues laid out in detail within the publication summarize the guiding principles which shaped AIF's 2024 legislative positions and are what AIF's Advocacy Team worked diligently to support.

For more than 100 years, AIF has been the go-to organization for business advocacy in Florida. The AIF team has perfected driving collaboration amongst employers to deliver massive legislative wins for the business community.

José Gonzalez, Director, Government & Industry Relations at Walt Disney Parks & Resorts



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STAFF



Brewster B. Bevis
President & Chief Executive Officer



Adam D. Basford
Vice President – Governmental Affairs



J. Tanner Warwick
Legislative Assistant

2024 ADVOCACY TEAM



Slater Bayliss
The Advocacy Partners



Leslie Dughi
Metz, Husband & Daughton, PA



Melissa Joiner Ramba
Floridian Partners



Jorge Chamizo
Floridian Partners



Cory Guzzo
Floridian Partners



Steve Schale
The Advocacy Partners



Chris Chaney
The Advocacy Partners



Ashley Kalifeh
Capital City Consulting



Stephen W. Shiver
The Advocacy Partners



Chris Coker
Coker Consulting



Andy Palmer
Metz, Husband & Daughton, PA



Jim Spratt
Magnolia Strategies



Jon Costello
Capitol Strategy Group



Toby Philpot
Floridian Partners



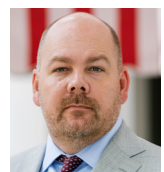
Sarah B. Suskey
The Advocacy Partners



Charles F. Dudley
Floridian Partners



W. Mark Powell
Capitol Advisory Group



Jeff Woodburn
The Advocacy Partners

KEY VICTORIES DURING THE LEGISLATIVE SESSION



Significant Reforms to the Healthcare System

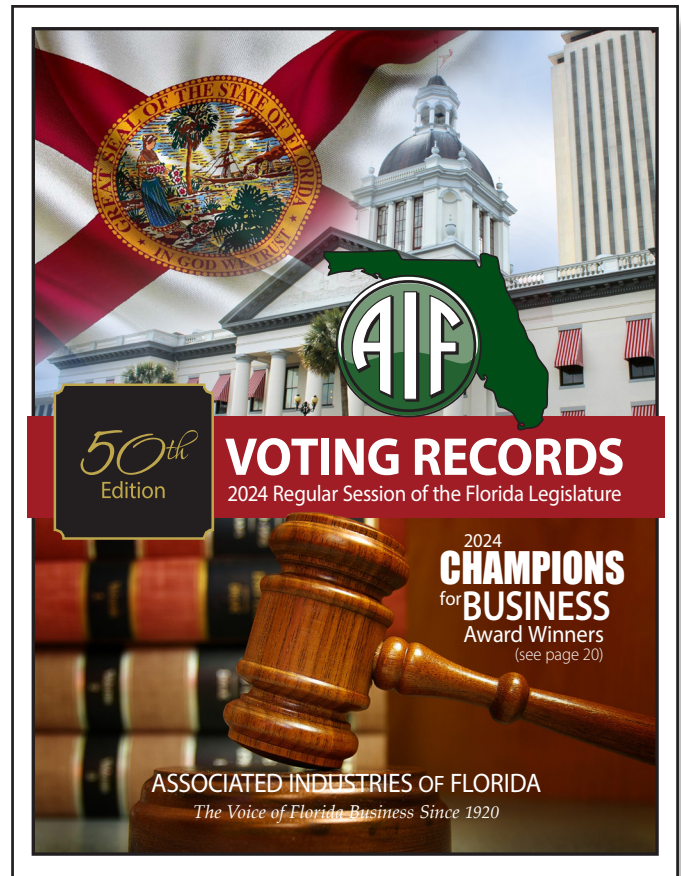
The legislative package referred to as the “Live Healthy Package” made significant reforms to Florida’s health-care system by establishing new programs for the training and development of new professionals in the healthcare industry. Some of the initiatives provide for student loan assistance, expanded telehealth services, and the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact that allows licensed healthcare professionals from other states to practice in Florida. The Live Healthy package will invest almost \$1.2 billion to greatly expand Florida’s healthcare workforce and provide innovative solutions to the shortage of desperately needed healthcare professionals.

Employment Regulations

Some local governments have enacted or proposed ordinances that create a patchwork of regulatory requirements and exceed other state and federal requirements. Several bills worked to standardize these regulations with regard to both minimum and prevailing wages as well as worker heat protection ordinances. Measures during the 2024 session promoted free market principles and ensured consistency by prohibiting local governments from having any control over the wages or benefits of businesses doing business with the local government. They also support regulatory consistency in workplace safety regulations that prevent a patchwork of local heat ordinances that could include unattainable standards which do little to protect employees while opening an onslaught of fines, penalties, and other punitive measures.

Beginning the Implementation of AI in Florida

A new law created the “Government Technology Modernization Council.” This council, composed of executive branch agency heads, along with members appointed by the Governor, Senate President, and Speaker of the House, will oversee and advise the Governor and the Legislature on Florida’s rollout of AI in state government and the private sector. AIF supports the increased dialogue at the state level about the beneficial elements of AI and how it can have a positive impact on Florida businesses. While creating proper boundaries and guidelines surrounding AI is important, it is also vital that the beneficial uses and innovation created by the proper use of AI are not unnecessarily stifled.



50th Anniversary of the AIF Voting Records

AIF was pleased to present the 50th edition of the Voting Records in 2024. AIF was the first and, for many years, the only business group to deliver such information to Florida employers. The purpose of the report is the same now as it was 50 years ago, to provide the business community with a metric to determine if a legislator supports businesses with the power of their vote. This year’s report covered 2,498 votes cast by legislators on 33 bills, making it the most exhaustive and complete record of the Legislature’s approach to Florida employers’ concerns.

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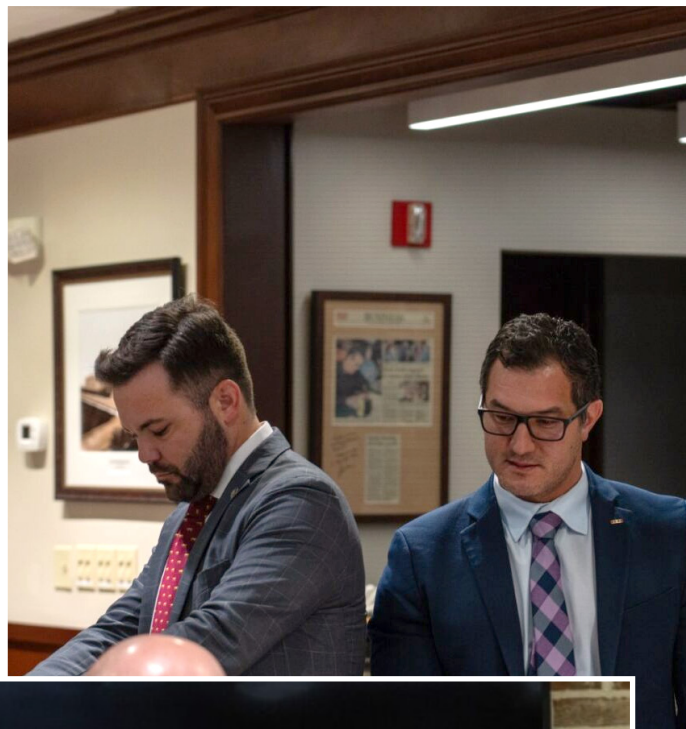
Foundation of Associated Industries of Florida



LUNCH & LEARN SERIES

In January, the Foundation of Associated Industries of Florida held a round table discussion as part of the Lunch & Learn series on artificial intelligence and its role in the business community.

Representatives from high tech companies, Florida businesses and invited legislators made for a very diverse and fruitful discussion.



Chris Hein of Google provided valuable input on the AI issue.



Sen. Joe Gruters (R), Rep. Christine Hunschofsky (D) listen to concerns from business leaders.

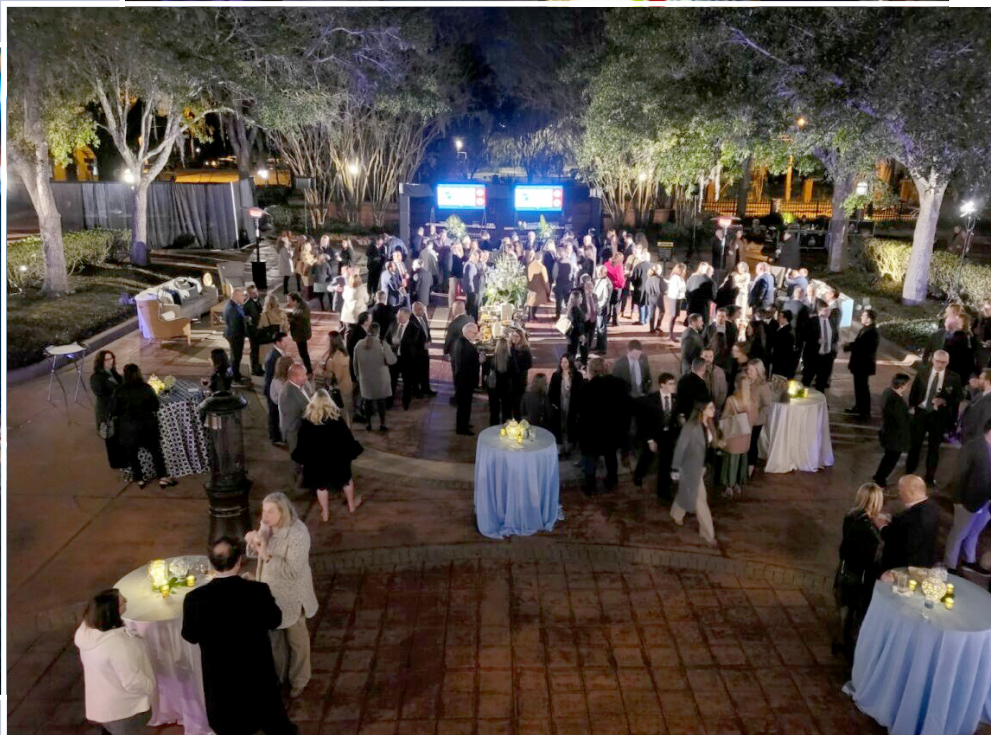


WELCOME BACK LEGISLATORS!

Held in January due to the early Legislative Session in 2024, the reception brings AIF members together with Legislators, business leaders and other key attendees.

Over the last 15 years, every major issue of concern to our many companies has been addressed through the success of the AIF policy councils and their broad reach across many industries.

Rick Murrell, CEO of Saltchuk Logistics



VIP Reception



Chairman's Circle

A VIP reception is held before the main reception for our top-tier sponsors and special invited guests.

AIF Coalition for the Future of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

in Business



AIF Leads the Way on Artificial Intelligence for Florida Business

In early February, AIF announced that it was creating the Coalition on the Future of Artificial Intelligence for Business. The Coalition will lead the way for the business community in tackling this emerging critical issue for employers.

Coalition Mission

Bring business sectors together to:

- (1) develop guidelines for accountable and innovative AI policies and
- (2) educate and engage with policymakers to ensure a responsible regulatory structure.



There is strong consensus among elected officials and business leaders in the United States that thoughtful measures are necessary to prevent bad actors from using AI to impose harm to others or threaten our national security. As we consider proposals for legislation or regulation, it is critically important that policies continue to foster innovation and promote the adaptation of emerging technologies.

– Brewster B. Bevis, President & CEO, AIF

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AIF SUMMER POLICY & POLITICAL RETREAT

The 2024 Summer Policy & Political Retreat held at Hammock Beach in Palm Coast, provided members with a good mix of both policy and political discussions.

Along with meetings of policy councils on Energy, Health Care, Manufacturing, Aerospace & Defense, Transportation & Maritime, Taxation, Environmental Sustainability & Agriculture, and Financial Services, the new AIF Coalition on Artificial Intelligence also held a strategic meeting.

Renowned national pollster, Jim McLaughlin, provided the latest results of AIF's statewide poll as well as some intel from national politics. Meanwhile, members of the AIF Center for Political Strategy had a deep dive analysis on Florida statewide polling, strategic legislative district polling, and focus groups that have been held and other state and national political data.

CFO Jimmy Patronis gave attendees his usual crowd-pleasing update on his office and the various issues they are handling on behalf of all Floridians.

AIF VP of Political Operations,
Jeremy Sheftel

Florida CFO Jimmy Patronis



National Pollster Jim McLaughlin



HONORING EXTRAORDINARY EFFORT



Representative Jennifer Canady (R-Lakeland) receives her 2024 Champion for Business award.



Rep. Tiffany Esposito (R-Ft. Myers) receives her 2024 Champion for Business award.



2024 CHAMPIONS FOR BUSINESS

AIF and the business community recognized these nine legislators who provided outstanding support on critical issues important to our members during the 2024 Session:

Senate President

Kathleen Passidomo

Senator Danny Burgess

Senator Nick DiCeglie

Senator Jay Trumbull

Senator Clay Yarborough

Representative Jennifer Canady

Representative Tiffany Esposito

Representative Mike Giallombardo

Representative Toby Overdorf

AIF staff congratulates some of the 100% voting record winners.

Fall Political and Policy Retreat

AIF was honored to have **Florida's Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Wilton Simpson**, as a keynote speaker to open the event. Commissioner Simpson has been a friend to AIF and the business community dating back to his time as a state senator, Senate President, and now as Commissioner of Agriculture.

Commissioner Simpson discussed the Florida Department of Agriculture's response to Hurricane Helene and what the department can do to assist the agricultural industries affected by the storm. He also briefly discussed his experience working with AIF on Florida's agriculture issues.



AIF is grateful to Commissioner Simpson for his steadfast efforts on behalf of Florida farmers and is committed to work alongside Commissioner Simpson in continuing to grow Florida agriculture.



Policy Councils



AIF Policy Council Sessions were held and included AIF staff, AIF members, legislators, and candidates. The councils meeting included the Florida Energy Council, Florida Financial Services Council, Florida Transportation & Maritime Council, Manufacturing, Aerospace & Defense Council and the IT Council, along with the newly formed AI Coalition.

The goal of each council was to formulate the final changes to the 2025 *AIF Session Priorities* publication that will be released early 2025. In the meetings, industry experts, legislators, and candidates discussed ways to craft the best language, so legislators know AIF's priorities and the position of AIF on a variety of issues.



AIF POLICY COUNCILS

Environmental Sustainability & Agriculture Council

Energy Council

Financial Services Council

Health Care Council

IT Council

Manufacturing, Aerospace & Defense Council

Taxation Council

Transportation & Maritime Council



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AIF's Center for Political Strategy is a culmination of listening to the needs of our members and Florida's top employers. Their desire was for a robust, complete, and comprehensive political entity that could improve the political landscape for the business community. The goal is to ensure that pro-business candidates, Republican or Democrat, are elected to the Legislature so that legislation which supports employers, not harm them, can be achieved.

Staying in-the-know on Florida politics is no longer an every other year effort. New data, shifting demographics, and Special Elections all require Florida businesses to be educated on the very latest information all year, every year.



- Data
- Intel
- Strategies



Engage
Viable
Candidates



Business
Friendly
Legislature

What we are doing here at AIF in the political arena for our members is practically unparalleled in any other state. This is not a short-term plan. The Center has a long-term vision for the business community's political efforts.



Candidate Interviews

During the 2024 election season, the AIF Political Council held candidate interviews across the state and interviewed over 200 candidates for the Florida Legislature. Members of the Council were able to hear the position on key business issues directly from the candidates.

Quarterly Briefings

The Center held quarterly briefings for members to provide the latest intel and data on Florida's political landscape.

Polling & Focus Groups

The Center did statewide quarterly polling and focus groups throughout the year to monitor the mood of the electorate in Florida on both candidates and issues.

On the Ground Efforts

The Center not only interviewed candidates and gathered key data from polling, it also did direct on the ground efforts in key districts where candidates that supported Florida employers were being attacked. The efforts included strategic polling, campaign contributions via our PAC's, campaign mailers and coordinated efforts with our members and the candidates.



The Florida Water Forum



Florida Commissioner of Agriculture Wilton Simpson

AIF was proud to host the 2024 Florida Water Forum, the 14th edition of the event, in Orlando, Florida at Rosen Shingle Creek. Like past Water Forums, attendees were privy to a broad array of specifically tailored panels that cover the most important topics relating to Florida environmental/water policy. The goal every year at the Water Forum is for AIF to provide an effective platform for policy leaders and stakeholders to gather and learn about the impact these issues have on Florida businesses and the environment.

We were honored to have Florida's Commissioner of Agriculture, Wilton Simpson, join us for a fantastic keynote address to our audience and give an update on the Department of Agriculture's role in maintaining a sustainable blueprint for agriculture to thrive in sidestep with the environmental necessities needed to sustain Florida's precious natural resources.

Our panels touched on several topics including, nutrient management, agriculture, water industry trends, Lake Okeechobee, budgetary solutions to Florida's water infrastructure, resiliency, smart watersheds, and water quality.



Attendees of the Water Forum attend the opening reception

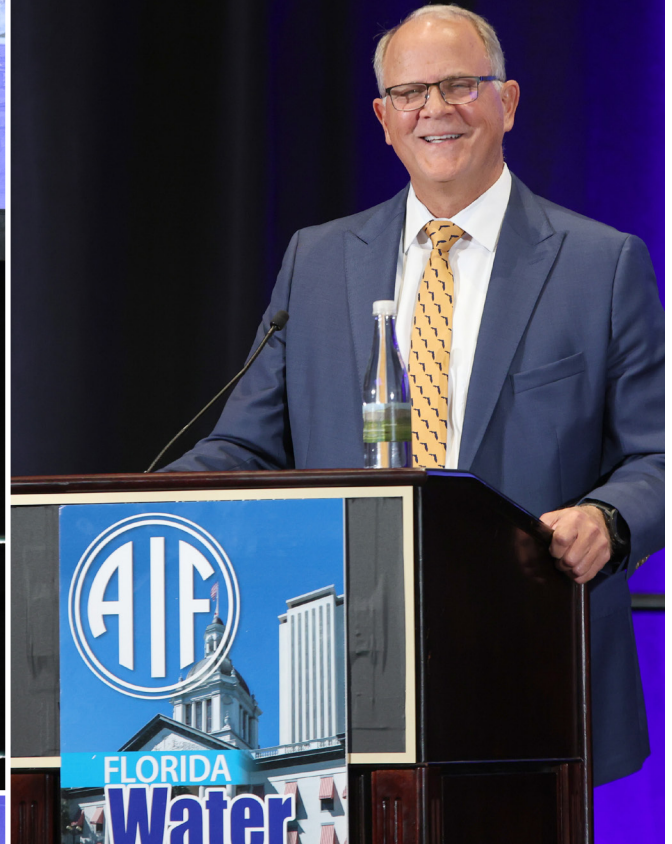
The AIF Water Forum was a great place for me to hear about what's going on with water policy in the state, and it helped me make connections with many of the people who are most invested in it.

Tripp Hunter
Director of Legislative Affairs
Florida Farm Bureau

Senator Stan McClain (R-Ocala)



Former Rep. Bobby Payne (R-Palatka)



Moderator: Rep. Toby Overdorf, FL House of Representatives
Panelists: Greg Knecht, The Nature Conservancy
Dr. Mark Rains, FL Dept of Environmental Protection
Mike Register, St. Johns River Water Mgmt. District



Rep. Toby Overdorf (R-Stuart)

2025 EVENTS

SAVE THE DATES

Notices will be sent to members providing agenda and registration information.

All events are sponsorship opportunities. Sponsoring AIF meetings and events is a great way to promote your organization or association to other business leaders, legislators and your peers. Your sponsorship commitment also helps to further support AIF's mission on behalf of our members across the state.

If you have any questions, contact Stephen Trickey, Executive Vice President & COO, at 850.224.7173 or strickey@aif.com.

JAN	13	Freshman Legislators' Reception 5:00 pm – 6:30 pm • Governor's Club, Tallahassee <i>For Partners, Chairman's Circle & Platinum Sponsors Only</i>
	22	Chairmen's Fish Fry 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm • AIF Courtyard, Tallahassee <i>For Partners and Chairman's Circle Sponsors Only</i>
FEB	12	Florida Business Forum 10:00 am – 2:00 pm Location TBD, Tallahassee
	17	Pre-Session Briefing 11:30 am – 1:00 pm • Governor's Club, Tallahassee
MAR	5	Chairman's VIP Reception 5:30 pm – 6:00 pm • AIF, Tallahassee <i>For Partners and Chairman's Circle Sponsors Only</i>
		Legislative Reception 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm • AIF, Tallahassee
APR	TBD	Mid-Session Leadership Dinner Location TBD, Tallahassee <i>For Partner Sponsors Only</i>
JUN	23-25	Summer Policy & Political Retreat Henderson Beach Resort, Destin
SEP	9-11	Fall Political & Policy Retreat Seminole Hard Rock Hotel, Hollywood
SEP/OCT	30-1 (tentative)	Florida U.S. Capitol Summit Washington, DC

Associated Industries of Florida



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