



# 2025

## 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, and**
- **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

**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 2025, I am proud of the great work that our staff, Board of Directors and partners have accomplished. I am also 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 myriads 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.

Despite it not being a full election year, The Center for Political Strategy was running at full speed as we got involved in special elections and candidate recruitment. Both efforts are aimed at ensuring that business friendly legislators are making their way to the State Capitol.

Finally, all these projects and efforts are supported by our events throughout the year. These events bring together business leaders, legislators and other stakeholders to have meaningful discussions on the challenges facing our state.

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 these efforts.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brewster B. Bevis".

Brewster B. Bevis  
President & Chief Executive Officer

# OUR 2025 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.**

 <b>Altria</b>				
 <b>American Property Casualty Insurance Association</b> INSURING AMERICA apci.org				
				
				
				
				
				

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

## Continuing Education on Critical Water Issues

In January, AIF hosted the first ever Water Forum University in Tallahassee. This one-day event was designed specifically for freshman members of the Florida House to participate and be educated on the complex issues of water policy. Like the Water Forum, we had panels and presentations, but we approached this from a novice's perspective so we could better educate the new class of legislators.

**AIF's Water Forum brings together Florida's policy makers, business leaders and those who truly care about making Florida the best place to live and do business. From discussions and presentations to conversations in the halls, the AIF Water Forum is an invaluable resource for the betterment of our state."**

Andrew Walmsley, Director of Legislative Affairs,  
Florida Farm Bureau



## Welcoming New Legislators

In early January, AIF and its key sponsors held a reception where the business community welcomed newly elected Legislators. It was a great opportunity for AIF members to meet and greet the new Legislators to Tallahassee.



**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.**

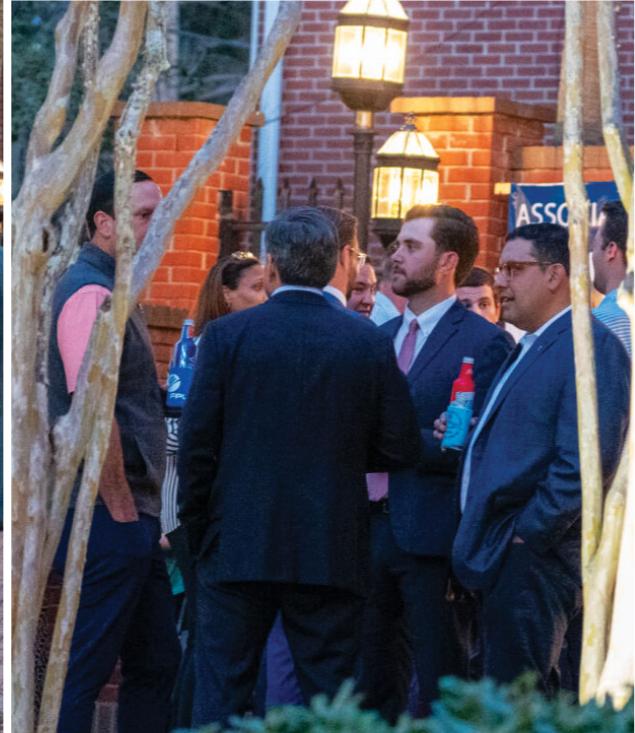
Rick Murrell, Advisor, Governmental Affairs,  
Tropical Shipping USA

New Legislator Rep. Bill Conerly.



## Chairmen's Fish Fry

In February, the annual Chairmen's Fish Fry was held. This is an event specifically for our top-tier sponsors, which allows them to casually network with Legislators and other business leaders.



**Business organizations who participate at the top level of our sponsorships came together with key legislators for a casual networking event.**

# COLLABORATION WITH PARTNERS



Panelists from Comcast, Google and Amazon speak about AI.



## Florida Business Forum

Hosted by the Foundation of Associated Industries of Florida, the focus of the 2025 Florida Business Forum was "Artificial Intelligence." Industry representatives, lawmakers and others were present to discuss key issues and benefits of Artificial Intelligence.

In 2024, AIF established the *Coalition for the Future of AI in Business*. As AI's influence accelerates and both the state and federal government begin to act, there will be numerous challenges for employers. The mission is clear—educate policymakers on the concerns of employers and help develop guidelines for accountable and innovative AI policies.

AIF President & CEO Brewster Bevis speaking at the Florida Business Forum.

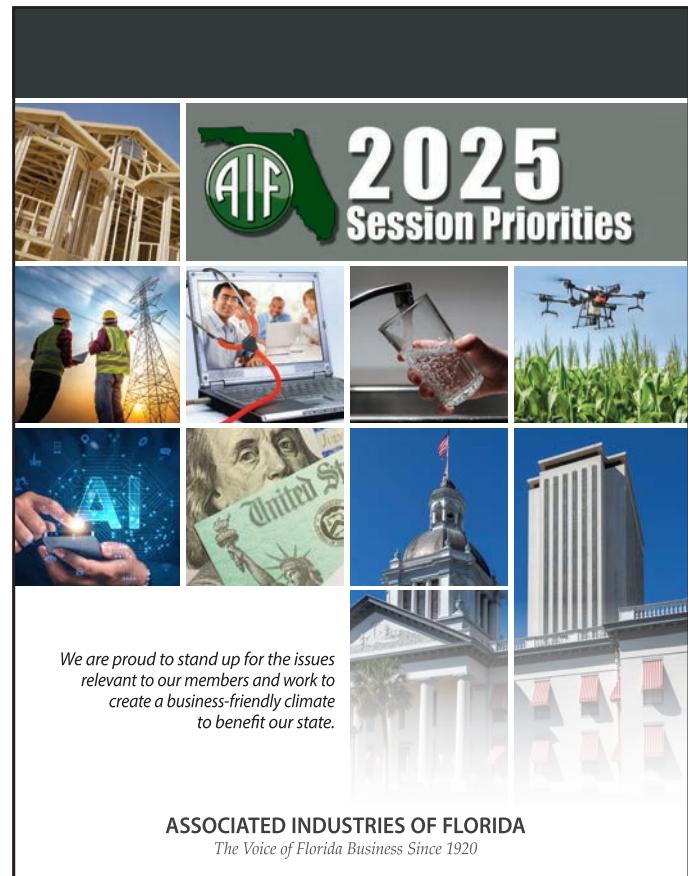
## RELEASING OUR PRIORITIES

In early March, after multiple meetings with our policy councils on key business issues that affect their companies, the **2025 Session Priorities** were approved by the AIF Board of Directors and released to members of the Florida Legislature.

The issues laid out in detail within the publication summarize the guiding principles which shaped AIF's 2025 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



The collage features the AIF logo, a construction site, a drone, a hand holding a glass, a laptop, a hand holding a smartphone, a US dollar bill, the Florida State Capitol, and the Metz, Husband & Daughton, PA building.

*We are proud to stand up for the issues relevant to our members and work to create a business-friendly climate to benefit our state.*

**ASSOCIATED INDUSTRIES OF FLORIDA**  
*The Voice of Florida Business Since 1920*

### AIF TEAM



Brewster B. Bevis  
President & Chief Executive Officer



Adam D. Basford  
Vice President – Governmental Affairs



Cameron J. Fink  
Director – Governmental Affairs

### 2025 ADVOCACY TEAM



Slater Bayliss  
The Advocacy Partners



Jorge Chamizo  
Floridian Partners



Chris Chaney  
The Advocacy Partners



Chris Coker  
Coker Consulting



Jon Costello  
Capitol Strategy Group



Charles F. Dudley  
Floridian Partners



Leslie Dughi  
Metz, Husband & Daughton, PA



George Feijoo  
Floridian Partners



Ashley Kalifeh  
Capital City Consulting



Andy Palmer  
Metz, Husband & Daughton, PA



Toby Philpot  
Floridian Partners



W. Mark Powell  
Capitol Advisory Group



Melissa Joiner Ramba  
Floridian Partners



Steve Schale  
The Advocacy Partners



Allison 'Alli' Liby-Schoonover  
Metz, Husband & Daughton, PA



Stephen W. Shiver  
The Advocacy Partners



Jim Spratt  
Magnolia Strategies



Sarah B. Suskey  
The Advocacy Partners



Jeff Woodburn  
The Advocacy Partners

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## Pre-Session Briefing

In mid-February, AIF held its annual Session Briefing for members. Each year in the weeks leading up to the annual session of the Legislature, this briefing includes updates from both Legislators and our advocacy team on key business issues.



Former Senator and current CFO Blaise Ingoglia speaking at the Session Briefing.



## Political Council Special Election Candidate Interviews

In February, our political council held interviews with candidates running in various special elections for the Legislature. These special elections are always held in a very short window of time and are critical to the make-up of the Legislature.

# WELCOME BACK LEGISLATORS!

A very popular annual event in Tallahassee is the Welcome Reception Honoring the Florida Legislators. This event is for AIF members, Florida Legislators and other key attendees.

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



# KEY VICTORIES DURING THE 2025 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

## Defending 2022/23 Tort Reform

The AIF lobby team spent most of the 2025 Legislative Session defending the tort reform that was passed in 2022 and 2023. During Session, the Florida House of Representatives released a barrage of bills attacking positive changes to the legal climate in Florida. As insurance premiums continue to stabilize and decline, so do the number of frivolous lawsuits that have been filed against insurers and Florida's companies. Protecting the reforms that have been proven to work will continue to be a top priority for AIF in the future.

Both chambers also attempted to change the scope of medical negligence lawsuits that could be filed, attempting to change the exemptions in statute to broaden which patients can file lawsuits and what evidence can be seen during trial proceedings. AIF could support legislation if reasonable monetary caps for medical negligence cases were included to prevent nuclear verdicts, which tend to destabilize the healthcare market and force doctors to look elsewhere in the country to practice their profession.

## Business Rent Tax

The long discussion of eliminating the business rent tax was also brought up again this Session. Before this year, Florida was the only state to levy this tax on businesses, but this Session, AIF was able to support the elimination of this tax. Now Florida can stand with the rest of the country on equal footing in this tax space.

## Agriculture

Although 2025 was spent defending a lot of previous hard work, some positives did come out of Session. AIF supported initiatives that exempt agriculture equipment from tangible personal property tax, giving farmers a tax break on equipment that they already own. This piece of legislation will now appear on the ballot as a constitutional amendment. AIF also supported initiatives to allow farm owners to more productively build housing for their workers on farmland as they see best fits their business models.



## AIF SUMMER POLICY & POLITICAL RETREAT

The 2025 Summer Policy & Political Retreat held at the Henderson Beach Resort in Destin, provided members with a good mix of both policy and political discussions. Members participated in policy councils meetings on Energy, Health Care, Manufacturing, Aerospace & Defense, Transportation & Maritime, Taxation, Environmental Sustainability & Agriculture, Information Technology and Financial Services.

Renown national pollster Jim McLaughlin provided the latest results of AIF's statewide poll as well as some intel from National Politics. Along with the latest Florida political update from AIF VP of Political Affairs Jeremy Sheftel, members also heard from two candidates for the 2026 election cycle, Emily Duda Buckley (R-Candidate HD 38) Jake Johansson (R-Candidate SD 8).

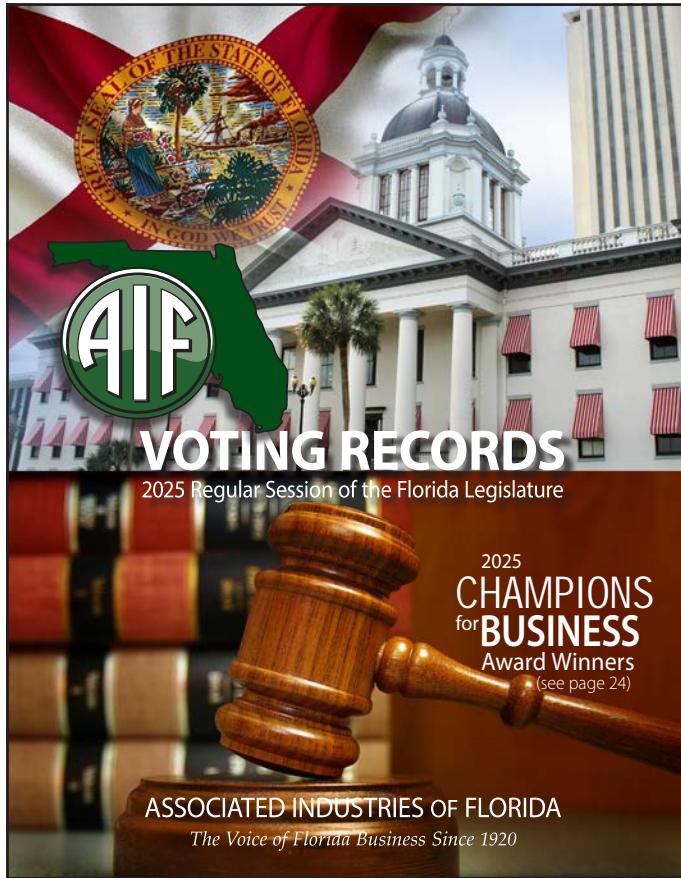
Herbie Thiele of Sachs Media provided a presentation on how best to communicate on big issues such as the recent Tort issue.



## AIF POLICY COUNCILS

- Community Growth Council
- Environmental Sustainability & Agriculture Council
- Financial Services Council
- Florida Energy Council
- Florida Transportation & Maritime Council
- Health Care Council
- Information Technology Council
- Manufacturing, Aerospace & Defense Council
- Taxation Council





**The AIF Voting Records is a critical tool for companies to determine which legislators are truly supportive of the business community.**

BillieAnne Gay, Director, State Government Affairs  
Anheuser-Busch

### AIF Voting Records Released

AIF was pleased to present the 51st edition of the *Voting Records* in 2025.

This year's report covered 3,856 votes cast by legislators on 47 bills. This makes it the most exhaustive and complete record of the Legislature's approach to Florida employers' concerns.

## Recognizing Top-Tier Issues

**Highlighting top-priority issues helps provide context for Voting Records.**

From time to time, a critical issue is taken up during the legislative session that would significantly affect most Florida businesses regardless of industry, size, location, etc. Issues such as workers' compensation, across the board business taxes and broad regulatory schemes are always top priorities for AIF.

This year, AIF identified **tort reform rollbacks** as the **top-tier issue for the 2025 Legislative Session**.

**TORT  
REFORM  
ROLLBACKS**



## AIF FALL POLITICAL & POLICY RETREAT

In September, the AIF Fall Political & Policy Retreat was held at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino. Along with all of our policy councils discussing key business issues, attendees heard from speakers such as Florida Lt. Governor Jay Collins, Representative Mike Redondo, and national pollster Jim McLaughlin.



AIF President & CEO Brewster Bevis with Lt. Governor Jay Collins at the AIF Fall Political & Policy Retreat.





## HONORING EXTRAORDINARY EFFORT

AIF President & CEO Brewster Bevis presents the John Thrasher Lifetime Achievement Award to Senator Kathleen Passidomo.



AIF Board Chair Gordon Bailey is recognized for his service on the AIF Board of Directors.



On the last night of the 2025 Fall Retreat, AIF and the business community recognized eight legislators who provided outstanding support on critical issues important to our members during the 2025 Session. Congratulations to Senate President Ben Albritton, Senate Majority Leader Jim Boyd, Senator Gayle Harrell, Senator Stan McClain, Senator Kathleen Passidomo, Representative Mike Caruso, Representative Tom Fabricio, and Representative Toby Overdorf.

Governor Ron DeSantis received his second CFB award for his unwavering support on the tort issue. While Senator Kathleen Passidomo received her seventh CFB award, she was also presented with the John Thrasher Lifetime Achievement Award for all her years of serving in the Florida Legislature and being a strong supporter of AIF and the business community.



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

# 2025 A Year in Review



Governor Ron DeSantis receives his Champion for Business Award.



Sen. Stan McClain receives his Champion for Business Award.



Sen. Gayle Harrell receives her Champion for Business Award.



Rep. Toby Overdorf receives his Champion for Business Award.



Rep. Tom Fabricio receives his Champion for Business Award.



Gov. Ron DeSantis speaking at the *Champions for Business* Awards Ceremony & Dinner at the Fall Retreat.

# PREPARING FOR THE 2026 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

## PRE-SESSION BRIEFING

AIF hosted its Pre-Session Briefing on Monday, December 8. Members received insights into priorities and expectations on key business issues for the upcoming 2026 Legislative Session. Remarks were delivered by AIF President & CEO Brewster Bevis, Senator Stan McClain, Speaker Designate Sam Garrison, and Speaker Pro Tempore Wyman Duggan, each offering a unique perspective on the issues likely to shape the session.

Following the legislative presentations, Brewster Bevis and Cameron Fink, AIF's Director of Governmental Affairs, outlined AIF's policy priorities for the session, including protecting the 2022–23 tort reforms, ensuring property tax relief proposals do not shift costs onto businesses, and preventing the overregulation of artificial intelligence. AIF and its members look forward to engaging in the 2026 Session.



## FOUNDATION ROUNDTABLE EVENT

The Foundation of Associated Industries of Florida hosted a Lunch and Learn focused on Data Centers, a sometimes-large facility that houses servers and IT infrastructure to process and store data. Data Centers are used in artificial intelligence applications, business and financial transactions and backend storage of insurmountable amounts of information that everyone uses in their daily lives without even knowing, making this topic important to the state as a whole. The event brought together industry leaders and lawmakers to examine Florida's competitiveness in recruiting and developing data center infrastructure. Participants heard from a roundtable of experts, including Kevin Doyle, Vice President of State Affairs for Consumer Energy Alliance; Dr. David Gattie, Associate Professor of Engineering at the University of Georgia; Buddy Rizer, Executive Director of Economic Development for Loudoun County, Virginia; and Katie Kelly, Southeast Director of TechNet. The discussion highlighted lessons learned from other states' successes and challenges, with a focus on how Florida can proactively address potential obstacles and position itself for responsible, long-term growth in the data center sector.

# Associated Industries of Florida



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