



# VOTING RECORDS

*On Key Business Issues*

*2008 Regular Session  
of the Florida  
Legislature*

2008  
*Champions  
for  
Business*

Page 35





**Barney T. Bishop III**  
President &  
Chief Executive Officer

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**Voting  
Records  
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516 North Adams Street  
Post Office Box 784  
Tallahassee, FL 32301-0784  
Phone: 850.224.7173  
Fax: 850.224.6532  
E-mail: [aif@aif.com](mailto:aif@aif.com)  
Internet: [aif.com](http://aif.com)

## ASSOCIATED INDUSTRIES OF FLORIDA

### Dear Employer:

It is my pleasure to provide you with this tabulation of the voting conduct of each member of the Florida Legislature during the 2008 Regular Session.

*Voting Records* reports on the votes made by every legislator on bills that were lobbied, advocated, promoted or opposed by Associated Industries of Florida. By reporting on 9,505 votes cast by legislators on 116 bills, this publication embodies the most exhaustive and complete record of the Legislature's approach to the concerns of Florida's employers.

We go to great lengths to ensure that legislators are aware of AIF's positions on issues of great importance to the business community. Every year before the session begins, we produce AIF's *Session Priorities*, which explains why we support or oppose key issues. In addition, during the session we provide each legislator with a *Daily Brief* on the activities of that day, highlighting bills of interest to business and our positions on those issues. Our greatest asset, however, is our experienced and accomplished legislative team, which has compiled a record of success second to none.

For more than three decades, AIF has published *Voting Records*, an analysis of every vote cast by every legislator on every major business issues. 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 in 2003 to acknowledge lawmakers who provide leadership on key legislation. A "Champion for Business" is a legislator who takes risks for his or her 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 ten lawmakers (see page 35) honored this year are the epitome of a "Champion for Business." In addition, we have designated another five legislators for "Honorable Mention" and three of our AIF Councils have awarded "Legislator of the Year" awards.

We are also proud to present a "Champion for Business" award to CFO Alex Sink — the first CFO to receive this prestigious recognition and only the second cabinet member. She is being recognized by the Financial Securities Council for her dedication to reducing the threat of assessments by the CAT Fund on Florida's businesses and residents.

While some business groups claim to track legislators' voting records, recognize that only AIF tracks both committee votes and floor votes. Without tracking both, you could be given a skewed picture of their support or non-support of our cherished private enterprise system.

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# Feeling the Pressure ...

**T**he business community is often portrayed as a lobby that always gets what it wants. Though AIF and its members do exert a strong force in the Capitol, we often have to fight “tooth and nail” for our issues. The need to keep an ever-vigilant eye on the Legislature is magnified during economic down-turns and election years. The 2008 Session presented a unique perfect storm, as legislators faced the reality of cutting over \$6 billion from the state’s budget and the political pressures of a presidential election year during which a number of key seats in the House and Senate are up for grabs.

AIF and its lobby team found itself defending a number of core business issues this session. Old albatrosses like the “unitary tax” and additional excise taxes on cigarettes and other products reared their ugly heads this year, under the guise of proposals to increase state revenues. Fortunately for AIF members, our team of legislative consultants sprang into action and successfully advocated against passage of these bills. One of the strongest resources against bad, anti-free market ideas is AIF’s institutional knowledge. In this era of term limits, having been around for over 85 years is tremendously helpful when vetting proposed legislation. If it has been tried before, you can bet that the business community remembers the conse-

quences, especially if the outcomes hurt or negatively impacted Florida’s business climate.

As stated earlier, election years also present a challenge to the business community. With 39 open seats in the House and Senate and a contentious presidential election capturing everyone’s attention, the 2008 campaign season promises to be a memorable one. Every two years legislators must turn their attention to re-election and that sometimes means filing legislation that may be popular for the voters back home, but not so much for employers and small-business owners. Perhaps the best example of this was passage of the guns in the workplace bill. This issue was seen as a must-pass bill for the National Rifle Association, a strong lobby and politically powerful entity, which has been working this issue for the past three years. Even against a backdrop of a unified business community and the public outcry of the media, the bill was passed and quickly signed by the Governor. Legislators also felt the political pressure on the issue of commuter rail in Florida. In this case, a tough budget year in conjunction with opposition from the state’s trial bar (another powerful political group themselves) led to the defeat in the final hours of session of this beneficial project for Florida’s economy.

Even in light of these defeats, the

2008 Session will be best remembered for all of the bad business bills AIF and the business community were able to defeat. Just a few of the anti-business proposals that were killed that included:

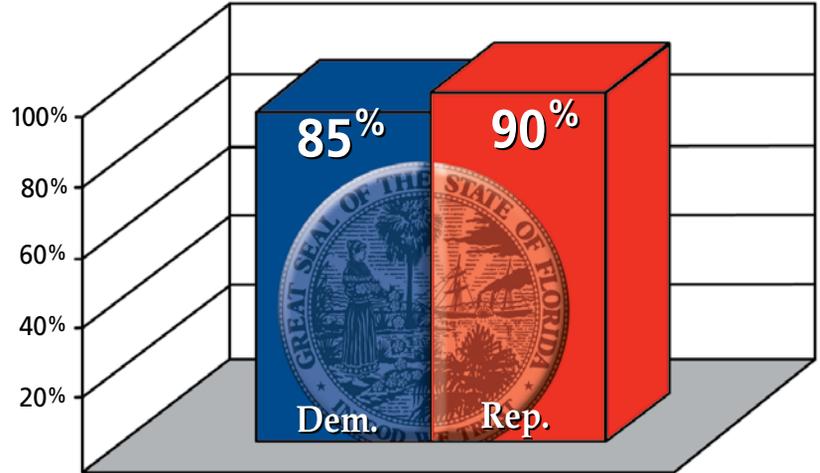
- unnecessary changes to the state’s arbitration code (HB 1219/SB 2076)
- an additional \$2 rental car surcharge for automobiles rented at airports
- duplicitous security screenings & increased costs for port tenants (HB 7119/SB 1470)
- increased and unjustified increases in employer contributions for unemployment compensation (HB 1057/SB 2706)
- efforts to subject all lines of insurance, not just property insurance, to a dangerous repeal of the state’s anti-trust exemptions (SB 2860)

As you can see from this year’s *Voting Records*, both the House and Senate averages are down, with the Senate’s average falling four points to a disappointing 81 percent. Whether this trend can be associated with a difficult budget year or the need to appease other voting blocs, the bottom-line is that AIF will continue to walk the halls and track the votes in order to defend the principles of the free-enterprise system.

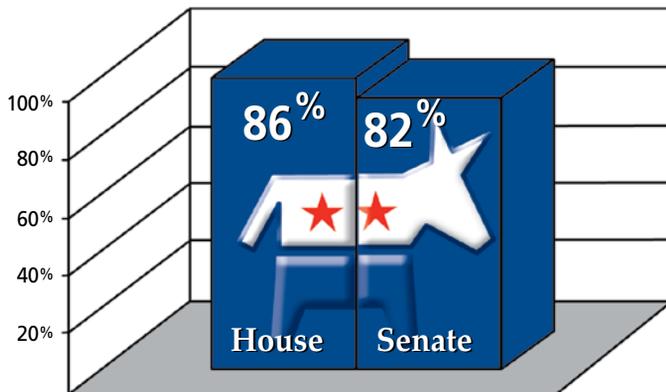
# 2008 Florida Legislature *by the Numbers*

**K**nowing how individual legislators cast their votes is extremely important when evaluating their stand on the issues facing our members. However, it is also important to look at the other areas of the data to find clues on how different segments of the Florida Legislature are casting their votes. For instance, which party in which chamber tends to support business issues more than the other? How do the current vote records compare to those from past years? This section will break down different segments of the votes and provide some interesting snapshots of what the mood of the Florida Legislature is on business issues.

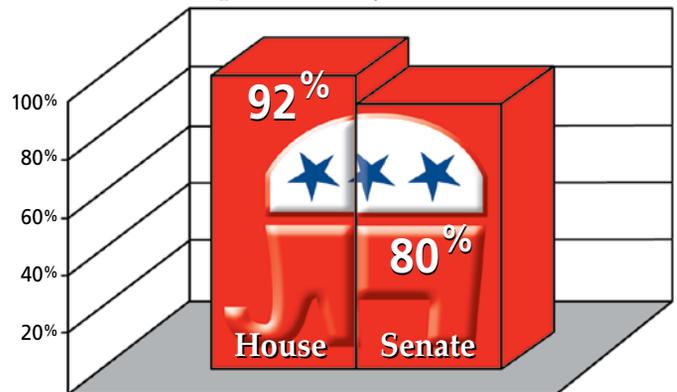
2008 Florida Legislature by Party



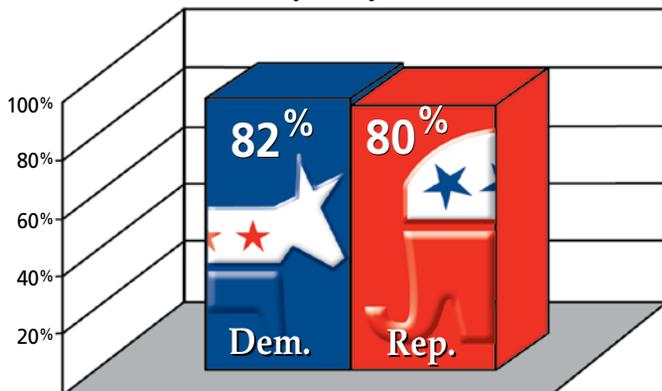
Democrats by Chamber



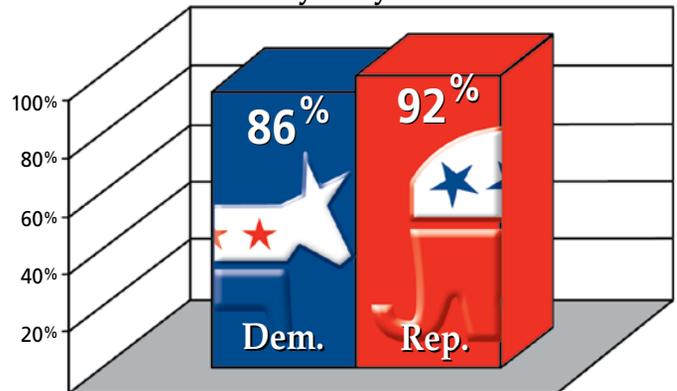
Republicans by Chamber



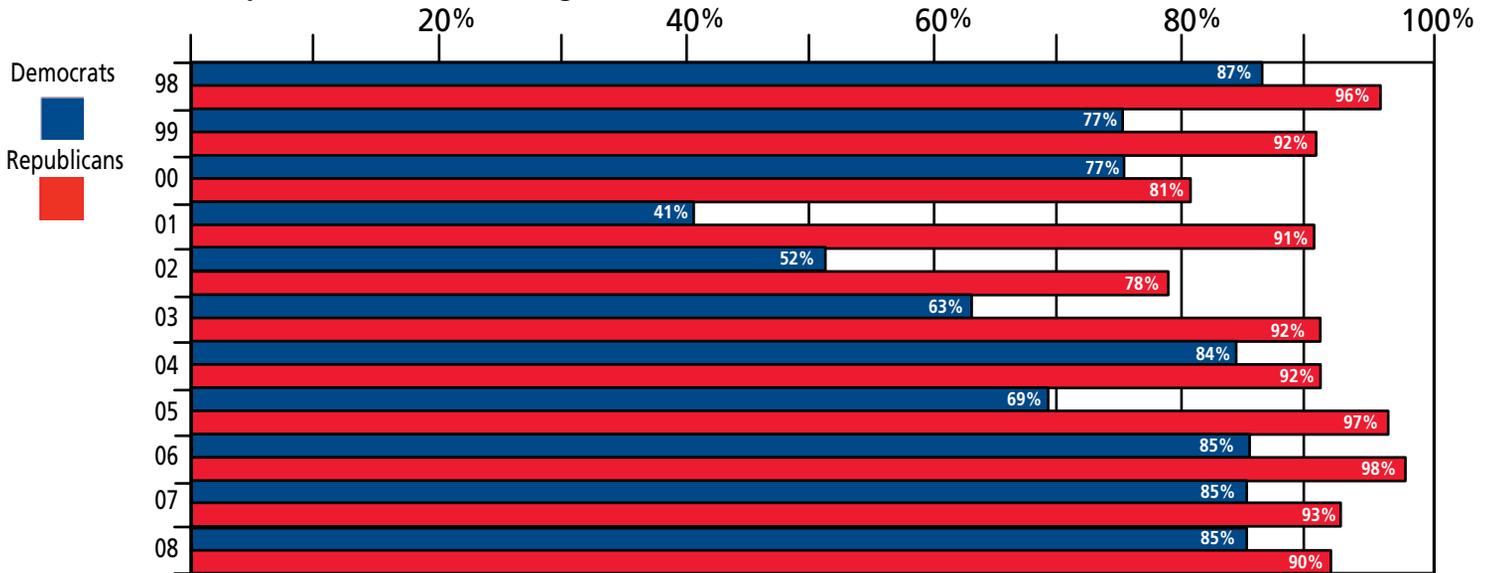
Senate by Party



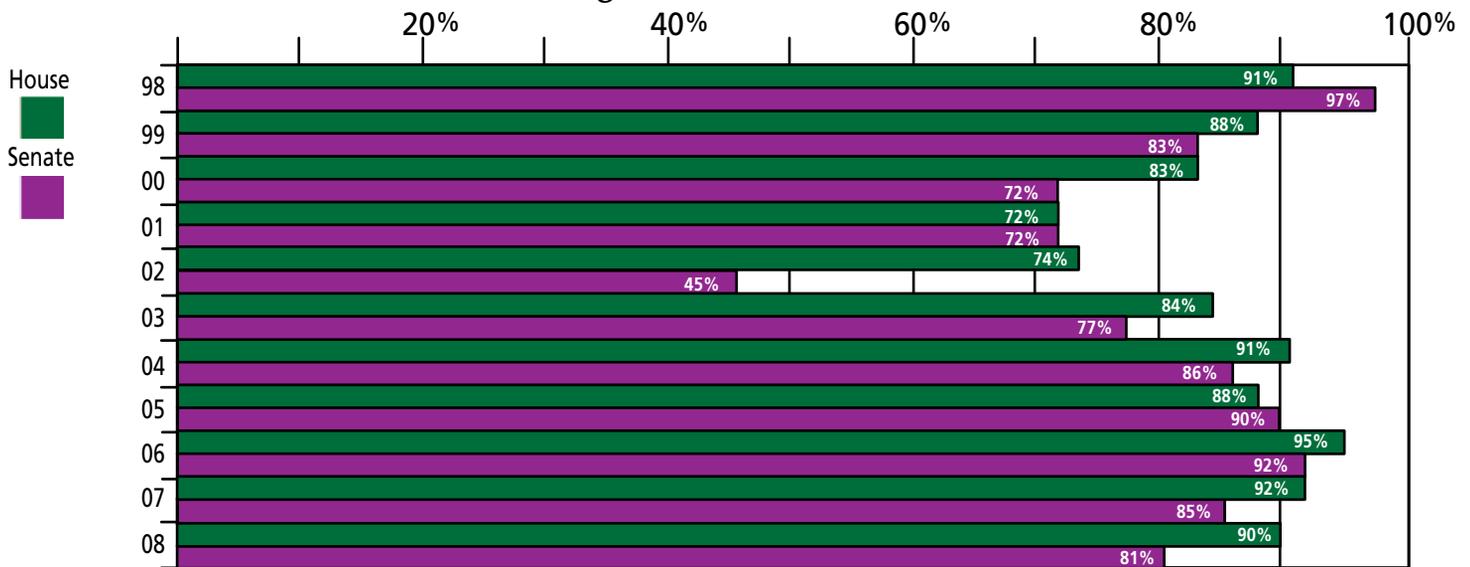
House by Party



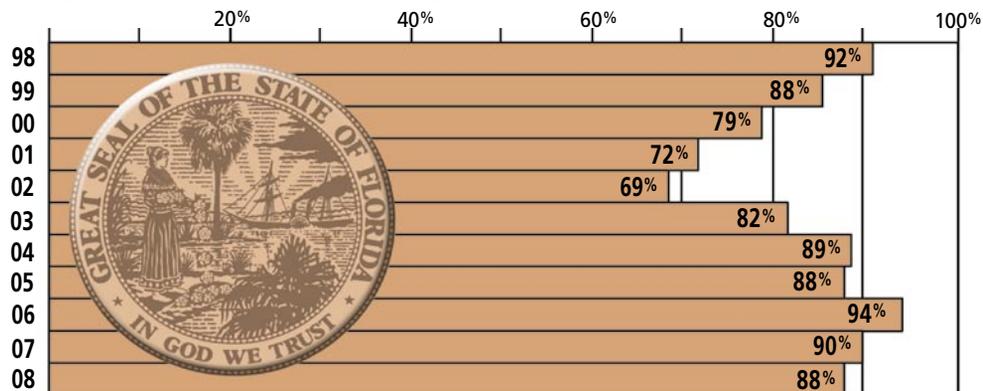
### Party — Historical Voting Records



### Chamber — Historical Voting Records



### Legislature — Historical Voting Records



# 2008 FLORIDA LEGISLATURE VOTING RECORDS

## *On Key Business Issues – Percentage with AIF*

*Voting Records* is compiled using actual votes cast as reported in official state records. It does not include changed or paired votes. Some votes may be corrected by the Legislature at a later date, but those changes will not be reflected in *Voting Records*, which relies on the positions of members of the Legislature at the time the votes are recorded. Each vote cast is measured equally, with no added points to certain bills.

FLORIDA SENATE							
% w/AIF	Name/Party	For	Against	% w/AIF	Name/Party	For	Against
92%	Oelrich (R)	55	5	80%	Aronberg (D)	36	9
90%	Haridopolos (R)	47	5	80%	Jones (R)	40	10
90%	Hill (D)	46	5	80%	Storms (R)	44	11
90%	Siplin (D)	56	6	80%	Villalobos (R)	41	10
88%	Bullard (D)	42	6	80%	Webster (R)	35	9
88%	Wise (R)	50	7	79%	Deutch (D)	46	12
87%	Geller (D)	47	7	79%	Gaetz (R)	46	12
87%	Lynn (R)	46	7	77%	Rich (D)	34	10
86%	Margolis (D)	36	6	76%	Alexander (R)	41	13
86%	Ring (D)	49	8	76%	Dean (R)	35	11
85%	Diaz de la Portilla (R)	52	9	76%	Garcia (R)	42	13
85%	Fasano (R)	40	7	76%	Posey (R)	32	10
85%	King (R)	39	7	74%	Saunders (R)	49	17
84%	Carlton (R)	32	6	73%	Dockery (R)	43	16
83%	Lawson (D)	49	10	73%	Peaden (R)	36	13
82%	Baker (R)	37	8	72%	Atwater (R)	38	15
82%	Constantine (R)	37	8	72%	Wilson (D)	26	10
82%	Pruitt (R)	27	6	71%	Joyner (D)	34	14
81%	Crist (R)	54	13	70%	Bennett (R)	37	16
81%	Justice (D)	50	12	61%	Dawson (D)	22	14

**Total Votes With AIF/Business = 81%**

# H O U S E O F R E P R E S E N T A T I V E S

% w/AIF	Name/Party	For	Against	% w/AIF	Name/Party	For	Against	% w/AIF	Name/Party	For	Against
100%	Peterman (D)	1	0	92%	Carroll (R)	45	4	89%	Saunders (D)	74	9
95%	Cannon (R)	89	5	92%	Dorworth (R)	45	4	89%	Schultz (R)	51	6
95%	Grant (R)	87	5	92%	Fields (D)	44	4	89%	Taylor (D)	72	9
95%	Hukill (R)	103	5	92%	Ford (R)	49	4	89%	Thurston (D)	42	5
95%	Patterson (R)	59	3	92%	Galvano (R)	69	6	88%	Brise (D)	43	6
95%	Rivera (R)	70	4	92%	Gardiner (R)	47	4	88%	Chestnut (D)	42	6
94%	Attkisson (R)	79	5	92%	Gonzalez (R)	48	4	88%	Fitzgerald (D)	61	8
94%	Aubuchon (R)	64	4	92%	Harrell (R)	46	4	88%	Jenne (D)	43	6
94%	Brown (R)	68	4	92%	Heller (D)	44	4	88%	Long (D)	46	6
94%	Coley (R)	58	4	92%	Hudson (R)	54	5	88%	Machek (D)	50	7
94%	Holder (R)	62	4	92%	Legg (R)	48	4	88%	Meadows (D)	76	10
94%	Kravitz (R)	73	5	92%	Mayfield (R)	65	6	88%	Patronis (R)	51	7
94%	Lopez-Cantera (R)	74	5	92%	Murzin (R)	44	4	88%	Rouson (D)	38	5
94%	Proctor (R)	66	4	92%	Pickens (R)	57	5	87%	Braynon (D)	41	6
94%	Reagan (R)	74	5	92%	Richter (R)	49	4	87%	Bullard (D)	55	8
94%	Sansom (R)	75	5	92%	Schenck (R)	48	4	87%	Garcia, R. (R)	39	6
94%	Traviesa (R)	74	5	92%	Snyder (R)	47	4	87%	Gelber (D)	40	6
93%	Altman (R)	52	4	92%	Zapata (R)	71	6	87%	Randolph (D)	52	8
93%	Ambler (R)	71	5	91%	Cretul (R)	43	4	87%	Vana (D)	72	11
93%	Bogdanoff (R)	70	5	91%	Gibson, H. (R)	48	5	87%	Waldman (D)	41	6
93%	Bowen (R)	68	5	91%	Planas (R)	43	4	86%	Bendross-Mindingall (D)	79	13
93%	Domino (R)	53	4	91%	Robaina (R)	48	5	86%	Homan (R)	51	8
93%	Evers (R)	50	4	91%	Rubio (R)	42	4	86%	Reed (D)	56	9
93%	Flores (R)	51	4	91%	Scionti (D)	53	5	86%	Skidmore (D)	51	8
93%	Glorioso (R)	69	5	91%	Soto (D)	58	6	86%	Thompson, G. (D)	50	8
93%	Hasner (R)	69	5	91%	Williams (R)	50	5	85%	Ausley (D)	64	11
93%	Hooper (R)	54	4	90%	Anderson (R)	45	5	85%	Garcia, L. (D)	35	6
93%	Jordan (R)	53	4	90%	Brandenburg (D)	82	9	85%	Gibbons (D)	47	8
93%	Kelly (R)	55	4	90%	Culp (R)	54	6	85%	Kriseman (D)	47	8
93%	Kiar (D)	52	4	90%	Grimsley (R)	54	6	85%	Sachs (D)	46	8
93%	McBurney (R)	53	4	90%	Hays (R)	46	5	84%	Boyd (D)	49	9
93%	McKeel (R)	56	4	90%	Kendrick (R)	78	9	84%	Seiler (D)	66	13
93%	Nehr (R)	64	5	90%	Llorente (R)	45	5	83%	Richardson (D)	67	14
93%	Ross (R)	64	5	90%	Needelman (R)	43	5	83%	Sasso (D)	45	9
93%	Simmons (R)	54	4	90%	Nelson (R)	52	6	82%	Porth (D)	53	12
93%	Thompson, N. (R)	51	4	90%	Poppell (R)	54	6	82%	Roberson (D)	61	13
93%	Troutman (R)	64	5	90%	Precourt (R)	57	6	81%	Cusack (D)	80	19
93%	Weatherford (R)	100	7	89%	Frishe (R)	49	6	81%	Sands (D)	48	11
92%	Adams (R)	49	4	89%	Gibson, A. (D)	42	5	80%	Schwartz (D)	36	9
92%	Bean (R)	68	6	89%	Kreegel (R)	49	6	70%	Bucher (D)	47	20

**Total Votes With AIF/Business = 90%**

# 2008 FLORIDA LEGISLATURE VOTING RECORDS

## *On Key Business Issues – Alphabetically*

*Voting Records* is compiled using actual votes cast as reported in official state records. It does not include changed or paired votes. Some votes may be corrected by the Legislature at a later date, but those changes will not be reflected in *Voting Records*, which relies on the positions of members of the Legislature at the time the votes are recorded. Each vote cast is measured equally, with no added points to certain bills.

FLORIDA SENATE							
Name/Party	For	Against	% w/AIF	Name/Party	For	Against	% w/AIF
Alexander (R)	41	13	76%	Jones (R)	40	10	80%
Aronberg (D)	36	9	80%	Joyner (D)	34	14	71%
Atwater (R)	38	15	72%	Justice (D)	50	12	81%
Baker (R)	37	8	82%	King (R)	39	7	85%
Bennett (R)	37	16	70%	Lawson (D)	49	10	83%
Bullard (D)	42	6	88%	Lynn (R)	46	7	87%
Carlton (R)	32	6	84%	Margolis (D)	36	6	86%
Constantine (R)	37	8	82%	Oelrich (R)	55	5	92%
Crist (R)	54	13	81%	Peaden (R)	36	13	73%
Dawson (D)	22	14	61%	Posey (R)	32	10	76%
Dean (R)	35	11	76%	Pruitt (R)	27	6	82%
Deutch (D)	46	12	79%	Rich (D)	34	10	77%
Diaz de la Portilla (R)	52	9	85%	Ring (D)	49	8	86%
Dockery (R)	43	16	73%	Saunders (R)	49	17	74%
Fasano (R)	40	7	85%	Siplin (D)	56	6	90%
Gaetz (R)	46	12	79%	Storms (R)	44	11	80%
Garcia (R)	42	13	76%	Villalobos (R)	41	10	80%
Geller (D)	47	7	87%	Webster (R)	35	9	80%
Haridopolos (R)	47	5	90%	Wilson (D)	26	10	72%
Hill (D)	46	5	90%	Wise (R)	50	7	88%

**Total Votes With AIF/Business = 81%**

# H O U S E O F R E P R E S E N T A T I V E S

Name/Party	For	Against	% w/AIF	Name/Party	For	Against	% w/AIF	Name/Party	For	Against	% w/AIF
Adams (R)	49	4	92%	Gibson, H. (R)	48	5	91%	Poppell (R)	54	6	90%
Altman (R)	52	4	93%	Glorioso (R)	69	5	93%	Porth (D)	3	12	82%
Ambler (R)	71	5	93%	Gonzalez (R)	48	4	92%	Precourt (R)	57	6	90%
Anderson (R)	45	5	90%	Grant (R)	87	5	95%	Proctor (R)	66	4	94%
Attkisson (R)	79	5	94%	Grimsley (R)	54	6	90%	Randolph (D)	52	8	87%
Aubuchon (R)	64	4	94%	Harrell (R)	46	4	92%	Reagan (R)	74	5	94%
Ausley (D)	64	11	85%	Hasner (R)	69	5	93%	Reed (D)	56	9	86%
Bean (R)	68	6	92%	Hays (R)	46	5	90%	Richardson (D)	67	14	83%
Bendross-Mindingall (D)	79	13	86%	Heller (D)	44	4	92%	Richter (R)	49	4	92%
Bogdanoff (R)	70	5	93%	Holder (R)	62	4	94%	Rivera (R)	70	4	95%
Bowen (R)	68	5	93%	Homan (R)	51	8	86%	Robaina (R)	48	5	91%
Boyd (D)	49	9	84%	Hooper (R)	54	4	93%	Roberson (D)	61	13	82%
Brandenburg (D)	82	9	90%	Hudson (R)	54	5	92%	Ross (R)	64	5	93%
Braynon (D)	41	6	87%	Hukill (R)	103	5	95%	Rouson (D)	38	5	88%
Brise (D)	43	6	88%	Jenne (D)	43	6	88%	Rubio (R)	42	4	91%
Brown (R)	68	4	94%	Jordan (R)	53	4	93%	Sachs (D)	46	8	85%
Bucher (D)	47	20	70%	Kelly (R)	55	4	93%	Sands (D)	48	11	81%
Bullard (D)	55	8	87%	Kendrick (R)	78	9	90%	Sansom (R)	75	5	94%
Cannon (R)	89	5	95%	Kiar (D)	52	4	93%	Sasso (D)	45	9	83%
Carroll (R)	45	4	92%	Kravitz (R)	73	5	94%	Saunders (D)	74	9	89%
Chestnut (D)	42	6	88%	Kreegel (R)	49	6	89%	Schenck (R)	48	4	92%
Coley (R)	58	4	94%	Kriseman (D)	47	8	85%	Schultz (R)	51	6	89%
Cretul (R)	43	4	91%	Legg (R)	48	4	92%	Schwartz (D)	36	9	80%
Culp (R)	54	6	90%	Llorente (R)	45	5	90%	Scionti (D)	53	5	91%
Cusack (D)	80	19	81%	Long (D)	46	6	88%	Seiler (D)	66	13	84%
Domino (R)	53	4	93%	Lopez-Cantera (R)	74	5	94%	Simmons (R)	54	4	93%
Dorworth (R)	45	4	92%	Machek (D)	50	7	88%	Skidmore (D)	51	8	86%
Evers (R)	50	4	93%	Mayfield (R)	65	6	92%	Snyder (R)	47	4	92%
Fields (D)	44	4	92%	McBurney (R)	53	4	93%	Soto (D)	58	6	91%
Fitzgerald (D)	61	8	88%	McKeel (R)	56	4	93%	Taylor (D)	72	9	89%
Flores (R)	51	4	93%	Meadows (D)	76	10	88%	Thompson, G. (D)	50	8	86%
Ford (R)	49	4	92%	Murzin (R)	44	4	92%	Thompson, N. (R)	51	4	93%
Frishe (R)	49	6	89%	Needelman (R)	43	5	90%	Thurston (D)	42	5	89%
Galvano (R)	69	6	92%	Nehr (R)	64	5	93%	Traviesa (R)	74	5	94%
Garcia, L. (D)	35	6	85%	Nelson (R)	52	6	90%	Troutman (R)	64	5	93%
Garcia, R. (R)	39	6	87%	Patronis (R)	51	7	88%	Vana (D)	72	11	87%
Gardiner (R)	47	4	92%	Patterson (R)	59	3	95%	Waldman (D)	41	6	87%
Gelber (D)	40	6	87%	Peterman (D)	1	0	100%	Weatherford (R)	100	7	93%
Gibbons (D)	47	8	85%	Pickens (R)	57	5	92%	Williams (R)	50	5	91%
Gibson, A. (D)	42	5	89%	Planas (R)	43	4	91%	Zapata (R)	71	6	92%

**Total Votes With AIF/Business = 90%**

# HISTORICAL FLORIDA LEGISLATURE VOTING RECORDS

## *On Business Issues – Alphabetically*

The AIF Historical Voting Records provides a cumulative tally of all the votes cast by legislators on AIF issues over their careers in the Florida Legislature.

F L O R I D A S E N A T E					
Name/Party	'08	History	Name/Party	'08	History
Alexander (R)	76%	89%↓	Jones (R)	80%	83%↓
Aronberg (D)	80%	81%↓	Joyner (D)	71%	65%↑
Atwater (R)	72%	87%↓	Justice (D)	81%	70%↑
Baker (R)	82%	89%↓	King (R)	85%	84%↑
Bennett (R)	70%	89%↓	Lawson (D)	83%	75%↑
Bullard (D)	88%	84%↑	Lynn (R)	87%	88%↓
Carlton (R)	84%	81%↑	Margolis (D)	86%	78%↑
Constantine (R)	82%	89%↓	Oelrich (R)	92%	92%—
Crist (R)	81%	86%↓	Peaden (R)	73%	82%↓
Dawson (D)	61%	73%↓	Posey (R)	76%	84%↓
Dean (R)	76%	94%↓	Pruitt (R)	82%	87%↓
Deutch (D)	79%	80%↓	Rich (D)	77%	74%↑
Diaz de la Portilla (R)	85%	87%↓	Ring (D)	86%	85%↑
Dockery (R)	73%	88%↓	Saunders (R)	74%	81%↓
Fasano (R)	85%	87%↓	Siplin (D)	90%	80%↑
Gaetz (R)	79%	81%↓	Storms (R)	80%	81%↓
Garcia (R)	76%	90%↓	Villalobos (R)	80%	83%↓
Geller (D)	87%	75%↑	Webster (R)	80%	88%↓
Haridopolos (R)	90%	93%↓	Wilson (D)	72%	72%—
Hill (D)	90%	80%↑	Wise (R)	88%	87%↑

# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Name/Party	'08	History	Name/Party	'08	History	Name/Party	'08	History
Adams (R)	92%	97% <sup>▼</sup>	Gibson, H. (R)	91%	95% <sup>▼</sup>	Poppell (R)	90%	96% <sup>▼</sup>
Altman (R)	93%	97% <sup>▼</sup>	Glorioso (R)	93%	97% <sup>▼</sup>	Porth (D)	82%	81% <sup>▲</sup>
Ambler (R)	93%	91% <sup>▲</sup>	Gonzalez (R)	92%	92% <sup>—</sup>	Precourt (R)	90%	93% <sup>▼</sup>
Anderson (R)	90%	94% <sup>▼</sup>	Grant (R)	95%	97% <sup>▼</sup>	Proctor (R)	94%	97% <sup>▼</sup>
Attkisson (R)	94%	95% <sup>▼</sup>	Grimsley (R)	90%	97% <sup>▼</sup>	Randolph (D)	87%	87% <sup>—</sup>
Aubuchon (R)	94%	96% <sup>▼</sup>	Harrell (R)	92%	95% <sup>▼</sup>	Reagan (R)	94%	96% <sup>▼</sup>
Ausley (D)	85%	75% <sup>▲</sup>	Hasner (R)	93%	96% <sup>▼</sup>	Reed (D)	86%	84% <sup>▲</sup>
Bean (R)	92%	94% <sup>▼</sup>	Hays (R)	90%	97% <sup>▼</sup>	Richardson (D)	83%	72% <sup>▲</sup>
Bendross-Mindingall (D)	86%	75% <sup>▲</sup>	Heller (D)	92%	90% <sup>▲</sup>	Richter (R)	92%	94% <sup>▼</sup>
Bogdanoff (R)	93%	97% <sup>▼</sup>	Holder (R)	94%	95% <sup>▼</sup>	Rivera (R)	95%	97% <sup>▼</sup>
Bowen (R)	93%	96% <sup>▼</sup>	Homan (R)	86%	93% <sup>▼</sup>	Robaina (R)	91%	96% <sup>▼</sup>
Boyd (D)	84%	88% <sup>▼</sup>	Hooper (R)	93%	93% <sup>—</sup>	Roberson (D)	82%	79% <sup>▲</sup>
Brandenburg (D)	90%	84% <sup>▲</sup>	Hudson (R)	92%	92% <sup>—</sup>	Ross (R)	93%	94% <sup>▼</sup>
Braynon (D)	87%	87% <sup>—</sup>	Hukill (R)	95%	97% <sup>▼</sup>	Rouson (D)	88%	88% <sup>—</sup>
Brise (D)	88%	85% <sup>▲</sup>	Jenne (D)	88%	85% <sup>▲</sup>	Rubio (R)	91%	95% <sup>▼</sup>
Brown (R)	94%	96% <sup>▼</sup>	Jordan (R)	93%	96% <sup>▼</sup>	Sachs (D)	85%	84% <sup>▲</sup>
Bucher (D)	70%	60% <sup>▲</sup>	Kelly (R)	93%	93% <sup>—</sup>	Sands (D)	81%	83% <sup>▼</sup>
Bullard (D)	87%	77% <sup>▲</sup>	Kendrick (R)	90%	83% <sup>▲</sup>	Sansom (R)	94%	97% <sup>▼</sup>
Cannon (R)	95%	97% <sup>▼</sup>	Kiar (D)	93%	90% <sup>▲</sup>	Sasso (D)	83%	83% <sup>—</sup>
Carroll (R)	92%	97% <sup>▼</sup>	Kravitz (R)	94%	94% <sup>—</sup>	Saunders (D)	89%	81% <sup>▲</sup>
Chestnut (D)	88%	87% <sup>▲</sup>	Kreegel (R)	89%	96% <sup>▼</sup>	Schenck (R)	92%	94% <sup>▼</sup>
Coley (R)	94%	97% <sup>▼</sup>	Kriseman (D)	85%	83% <sup>▲</sup>	Schultz (R)	89%	89% <sup>—</sup>
Cretul (R)	91%	97% <sup>▼</sup>	Legg (R)	92%	97% <sup>▼</sup>	Schwartz (D)	80%	81% <sup>▼</sup>
Culp (R)	90%	94% <sup>▼</sup>	Llorente (R)	90%	97% <sup>▼</sup>	Scioni (D)	91%	90% <sup>▲</sup>
Cusack (D)	81%	72% <sup>▲</sup>	Long (D)	88%	90% <sup>▼</sup>	Seiler (D)	84%	73% <sup>▲</sup>
Domino (R)	93%	97% <sup>▼</sup>	Lopez-Cantera (R)	94%	96% <sup>▼</sup>	Simmons (R)	93%	94% <sup>▼</sup>
Dorworth (R)	92%	92% <sup>—</sup>	Machek (D)	88%	76% <sup>▲</sup>	Skidmore (D)	86%	86% <sup>—</sup>
Evers (R)	93%	95% <sup>▼</sup>	Mayfield (R)	92%	96% <sup>▼</sup>	Snyder (R)	92%	94% <sup>▼</sup>
Fields (D)	92%	77% <sup>▲</sup>	McBurney (R)	93%	93% <sup>—</sup>	Soto (D)	91%	90% <sup>▲</sup>
Fitzgerald (D)	88%	87% <sup>▲</sup>	McKeel (R)	93%	96% <sup>▼</sup>	Taylor (D)	89%	82% <sup>▲</sup>
Flores (R)	93%	97% <sup>▼</sup>	Meadows (D)	88%	81% <sup>▲</sup>	Thompson, G. (D)	86%	87% <sup>▼</sup>
Ford (R)	92%	95% <sup>▼</sup>	Murzin (R)	92%	97% <sup>▼</sup>	Thompson, N. (R)	93%	95% <sup>▼</sup>
Frishe (R)	89%	91% <sup>▼</sup>	Needelman (R)	90%	92% <sup>▼</sup>	Thurston (D)	89%	87% <sup>▲</sup>
Galvano (R)	92%	95% <sup>▼</sup>	Nehr (R)	93%	95% <sup>▼</sup>	Traviesa (R)	94%	96% <sup>▼</sup>
Garcia, L. (D)	85%	84% <sup>▲</sup>	Nelson (R)	90%	93% <sup>▼</sup>	Troutman (R)	93%	96% <sup>▼</sup>
Garcia, R. (R)	87%	83% <sup>▲</sup>	Patronis (R)	88%	90% <sup>▼</sup>	Vana (D)	87%	78% <sup>▲</sup>
Gardiner (R)	92%	95% <sup>▼</sup>	Patterson (R)	95%	97% <sup>▼</sup>	Waldman (D)	87%	89% <sup>▼</sup>
Gelber (D)	87%	66% <sup>▲</sup>	Peterman (D)	100%	69% <sup>▲</sup>	Weatherford (R)	93%	93% <sup>—</sup>
Gibbons (D)	85%	86% <sup>▼</sup>	Pickens (R)	92%	96% <sup>▼</sup>	Williams (R)	91%	97% <sup>▼</sup>
Gibson, A. (D)	89%	77% <sup>▲</sup>	Planas (R)	91%	94% <sup>▼</sup>	Zapata (R)	92%	96% <sup>▼</sup>

# The Bills

*Voting Records* was compiled using committee and floor votes cast on each of the following bills.

Unless otherwise noted, AIF took the same position on the bills listed in the summary at the end of each write-up as it did on the bill in the write-up.

**PRIORITY** = included in AIF's 2008 Sessions Priorities.

## BUSINESS REGULATION

### **HB 105—Relating to Secondary Metal Recyclers by Rep. Baxter Troutman (R-Winter Haven) **PRIORITY****

This legislation will act to deter thieves from bringing stolen items to a legitimate secondary metal dealer by requiring these metal dealers to keep records on sources of the metal. In addition, any unscrupulous metal dealers who do not provide the required information for a sale and who receive stolen property can be charged with a third-degree felony.

Due to the increasing worldwide demand for metals, metal theft is on the rise and can jeopardize the safety of individuals who are affected by the theft, as well as wreak havoc on communities by causing power outages and surges.

AIF supports legislation which helps law enforcement find these thieves and makes it harder for them to unload their stolen goods. Metal thieves may get a few hundred dollars for the metal they steal, but a business may have to spend 100 times that amount to repair the damage.

*CS/CS/HB 105 was approved by the Governor and assigned Chapter Number 2008-69; Senate companion CS/CS/SB 556 was laid on the table.*

### **HB 147 – Relating to Expedited Permitting Process for Economic Development Projects by Rep. Rob Schenck (R-Spring Hill)**

The bill requires the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and water management districts to create a 45-day expedited permitting process for businesses that have been identified as a target industry business by the state Office of Tourism, Trade and Economic Development (OTTED). The bill also requires a mandatory pre-application review process to reduce

permitting conflicts by providing guidance to applicants regarding the permits needed from each agency and governmental entity, site planning and development, site suitability and limitations, facility design, and steps the applicant can take to ensure expeditious permit application review.

AIF supports legislation aimed at improving the permitting process for existing businesses in Florida and for those companies looking to invest in our state. Any legislation that helps this process will have a dramatic effect on helping to stimulate our economy.

*CS/HB 147 died in Senate messages; Senate companion CS/SB 402 died in the Senate General Governmental Appropriations Committee.*

### **HB 799 – Relating to the Theft of Copper or Other Nonferrous Metal by Rep. Sandy Adams (R-Oviedo) **PRIORITY****

The bill provides that a person who knowingly and intentionally takes copper or other nonferrous metals from a utility or communications service provider commits a first degree felony if the theft damages, interrupts, or interferes with the facilities or service of a utility or communications service provider.

AIF and the Floridians for Copper & Metal Crime Prevention Coalition support this bill because of its potential to curb the practice of secondary metal theft. Utility and communications interruptions lead to costly repairs, but more importantly they have the potential to call into question the safety of Florida's residents.

*CS/HB 799 passed both the House and the Senate and was ordered enrolled; Senate companion CS/SB 1384 was laid on the table.*

#### **Barney T. Bishop III**

President & CEO of Associated Industries of Florida ... former aide to state Treasurer Bill Gunter ... former Executive Director of the Florida Democratic Party ... more than 29 years experience in legislative and political affairs ... areas of expertise include appropriations, criminal justice, and behavioral health care issues ... B.S. in Political & Judicial Communication from Emerson College in Boston.

**Issues:** General Business, Appropriations, Criminal Justice





**👍 HB 1267 – Relating to Protecting Urban and Residential Environments & Water by Rep. Bryan Nelson (R-Apopka)**

In 2007, the Legislature established the Consumer Fertilizer Task Force to take public input and testimony for the development of statewide guidelines governing non-agricultural fertilizer use rates and applications. This bill addresses some of the recommendations made by the Task Force. The bill requires all county and municipal governments to adopt, at a minimum, the “Florida Friendly Fertilizer Use on Urban Landscapes Model Ordinance by October 1, 2008. A county or municipal government that adopts its own fertilizer use ordinance prior to July 1, 2008, is exempt from the adoption requirement for the model ordinance.

AIF supports legislation that develops an over-arching model for regulation that applies statewide — it is unreasonable and a logistical nightmare for retailers to be held responsible for keeping legal products on their shelves when the definition of what’s legal and allow-

able can change from one town’s borders to the next city’s to an adjacent county.

*CS/HB 1267 died in the House Policy & Budget Council; Senate companion CS/SB 2352 died in the Senate Community Affairs Committee.*

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**👍 HB 293 – Relating to Corporate Income Tax Credits/New Market Tax Credits by Rep. Will Weatherford (R-Zephyrhills) PRIORITY**

The bill seeks to take advantage of almost \$60 billion in federal funding by creating a program that would leverage state dollars towards available federal dollars for investment into Florida’s fledging communities. This legislation makes the state more attractive to national investors who are deciding where to invest funds raised under the federal New Markets Tax Credits program. In addition, the legislation is modeled after other states which have successfully taken advantage of the federal program.

AIF supports efforts to draw down federal dollars for economic development in low-income areas of the state through innovative proposals such as the New Markets Tax Credits Program.

*CS/CS/HB 293 died in Senate messages; Senate companion bill CS/CS/SB 850 died in the Senate Finance & Tax Committee.*

**👍 SB 432 – Relating to Placement of Vessels/Artificial Reefs by Sen. Mike Bennett (R-Bradenton)**

The bill would create the Ships 2 Reefs program, a matching grant program whereby the state of Florida partners with local governments, the federal government, and private entities to provide funds needed to participate in the sinking of decommissioned naval vessels as a tourist attraction off the coasts of Florida. The grant program, estimated to cost approximately \$2 million to the state, would be administered by the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and may be used for the reconditioning, towing and sinking of such vessels.

AIF supports this creative way to stimulate



**Jose L. Gonzalez**

Vice President – Governmental Affairs of Associated Industries of Florida ... coordinates AIF’s lobbying team and all research and advocacy efforts for the association ... five years legislative experience ... Master’s degree in Public Administration with a specialization in Public Policy and a Bachelor’s in Political Science from the University of Florida.

**Issues:** Ethics & Elections, Government Accountability, Taxation, Workforce Housing

**👍** Bill supported by AIF

**👎** Bill opposed by AIF

Florida's economy by using the state's natural resources.

*SB 432 was signed by officers and presented to the governor.*

**👍 HB 593 – Relating to Florida Research Commercialization Matching Grant Program by Rep. Steve Precourt (R-Winter Garden)**

This bill would create a matching grant program, by way of a \$4-million appropriation for small or start-up companies that already are receiving federal grants and are looking to the state for help with their operations. Eligible companies must meet specific criteria and demonstrate their commitment to high quality jobs and innovative research.

AIF strongly supports the Legislature's efforts to energize Florida's economy by way of tax incentives, business development credits and various other business incentives for existing Florida businesses and new research institutes looking to expand in Florida.

*CS/CS/HB 593 died in Senate messages; Senate companion CS/CS/SB 1120 died in the Senate Higher Education Appropriations Committee.*

**👍 SB 1398 – Relating to Tax Credit for Research and Development Expenses by Sen. Steve Oelrich (R-Gainesville)**

This legislation attempts to establish a Research and Development Tax Credit Program whereby a tax credit would be granted for companies that chose to engage in research and development, manufacturing, telecommunications or tourism. In addition, any tax credits that were qualified for by a company, but were unused, could be assigned or sold to other companies. The bill was amended to ensure that a company selling the unused tax credits must sell these credits to another company that was engaged in research and development work.

AIF supports continued state funds being made available for enhancing economic development, creating incentives for new business locations and innovative employers looking to relocate in Florida.

*CS/SB 1398 died in the Senate Finance & Tax Committee; House companion HB 733 died in the*



*House Economic Expansion & Infrastructure Council.*

**👍 SB 2310 – Relating to Economic Stimulus by Sen. Jeremy Ring (D-Margate) **PRIORITY****

The bill allows the State Board of Administration to invest up to 1.5 percent of the net value of the Florida State Retirement Fund, which is approximately \$1.8 billion, into businesses described as "technology and growth investments." Eligible businesses include, but are not limited to, aerospace engineering, computer technology, renewable energy, and medical and life sciences. In addition, this legislation could award a \$40 million one-time cash prize to a private sector firm that provides the most significant advancement within the reusable space vehicle industry as Florida moves from the Challenger Space Program to the Constellation Program.

AIF supports legislation that seeks to take a small percentage of the state's retirement fund and invest it into Florida companies. Other large states like California



**Tamela Ivey Perdue, Esq.**

General Counsel and Shareholder with the law firm of Stiles, Taylor & Grace, P.A., managing the firm's Tallahassee office ... more than 16 years legislative and legal experience, representing insurers and the business community on tort, workers' compensation, insurance and other legal issues before the legislative and executive branches of government ... established legal practice specializing in insurance defense and administrative law ... formerly worked in The Florida Senate ... B.S. from Lee University and J.D. from Stetson University.

**Issues:** Legal & Judicial, Unemployment Compensation, Workers' Compensation

presently engage in this type of investment, and their economies have benefited tremendously from the infusion of capital into new and expanding companies.

*CS/SB 2310 was approved by the Governor and assigned Chapter Number 2008-31; House companion CS/HB 1295 was laid on the table.*

 **SB 2712, 2714 – Relating to Building Florida’s Future Revolving Trust Fund by Sen. Mike Fasano (R-New Port Richey) **PRIORITY****

SB 2712 and SB 2714 create the Building Florida’s Future Revolving Trust Fund, which is a program that will provide loan guarantees (or other credit incentives) to local governments or private entities that need assistance in building or modernizing facilities or infrastructure needed to attract or expand targeted, high wage industries with potential for growth. Specifically, these funds could be used to buy land, install infrastructure, and assist with access to telecommunications facilities or access to energy sources.

*As highlighted by AIF’s Economic Stimulus Package, AIF supports legislation that seeks to invest state dollars in infrastructure projects. These investments will help stimulate Florida’s lagging economy.*

*CS/CS/SB 2712 died on the House calendar; CS/CS/SB 2714 died on the Senate calendar.*

 **SB 2778 – Relating to Economic Development by Sen. Mike Fasano (R-New Port Richey)**

The bill aims to loosen regulatory burdens on businesses, increase the number of companies eligible for incentive programs through the Office of Tourism Trade and Economic Development (OTTED), increase economic assistance to rural areas of the state, set timelines for application approvals or denials to OTTED for economic assistance, and require that the state receive back 10 to 15 percent of royalties from project contracts with private companies that receive Innovation Incentive funds. These returns will then be distributed to various trust funds related to economic development.

*AIF supports this legislation since it ensures a commitment to economic development and the com-*

*mercialization of products developed in Florida. AIF further supports continued state funds being made available for enhancing economic development, creating incentives for new business locations and innovative employers looking to relocate in Florida.*

*CS/SB 2778 died in Senate messages; House companion CS/HB 7111 was laid on the table.*

 **HB 7109 – Relating to Small Business Regulatory Relief by Rep. Frank Attkisson (R-Kissimmee)**

This bill establishes the Small Business Regulatory Relief Act, establishes the state’s first Small Business Advisory Committee, and creates the Small Business Advocate. It also focuses on monitoring regulatory requirements for small businesses and making recommendations to the Legislature on how these burdens may be revised or deleted to reduce the detrimental impact they may have on Florida’s two million small businesses. In addition, the Small Business Advocate is established to represent the views and interests of small businesses before state agencies and the Legislature. The advocate would also be charged with receiving and responding to complaints from small businesses about regulatory burdens that may be adversely affecting their businesses. The reviews of these should also be coordinated with the agency’s sunset review process, a process by which state agencies are reviewed by the Legislature to determine if the agency and/or its rules and procedures are necessary.

*AIF supports this legislation. So often small businesses are adversely affected by regulatory and procedural burdens that can stymie growth or, in some instances, halt a business altogether. This bill will give small business owner a stronger voice in government.*

*HB 7109 was signed by officers and presented to the governor.*

## EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

 **HB 207 - Relating to Educator Certification by Rep. Maria Sachs (D-Delray Beach) **PRIORITY****

This bill aims to broaden the number of foreign



**Chris Verlander**

Senior Vice President – Corporate Development of Associated Industries of Florida ... more than 28 years expertise in insurance lobbying activities ... former President (1994-1997) and Vice Chairman (1997-1999) of American Heritage Life Insurance Company ... B.S. from Georgia Tech and M.B.A. from the University of Florida.

**Issues:** Insurance, General Business

 Bill supported by AIF

 Bill opposed by AIF

languages available in Florida's schools by changing the way teachers can be certified to teach a foreign language. The bill codifies into law an existing Department of Education rule dealing with this same subject. The languages being targeted by the bill include Chinese, Hebrew, Italian, and others.

**AIF supports students having access to classes in modern languages that are used around the world for commerce. Access to these languages will give our students the foundation they need to compete in the global workforce, thus ensuring that Florida's businesses can compete with their counterparts across the world.**

*CS/HB 207 died in Senate messages; Senate companion CS/CS/SB 1062 died in the Senate Education Pre-K-12 Committee.*

**👍 SB 346 - Relating to Sure Futures Postgraduate Scholarship Program by Sen. Jeremy Ring (D-Margate)**

The legislation creates a matching program for private sector businesses with students who are enrolled in a university seeking an advanced degree. A corporate sponsor would provide a scholarship for the student, who would then agree to work for the company for a minimum of four years after graduation.

**AIF believes that university research is an economic driver for Florida's future and supports efforts that will encourage our graduates who are pursuing advanced degrees to stay in Florida and provide them with links to employment in targeted economic growth sectors of the economy.**

*CS/SB 346 died in the Senate Higher Education Appropriations Committee; House companion CS/HB 231 died in the House Policy & Budget Council.*

**👍 HB 659 - Relating to Service Learning by Rep. Rick Kriseman (D-St. Petersburg)**

The bill permits the Department of Education to encourage school districts to initiate and implement service learning programs and activities in the K-12 system. As a part of the curriculum, service learning programs would allow students to practice and

apply skills, knowledge, and behaviors they need to learn through service to others in their school or community. These programs have been shown to improve the academic and behavioral skills of students resulting in increased academic performance, increased FCAT scores and improved attendance. These programs have also served well as an intervention strategy for at-risk students. School districts would receive incentive by way of federal grants.

**This bill is of significant importance to developing the workforce that business needs in Florida, and AIF supports these important initiatives.**

*HB 659 died on the House calendar; SB 1498 died in the Senate Education Pre-K-12 Committee.*

**👍 HB 985 - Relating to Workplace Skills of Students by Rep. Bryan Nelson (R-Apopka)**

This bill requires students beginning high school in 2008 to earn work credentials based on achieving a



**Keyna Cory (Chief Lobbyist)**

President, Public Affairs Consultants, a public affairs and governmental relations consulting firm ... more than 23 years experience representing a variety of clients, from small entrepreneurs to Fortune 500 companies, before the Florida Legislature ... majored in Political Science at the University of Florida.

**Issues:** General Business, Environmental, Taxation

minimum score in applied mathematics, reading for information, and the ability to locate information. The bill also requires Workforce Florida Inc. to coordinate with the Department of Education to ensure consistent application of the credential.

This bill is of significant importance to developing the workforce that business needs in Florida and AIF supports these important initiatives.

*CS/HB 985 died in Senate messages.*

 **SB 1906 - Relating to Alternative Credit High School Courses by Sen. Don Gaetz (R-Ft. Walton Beach)**

The bill creates a pilot project for career academies to earn core course credit for career education courses, provided the appropriate course content matches Florida's state standards and the student demonstrates mastery of those concepts on an end-of-course exam.

AIF supports a career education system that is linked to the same academic standards as traditional education (reading, writing, and math) as well as to industry standards so that students are prepared for both higher education and immediate employment in a high-wage, high-skill job that is in demand in today's economy.

*CS/CS/SB 1906 passed both the House and Senate and was ordered enrolled.*

 **SB 1908 - Relating to Designation of High School Grades by Sen. Don Gaetz (R-Ft. Walton Beach) PRIORITY**

Included in this omnibus education bill are parts of several other bills advanced during the 2008 session. SB 1908 includes a number of reforms to Florida's educational system such as enhanced Sunshine State Standards, end-of-course assessments for core subjects, a designation on the high school diploma to reflect achievement in a student's emphasis of study, access to additional foreign languages, and changes to the way Florida grades its high schools (no longer is FCAT performance the only determining factor for a high school's grade).

AIF believes it is important to continue to build on the K-12 accountability system with particular focus on

improving the value of a high school diploma. Employers must be able to trust that a high school diploma ensures that a graduate can communicate and operate effectively in the workplace.

*CS/SB 1908 passed both the House and Senate and was ordered enrolled.*

 **HB 7043 – Relating to Maximum Class Size by Rep. Joe Pickens (R-Palatka) PRIORITY**

This bill amends 1003.03, Florida Statute, the section of law that implements the constitutional amendment lowering class size. The bill preserves the integrity and purpose of the amendment, while providing a detailed mechanism for flexibility. The bill contains clauses restating the Florida Supreme Court's finding that the Constitution gives latitude to the Legislature to design ways to meet the class size goals, and finding that disruptions to learning in the middle of a school year are educationally unsound and distressing. The bill also changes accountability and enforcement for class size compliance.

AIF supports added flexibility in achieving the class size limits passed in Florida's Constitution. This will free up valuable funding that can go to increases in teacher salaries and investment in school infrastructure.

*CS/HB 7043 died in Senate messages; Senate companion CS/SB 1756 died in the Senate Conference Committee.*

 **HB 7045 - Relating to Curriculum Standards by Rep. Anitere Flores (R-Miami) PRIORITY**

The bill requires the Department of Education (DOE) to upgrade Florida's current curriculum standards by making them more rigorous and making them grade specific for the core subjects (math, language, science). Additionally, the bill adds standards in other important subjects such as civics and even physical education. It also strengthens Florida's education accountability system by adding social studies to the FCAT, exploring some end-of-course exams, and pushing back the FCAT testing date later in the school year.

During the last day of session, many of the provisions found in HB 7045 were amended onto SB 1908, a



**Robert P. Asztalos**

Partner with Buigas, Asztalos & Associates and the Director of Governmental Affairs for Delta Health Group ... directed the nursing home profession's litigation reform campaign in 2000-01 and served as the Director of the Heal Healthcare in Florida Coalition ... over 22 years legislative experience ... Master's degree in Legislative Affairs and a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from George Washington University.

**Issues:** Health Care

 Bill supported by AIF

 Bill opposed by AIF

bill that became the vehicle for a number of educational reforms.

AIF supports raising the rigor of high school education to better prepare students for transition into higher education and better align their skills with the needs of the 21st century workforce.

*CS/HB 7045 died in Senate messages; Senate companion CS/CS/SB 1914 was laid on the table.*

## ENERGY

### **SB 310 - Relating to Biomass Energy Production by Sen. Lee Constantine (R-Altamonte Springs)**

The bill renews the Farm-To-Fuel Grants program, which provides matching grants for bioenergy projects. It establishes incentive programs for biofuel retail sales and production of biofuels from biomass produced in the state. It also provides for additional increase of \$1 million per year to \$2 million on sales-tax refunds for materials used in the distribution of biodiesel and ethanol.

AIF supports efforts to secure funding assistance for companies looking to commercialize renewable energy technologies for the production of ethanol and biodiesel and for basic research at our universities.

*CS/SB 310 died in the Senate Communications and Public Utilities Committee.*

## ENVIRONMENT

### **HB 301 – Relating to Recycling by Rep. Janet Long (D-St. Petersburg)**

This bill would require all state agencies and airports to collect aluminum beverage cans and recyclable plastic and glass. Unfortunately, this good recycling bill had a section in it that would require any private association, business, or organization to collect and recycle these materials no matter if they were a for-profit or a not-for-profit entity. This mandate has the potential to increase costs for small business owners during an economic downturn.

**AIF opposes this bill only because of the mandate**

**on small businesses and not-for-profits. Although AIF supports recycling efforts that are good for our environment and economy, establishing a recycling mandate is not good public policy.**

*CS/HB 301 died on the House calendar; Senate companion CS/SB 692 died in the Senate General Government Appropriations Committee.*

### **HB 527 – Relating to Brownfield Site Redevelopment by Rep. Trudi Williams (R-Ft. Myers)**

This proposed legislation would make changes to the brownfield laws by establishing a new tax credit for an additional 25 percent of the total site rehabilitation costs, up to \$500,000, as a bonus for the construction and operation of a health-care facility or a health-care provider on a brownfield site. It would also implement the same changes for affordable housing. The bill includes language allowing a credit for the removal of solid waste from the brownfield site as long as the site was not used before as a landfill. The bill provides for definitions items covered under these new changes.

AIF supports this legislation as it hopefully will increase participation in the redevelopment of brownfield sites and therefore promote economic development efforts. It will also help to improve the affordable housing problem facing Florida today.

*CS/HB 527 passed both the House and the Senate and was ordered enrolled; Senate companion CS/CS/ SB 2594 died in the Senate Finance and Tax Committee.*

### **SB 542 – Relating to Land Acquisition and Management by Sen. Burt Saunders (R-Naples)** **PRIORITY**

Florida Forever was created by the Florida Legislature in 2001 and is an acquisition program designed to purchase lands for the preservation of the state's natural resources. SB 542 re-institutes the Florida Forever program for another 10 years and enhances the current program to prioritize public water access, alternative water supplies, imperiled species mitigation, and performance standards for land management. The bill was also amended to include some important working waterfront



**Pete J. Buigas**

Partner in Buigas, Asztalos & Associates ... has represented various associations and corporations and developed strategies to direct legislative action on health care and education issues for more than 10 years ... formerly served as Deputy Director for AHCA and managed the division responsible for statewide regulation of all health care facilities, managed care industry, Certificate of Need (CON) program, and provider/facility complaints.

**Issues:** Education



provisions that will ensure that these culturally sensitive lands are also protected using the Florida Forever model.

AIF and the Florida Coalition for Responsible Preservation of Public Land support adding additional uses of public lands that would include alternative water supply programs, expanding the use of mitigation programs for imperiled species, allowing for utility infrastructure access to public lands, and emphasizing public access to water for outdoor recreational opportunities.

*CS/CS/SB 542 passed both the House and Senate and was ordered enrolled; House companion CS/HB 7141 died on the House floor.*

**👍 HB 547 – Relating to Water Pollution Control by Rep. Paige Kreegel (R-Punta Gorda)**

This legislation will set up a trial water quality credit trading program for the Lower St. Johns River Basin. According to the staff analysis, “Water quality credit trading is a voluntary, market-based approach to

promote protection and restoration of Florida’s rivers, lakes, streams and estuaries that enhance other voluntary regulatory and financial assistance programs already in place.”

AIF supports this legislation because establishing a water quality credit trading program could reduce the costs of pollutant reduction activities to businesses, industries, agriculture, and all taxpayers.

*CS/HB 547 passed both the House and the Senate and was ordered enrolled; Senate companion CS/CS/ SB 1208 was laid on the table.*

## ETHICS & ELECTIONS

**👍 HB 903 Relating to Registration of Paid Petition Circulators by Rep. Chris Dorworth (R-Heathrow)**

As originally filed, the bill established a registration process and a number of requirements for persons wishing to operate as paid petition gatherers. The bill was amended to require a level two background screening for any person wishing to be a paid petition gatherer. The intent of this bill was to protect the public from individuals who may have criminal intentions or a criminal record. In addition, the bill would have reduced the number of years a petition signature is valid from the current four years to two years. Finally, as amended, the bill would require all petitions and revocation forms to be submitted within 60 days of a voter signing them to the Supervisor of Elections.

AIF supports legislation that would bring about increased accountability for paid petition signature gatherers and, as outlined in our 2008 Session Priorities, would limit the time during which petition signatures are valid from four years to two years.

*CS/CS/HB 903 died on the House calendar.*

## HEALTH CARE

**👍 HB 19 – Relating to Coverage for Mental, Nervous, and Substance-related Disorders by Rep. Ed Homan (R-Temple Terrace)**

The bill, which deals with the issue of mental health



**Al Cardenas, Esq.**

Partner with the law firm of Tew Cardenas LLP, chairs the Advocacy and Governmental Affairs group in Miami, Tallahassee and Washington, DC ... over 30 years legislative experience ... served two terms as Chairman of the Republican Party of Florida ... twice-named one of Washington DC’s top lobbyists ... currently represents some of Florida’s largest corporate and governmental entities before the Florida Legislature ... graduate of Florida Atlantic University and the Seton Hall University School of Law.

**Issues:** Federal Legislation

**👍** Bill supported by AIF

**👎** Bill opposed by AIF



parity, initially started out as an unfunded mandate requiring health insurers to provide coverage for mental health diseases, such as bi-polar disorder. With the help of Rep. Homan, this proposal evolved into a bill that makes insurance providers offer the coverage, leaving the choice up to the individual as to whether or not to choose that additional coverage.

AIF thanks Rep. Homan for his willingness to work with the business community to find ways to address the issue of mental health parity without costly mandates that would drive up the cost of health insurance for employers. As originally drafted, AIF was opposed to HB 19.

*CS/CS/HB 19 died in Senate messages; Senate companion CS/ SB 164 died in the Senate General Government Appropriations Committee.*

 **HB 461 – Relating to Health Flex Plans by Rep. Jimmy Patronis (R-Panama City) PRIORITY**

The bill expands the Health Flex program to a greater number of small employers by expanding

health flex plan eligibility from 200 to 300 percent of the federal poverty level. The goal Health Flex plans hope to achieve is to provide a “cafeteria-like” plan for health insurance, which allows policy holders to pick and choose their individual coverage options.

AIF supports market-based solutions to the problem of Florida’s uninsured. These individuals typically rely on emergency rooms for their primary care. Unfortunately, this kind of care is the most expensive option. Expanding access for low-income employees to health flex plans is sound public policy.

*HB 461 was signed by officers and presented to the governor.*

 **SB 448 – Relating to Breast Cancer/Lymph Node Dissection Coverage by Sen. Arthenia Joyner (D-Tampa)**

The bill would apply the same requirements for coverage of a lymph node dissection that currently apply to coverage for a mastectomy. Specifically, the bill requires that, if an insurance policy or health maintenance organization (HMO) contract provides coverage for breast cancer treatment, the inpatient hospital coverage for lymph node dissections must be for the time period determined to be medically necessary by the treating physician in accordance with prevailing medical standards. The bill also requires the policy or contract providing such breast cancer treatment to provide outpatient follow-up care for a lymph node dissection consistent with prevailing medical standards. In addition, the bill specifies that these provisions do not require an uninsured patient to have a lymph node dissection in the hospital or stay in the hospital for any fixed period following a lymph node dissection.

*AIF consistently opposes additional mandated coverages because the resultant cost increases could force some insurers out of the market and price health care insurance out of the reach of many employers and businesses.*

*SB 448 died in the Senate General Government Appropriations Committee; House bill HB 363 died in the House Health Innovation Committee.*



**Chris Dudley**

Joined Southern Strategy Group in 2000 ... over 15 years legislative experience ... formerly served as Assistant to the Chief of Staff and Acting Deputy Chief of Staff to Governor Jeb Bush and as Deputy Chief of Staff, Deputy Legislative Director, and Special Assistant to former Lt. Governor Frank T. Brogan ... Bachelor’s degree in Political Science from the University of South Florida.

**Issues:** Economic Development

 **SB 1010 – Relating to Sen. Les Miller Act/ Prostate Cancer Screening by Sen. Tony Hill (D-Jacksonville)**

This bill would require all individual, group, and out-of-state group health insurance policies, including all health maintenance organization (HMO) contracts, to provide coverage for an annual screening for prostate cancer to a man age 40 or over, as set forth in the early detection guidelines of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network or other evidence-based sources. The estimated annual recurring impact to the State Employees Health Insurance Trust Fund for this new health insurance benefit is \$460,000.

**AIF consistently opposes additional mandated coverages because the resultant cost increases could force some insurers out of the market and price health care insurance out of the reach of many employers and businesses.**

*CS/SB 1010 died in the Senate General Government Appropriations Committee; House companion HB 53 died in the House Health Innovation Committee.*

 **SB 1012 – Relating to Health Insurance Claims Payments by Sen. Don Gaetz (R-Ft. Walton Beach)**

The bill's original language was very onerous for employers and would have prohibited the use of Silent PPOs, which are key for employers who want to "self-insure" and provide affordable health insurance benefits to their employees. The original language would have made it more difficult and more expensive for all employers (not just those who self-insure) to provide health benefits to their employees. The bill that ultimately passed both houses, was compromise language developed by AIF, insurers and the Florida Medical Association. Associated Industries' lobbyists continually voiced their concerns in committees and directly to the bill's sponsors and are pleased with the outcome of this legislation.

**AIF originally opposed the bill because of its prohibition on silent PPOs, but thanks to the compromise reached by all stakeholders AIF was able to withdraw its opposition. The search for ways to expand the availability of health care coverage to Floridians is an impor-**

**tant endeavor. But almost as important is ensuring that Floridians who currently have health care coverage are not threatened by proposals that ultimately drive up the cost of coverage.**

*CS/CS/SB 1012 passed both the House and the Senate and was ordered enrolled; House companion CS/CS/ HB 405 was laid on the table.*

 **SB 1598 – Relating to Health Insurance Coverage/ Amino-acid-based Formula by Sen. Durell Peadar (R-Crestview)**

The bill would expand coverage by insurers and HMOs regarding prescription and non-prescription enteral formulas. Enteral formulas are liquid solutions containing some or all of the nutrients that the body needs to function. These formulas are considered nutritional supplements and not medication by the FDA. The measure also deletes the annual cost cap which would allow for costs to be contained.

**AIF consistently opposes additional mandated coverages because the resultant cost increases could force some insurers out of the market and price health care insurance out of the reach of many employers and businesses.**

*CS/CS/SB 1598 died in House messages; House companion HB 709 died in the House Healthcare Council.*

 **SB 1668 – Relating to Nursing Homes and Assisted Living Facilities by Sen. Dennis Jones (R-Seminole)**

The bill would allow trial lawyers to subvert the nursing home licensure laws by creating a roadmap that allows them to pierce corporate veils and sue related organizations for nursing home claims. The bill would require an applicant for an initial, renewal, or change of ownership license to submit additional information to the Agency related to extended ownership and financial status. The public would be able to submit information for the Agency to consider in application reviews associated with a change of ownership of a nursing home or assisted living facility. The full liability insurance policy amount would be available to a



**Mark Flynn**

Vice President of J. Keith Arnold & Associates ... over 21 years legislative experience ... former economic development executive with extensive experience representing business on a broad range of issues, including growth management and transportation ... has also worked for both a member of Congress and a member of the Florida House of Representatives ... graduate from the University of South Dakota with a B.S. in Mass Communications.

**Issues:** Transportation, Florida Maritime Council

 Bill supported by AIF

 Bill opposed by AIF

successful plaintiff since the policy would not be available to cover litigation costs or attorneys fees. Additional information would be made more easily accessible to the public.

**AIF opposes SB 1668 because of the dangerous precedent it sets for Florida's legal climate. Allowing affiliated organizations to be brought into lawsuits against nursing homes sends a chilling message to businesses in Florida — beware of who you do business with because you may end up in court through no fault of your own.**

*CS/SB 1668 died in the Senate Children, Families, and Elder Affairs Committee.*

**👍 SB 2534 – Relating to Health Insurance by Sen. Durell Peaden (R-Crestview) **PRIORITY****

The bill expands the affordability and accessibility of low-cost insurance for Florida's more than 3.8 million uninsureds by creating low cost plans that are exempt from the current Insurance Code and will be lower in cost through the use of cost containment measures, such as limits on the number of services, caps on benefits, and co-payments. After passing the Senate, the bill was sent to the House where it was combined to include portions of Rep. Aaron Bean's (R-Fernandina Beach) Farmer's Market plan, mainly language creating a corporation to oversee the availability of different healthcare products through an employer portal. In the end a compromise bill was passed on the final day of session, which incorporates provisions from both proposals.

AIF supports market-based solutions to the uninsured crisis in Florida. Currently, over three million people in Florida have no access to health insurance. This proposal has the potential to provide these individuals with a low-cost plan that provides some minimum coverage, including hospital stays.

*SB 2534 was approved by the Governor and assigned Chapter Number 2008-32; House companion CS/HB 7081 was laid on the table.*

**👎 SB 2654 – Relating to Autism Spectrum Disorder by Sen. Steve Geller (D-Hallandale Beach)**

The bill establishes coverage for children with autism

who are covered under a large employer's (50 employees or more) health insurance plan. Originally, the bill was to require coverage through the state's KidCare program, but this provision was removed when it was determined to be too expensive for the state.

**AIF consistently opposes additional mandated coverages because the resultant cost increases could force some insurers out of the market and price health care insurance out of the reach of many employers and businesses.**

*CS/CS/CS/SB 2654 was approved by the Governor and assigned Chapter Number 2008-30; House companion HB 1291 died in the House Healthcare Council.*

## INFRASTRUCTURE

**👍 HB 199 – Relating to Desalination Technology by Rep. Kurt Kelly (R-Ocala)**

This bill requires the Secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), in coordination with the five water management districts, to conduct a study examining all current and available desalination technologies. The study along with plan recommendations must be submitted by June 30, 2009 to the Governor, President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House.

**To prepare for future growth, Florida needs to diversify its source for water. AIF supports this legislation as it begins the process to find desalination technologies that are both environmentally and fiscally sound.**

*HB 199 died in Senate messages; Senate companion CS/SB 708 died on the Senate calendar.*

**👍 HB 431 – Relating to Affordable Housing by Rep. Keith Fitzgerald (D-Sarasota)**

The bill revises state statutes that address assessment of property used for affordable housing, which has received a low-income housing tax credit. The bill also revises the assessment of resale-restricted homes built on community land trust property so that they are not valued as though they were subject to free market purchase and sale prices, thereby reducing the assessment



**Leslie Foy**

Assistant Director of Greenberg Traurig's Tallahassee Governmental Affairs practice ... state legislative practice spans 20 years representing health and life insurers, investor-owned health care facilities, and assisted living facilities ... formerly served as the Director of Government Affairs for the Florida Chamber of Commerce ... well-versed in grassroots and campaign development techniques having previously served as AIF's Chief Political Officer.

**Issues:** Health Care



and property tax rate on those properties.

AIF supports this legislation because it creates sustainable affordable housing for Florida’s workforce, while correctly addressing the issues created in assessing property taxes.

*CS/HB 431 died on the House calendar.*

**👍 SB 474 – Relating to Growth Management by Sen. Rudy Garcia (R-Hialeah)**

The bill contains provisions regarding prohibitions on infrastructure spending in coastal areas, a new concurrency provision for urban areas, as well as a host

of clean-up provisions for the current Growth Management Act. Some of the proposed changes would have included enhanced participation by citizens in the plan amendment process, limitations on the frequency of plan amendments, incentives for the development of additional affordable housing units, designations of certain urban areas as transportation concurrency exception areas, and the creation of a process for studying and developing a mobility fee as a more effective means to mitigate traffic impacts.

AIF supports legislative proposals that would build on gains made last year in growth management legislation. The reform of growth-management laws is important to employers because they have the potential to impact the construction of roads, schools, and water projects, which are essential to economic development.

*CS/CS/SB 474 died on the Senate calendar; House companion CS/HB 7129 died on the House calendar.*

**👍 SB 482 – Relating to Affordable Housing by Sen. Rudy Garcia (R-Hialeah) **PRIORITY****

This legislation appropriates \$75 million from the Local Government Housing Trust Fund to the Florida Housing Finance Corporation to be used in the Homeownership Assistance Program, targeting counties and municipalities that have reduced impact fees at least 25 percent for a period of a year to eighteen months. The bill also targets local governments, which impose no impact fees or waive such fees entirely for homeownership purchases funded from this appropriation. The bill also allows funds to be used to preserve units that are less deteriorated than those requiring substantial rehabilitation, thereby allowing funding for preventive maintenance. It clarifies the Ad Valorem Exemption for Non-Profit Housing Property and bond allocation process; and creates the Florida Public Housing Preservation Grant program.

AIF supports this bill as it directly provides a mechanism to lower housing costs for Florida’s citizens. The issue of funding affordable housing is part of AIF and the business community’s Economic Stimulus Package. Spending dollars on housing is directly tied to increases in state revenue.



**Richard Gentry**

Head of Gentry & Associates, a government consulting firm in Tallahassee ... prior General and Legislative Counsel for the Florida Home Builders Association ... in his 24 years with the association, Mr. Gentry was actively involved in legislation which included growth management, affordable housing, and environmental laws.

**Issues:** Growth Management, Workforce Housing

**👍** Bill supported by AIF

**👎** Bill opposed by AIF

*CS/CS/SB 482 died in Senate messages; House companion CS/CS/HB 699 died on the House calendar.*

**👍 HB 683 – Relating to Public Construction Works by Rep. Will Weatherford (R-Zephyrhills)**

The purpose of this proposed legislation is to require local governments to competitively bid certain public construction projects over \$250,000. The local government would determine the cost of the project and then the private sector would have an opportunity to bid on said project. If a private-sector bid is 10 percent less than the public-sector costs, then the private-sector company would be awarded the job. It would also prohibit a local government from owning or operating an asphalt plant or a portable or stationary concrete batch plant with an independent mixer.

*AIF supports this legislation. Local governments should provide the necessary services such as police, fire, and EMS and not use taxpayers' money to be in the construction or road-building business.*

*CS/HB 683 died on the House calendar; Senate companion CS/SB 2148 died in the Senate Governmental Operations Committee.*

## INSURANCE

**👍 HB 269 – Relating to Hurricane Preparedness and Insurance by Rep. Alan Hays (R-Umatilla) **PRIORITY****

The bill creates The Citizens Property Insurance Corporation Mission Review Task Force consisting of industry and consumer experts to develop a plan to return Citizens to its original mission as an insurer of last resort. The funding for a similar task force was vetoed by the Governor in 2007. A strike-everything amendment was adopted, which made some slight changes to the bill as originally filed. For starters, funding for the task force would be provided by Citizens. In addition, the bill requires the Chief Financial Officer to develop a report on the economic impact on the state of Florida from a 1-in-100 year hurricane. The creation of this task force will begin the process of reducing businesses' exposure to hurricane taxes

to fund Citizens' deficits. Although HB 269 did not pass, the main provisions of the bill were included in the property insurance reform bill, SB 2860, which did pass this year.

*AIF supports this legislation because it begins to develop strategies for curbing artificially suppressed insurance rates and the irresponsible expansion of Citizens Insurance Company, a government-administered insurance company that should be an insurer of last resort, not the state's primary source of coverage.*

*CS/HB 269 died on the House calendar; Senate companion SB 754 died in the Senate Banking and Insurance Committee.*

**👍 SB 2156 – Relating to Florida Hurricane Catastrophe Fund by Sen. Bill Posey (R-Rockledge) **PRIORITY****

The bill is designed to reduce the risk associated with Florida's Catastrophe Fund by \$3 billion, which is an



**Peter Harris, Esq.**

President and CEO of ADG Business & Governmental Consultants ... more than 17 years experience successfully designing and implementing substantive legislative, governmental and management programs for business and government ... effectively worked with key policy makers in all branches of government ... graduate of the University of Miami and Florida State University College of Law.

**Issues:** Workforce Development, Workforce Housing, *Governmental Outsourcing Council*

excellent start in reducing potential hurricane taxes against businesses to fund deficits. For the Cat Fund contract year commencing June 1, 2008, and ending May 31, 2009, and for the contract year commencing July 1, 2009, and ending May 31, 2010, the proposal reduces the maximum temporary increase in coverage limits (TICL) option from \$12 billion to \$9 billion.

AIF supports SB 2156 and its efforts to protect Florida's taxpaying citizens from facing a financial deficit in the form of assessments or "hurricane taxes" that will affect our economy and livelihood for years to come.

*CS/CS/CS/SB 2156 died on the Senate calendar; House companion CS/HB 7021 died on the House calendar.*

#### **SB 2860 – Relating to Insurance by Sen. Jeff Atwater (R-North Palm Beach)**

The bill includes a number of property insurance reforms aimed at increasing consumer protections, mainly increased fines for violations of the insurance code and the repeal of the arbitration process. The bill also extends the freeze on Citizens' rates through 2010 and prohibits homes or condos valued at more than \$2 million from being covered by Citizens. Many of the onerous provisions included in the original version of SB 2860, as approved by the Senate, were successfully removed by the team of negotiators for the House. These include fine amounts that were excessive as well as provisions that would subject all lines of insurance (not just property insurance) to anti-trust provisions that would have led to a dramatic increase in litigation. The House was also able to include language from HB 269 by Rep. Alan Hays (R-Umatilla), which establishes the Citizens Review Task Force. This particular provision was a top priority for AIF.

**AIF opposes legislation that allows Citizens to compete with private insurance companies. By continuing the freeze on Citizens' rates, businesses in Florida will continue to be exposed to hurricane taxes in the form of assessments on all lines of insurances should a major hurricane hit our state.**

*CS/CS/SB 2860 was approved by the Governor with an appropriation veto of Section 16 of the bill, which*

*would have appropriated \$250 million for the Insurance Capital Build-Up Incentive Program. Assigned Chapter Number 2008-66.*

## LEGAL & JUDICIAL

#### **SB 704 – Relating to the Administrative Procedures Act by Sen. Mike Bennett (R-Bradenton) PRIORITY**

This bill provides additional incentives for state agencies to undergo rule adoption and implementation procedures when authority for such is granted by statute. The bill is designed to prevent agencies from failing to go through the formal rule-making process by implementing and enforcing policies under such statutes.

AIF supports SB 704 since it provides additional incentives for agencies to adopt their policies using the required rulemaking process. Businesses use the APA on a daily basis when interacting with state government. Any improvements to the Act are welcomed by the business community.

*CS/CS/SB 704 was signed by officers and presented to the governor.*

#### **SB 2076 – Relating to Arbitration by Sen. Ted Deutch (D-Delray Beach)**

This bill relates to the arbitration code and severely hampers a business' ability to contract with consumers to resolve disputes through arbitration instead of litigation. The legislation would essentially force more disputes to litigation and nullify any contractual arbitration requirements if a consumer is a party to a contract. Arbitration should serve as an efficient and predictable alternative to litigation; but if the current structure of its use is altered significantly, as with this litigation, its effectiveness will be minimized. The bill would also drastically increase the litigation burden on businesses and the court system.

**AIF opposes this legislation. The changes to the arbitration process outlined in this bill can only lead to greater litigation costs for Florida's employers.**



#### **Nick Iarossi, Esq.**

Founding Partner of Capital City Consulting, LLC ... more than seven years legislative experience ... formerly worked in The Florida Senate, the Florida House of Representatives and the Office of Insurance Regulation ... expertise in banking and insurance, privacy and public records, health care, procurement, parimutuels, technology, and education ... graduate Florida State University College of Law.

**Issues:** Insurance, Privacy

 Bill supported by AIF

 Bill opposed by AIF

*SB 2706 died in the Senate Banking and Insurance Committee; House companion HB 1219 died in the House Constitution & Civil Law Committee.*

## PROPERTY RIGHTS

### **HB 503 – Relating to Preservation & Protection of the Right to Keep & Bear Arms in Motor Vehicles Act of 2008 by Rep. Greg Evers (R-Milton)**

The bill prohibits employers from restricting employees, who hold a valid concealed weapon permit, from keeping their gun locked inside a car. The bill also prevents an employer from searching an employee's vehicle (unless a law enforcement officer is present) and firing an employee on the grounds that he or she possesses a firearm in the vehicle. HB 503 includes a greater list of properties that are exempt from this law, including nuclear power facilities, school property, and locations where combustible materials are present.

*AIF opposes legislation that prohibits businesses from enforcing or maintaining policies that ban guns in the workplace. Employers should be allowed to establish these types of policies and exert their rights as property owners. Maintaining a safe work environment is paramount for the longevity of any employer in Florida.*

*CS/HB 503 was approved by the Governor and assigned Chapter Number 2008-7; Senate companion CS/SB 1130 was laid on the table.*

## SPACE

### **HB 1055 – Relating to Space Industry by Rep. Thad Altman (R-Melbourne) **PRIORITY****

This legislation will create the Space Technology and Research Diversification Initiative (STRDI) in the Governor's Office of Tourism, Trade and Economic Development to be a university-led program to develop high-impact space research, and applied technology programs that can best advance the state's interest in a very competitive and diverse space industry.

*AIF supports full funding of Space Florida and other*

*space-related programs. Additionally, AIF supports proposals such as the Commercial Space Launch Act and the Space & Aerospace Development Infrastructure Enhancement (SADIE) Act. Investing in space leads to more jobs, a high-skilled workforce, and great economic activity.*

*CS/HB 1055 died in Senate messages; Senate companion CS/SB 2526 died in the Senate Transportation and Economic Development Appropriations Committee.*

### **HB 1373 – Relating to Qualified Defense Contractor Tax Refund Program by Rep. Thad Altman (R-Melbourne) **PRIORITY****

This bill expands the current Qualified Defense Contractor (QDC) Tax Refund Program administered by the Governor's Office of Tourism, Trade and Economic Development to include spaceflight businesses or entities to qualify for the QDC tax refunds. Spaceflight businesses that qualify will receive a tax refund based upon the number of jobs created. Tax refunds generated can qualify against corporate income taxes, sales and use taxes, intangible personal property taxes, excise taxes paid on documents, ad valorem taxes, and state communication services taxes.

*AIF supports adding spaceflight businesses to the Qualified Defense Contract Tax Refund Program. The incentives included in this successful program should go a long way in helping Florida maintain and attract commercial space industries.*

*CS/HB 1373 was approved by the Governor and assigned Chapter Number 2008-89; Senate companion CS/SB 2666 was laid on the table.*

### **SB 2426 – Relating to Space Florida/Florida Aerospace Development by Sen. Bill Posey (R-Rockledge) **PRIORITY****

This bill would create a new program in the Governor's Office of Tourism, Trade and Economic Development to provide funds for Space Florida. These funds would be directed to provide or upgrade space-related infrastructure or to create or retain high-quality, high-salary jobs in the space or aerospace industry.



#### **H. Frank Meiners**

President, Frank Meiners Governmental Consultants, LLC ... formerly with BellSouth as their Executive Director in Tallahassee where he lobbied communications issues ... more than 30 years legislative experience ... graduate of the University of South Florida in Mathematics and of the Fuqua School of Business at Duke University.

**Issues:** Taxation, Information Technology Council



AIF supports full funding of pro-space legislation and other space related programs that will help Florida leverage its existing space-related infrastructure. This will ensure that Florida remains the frontrunner in the space industry for years to come.

*CS/CS/SB 2426 died in the Senate Transportation and Economic Development Appropriations Committee.*

**👍 SB 2438 – Relating to Spaceflight/Informed Consent by Sen. Bill Posey (R-Rockledge) **PRIORITY****

This bill provides a limitation on liability for commercial launch firms and their subcontractors who provide human spaceflight services from Florida launch sites. Florida has nearly \$10 billion invested in infrastructure to support aerospace assets represented by over 1,000 companies employing 30,000 people with an estimated financial impact of \$1.68 billion on Florida's economy. This legislation will keep Florida's competitive edge in the aerospace industry — allowing us to recruit new business to Florida and retain it.

AIF supports legislation which seeks to maintain and advance Florida's global leadership in the space industry. Florida must protect revenue-producing industries, such as aerospace and commercial space flight, through implementation of legislation that will promote growth and prosperity.

*CS/SB 2438 passed both the House and the Senate and was ordered enrolled; House companion CS/HB 737 was laid on the table.*

## TAXATION

**👍 HB 111 – Relating to Hurricane Preparedness by Rep. Peter Nehr (R-Tarpon Springs)**

The bill provides a sales-tax holiday for items needed to prepare for hurricane season. The sales-tax holiday will coincide with the opening day of hurricane season, June 1, 2008, and ends on June 12, 2008. There is a specific list of items that are eligible for the sales-tax holiday. Some examples include batteries, self-powered light sources selling for \$20 or less, portable radios under \$75, tarpaulins or other flexible waterproof sheeting selling for \$50 or less, gas or diesel-fuel tanks selling for \$25 or less, and non-electric food-storage coolers selling for \$30 or less.

AIF supports the hurricane-preparedness sales-tax holiday. It is important for businesses and employees to be ready for hurricanes. Being prepared for these natural disasters will lower the amount of time a business may be closed or an employee may be away from work.

*CS/CS/HB 111 died on the House calendar.*



### David Rancourt

Founding Partner of Southern Strategy Group with more than 21 years legislative experience ... formerly served as Director of the Florida Division of Elections, as Deputy Secretary of State, and Deputy Chief of Staff under Governor Jeb Bush ... serves a strong client base with varied interests in both executive and legislative branches of government ... holds a B.S. in Economics from Florida State University and a Master's degree in Political Science from the University of Florida.

**Issues:** Executive Branch

**👍** Bill supported by AIF

**👎** Bill opposed by AIF



**👍 HB 129 – Relating to Just Valuation of Property by Rep. Carlos Lopez-Cantera (R-Miami) **PRIORITY****

The bill changes the method used by property appraisers in deriving the just valuation of a property by tightening the definition of “highest and best” use and requiring that all government approvals and permits be in place before the higher value can be assessed. It also adds a provision that will require property appraisers to appraise multi-unit residential and commercial properties solely on the income produced from that property. HB 129 also creates, for the purpose of receiving a lower valuation, the ability for residential rental, multi-unit commercial, marina and mobile home properties to apply for a voluntary deed restriction with a minimum of five years guaranteeing that the smaller or lower use of a property will be used.

AIF supports HB 129 because reducing property taxes for employers is a priority for AIF and this is one more way to insure that property owners pay their fair share and no more.

*CS/HB 129 died in Senate messages; Senate companion SB 626 died in the Senate Community Affairs Committee.*

**👍 HB 135 – Relating to Exemptions from the Tax on Sales, Use, and Other Transactions by Rep. Baxter Troutman (R-Winter Haven)**

This proposed legislation would give a sales-tax exemption on electricity used for packing houses. A packing house is a place where fresh fruits and vegetables are packed, or otherwise prepared, for market or shipping for wholesale distribution. The legislation does not give the exemption to buildings or structures where agriculture products are sold at retail prices. Agriculture is the second largest economic contributor to the State of Florida. This sales-tax exemption will help our farming community keep prices as low as possible.

*AIF supports legislation establishing sales-tax exemptions that benefit our state’s farmers. Agriculture is one of Florida’s largest industries, employing more than 388,000 people and producing in excess of \$50 billion in total sales.*

*CS/HB 135 died in Senate messages; Senate companion CS/SB 394 died in the Senate Finance and Tax Committee.*

**👍 HJR 421 – Relating to Additional Homestead Exemption by Rep. David Simmons (R-Altamonte Springs)**

This proposed constitutional amendment would entitle all homestead property owners to an additional homestead exemption, equal to 40 percent of the homestead’s just value between \$75,000 and \$500,000, or the accumulated benefit under the Save Our Homes



**Jim Rathbun**

President of Rathbun & Associates ... more than 19 years of experience representing individuals and entities before the Legislature, state agencies, Governor, and Cabinet ... formerly worked with the Florida House of Representatives and served as Staff Director of the House Republican Office ... B.S. from Florida State University.

**Issues:** Energy & Utilities, *Florida Energy Council*

assessment limitation currently in the Constitution.

AIF supports this enhanced property tax exemption, which may mitigate some of the potential legal challenges to the portability provisions of Amendment 1. The proposal also is a way to further stimulate the real estate market in Florida thereby increasing economic activity across the state.

*CS/HJR 421 died on the House calendar.*

 **HB 715 – Relating to Local Government Revenue Sources by Rep. Anitere Flores (R-Miami)**

Under current law, non-ad valorem taxes may not be levied by any local government entity without specific statutory authorization, and must be levied in accordance with procedures required by statute. Counties and municipalities have constitutional home-rule power to levy special assessments and impact fees without statutory authorization, however, the Legislature may limit that power. The bill requires a three-fifths vote or a majority plus one of the governing board's membership to increase taxes, fees, expand a tax base, or levy a new tax or special assessment.

AIF supports the bill because it makes it more difficult for the local governments to raise taxes or fees, particularly impact fees which have increased faster in Florida than in any other state.

*HB 715 died in the House Government Efficiency & Accountability Council; Senate companion SB 2412 died in the Senate Community Affairs Committee.*

 **HB 877 – Relating to Working Waterfront Real Property by Rep. Mitch Needelman (R-Melbourne)**

This bill provides an alternative method for counties and local governments provide incentives for the maintenance and preservation of working waterfront property. The bill would allow the owner of a working waterfront to convey all rights to develop the property to the local government where the property is located for seven years. This will help when determining the fair market value of the property. Basically, this conveyance will guarantee the maintenance of the working waterfront real property in exchange for a reduction in the taxable value of the parcel. If the property

owner terminates the conveyance prior to the expiration of the seven-year period, would have to pay taxes to the county or city equal to the difference between the amount actually paid while the conveyance was in effect and the amount the owner would have paid without the conveyance.

AIF supports efforts to protect Florida's valuable working waterfronts. The industries located on these lands bring an incredible amount of economic activity to the state.

*CS/HB 877 died in the House Policy & Budget Council; Senate companion SB 2294 died in the Senate Community Affairs Committee.*

 **HB 909 – Relating to Value Adjustment Boards (VAB) by Rep. Peter Nehr (R-Tarpon Springs) PRIORITY**

This business-friendly legislation will provide Floridians with a standard procedure by which they can challenge their local property appraiser's assessment of the value of their property. The bill implements the Auditor General's Value Adjustment Boards (VABs) performance audit that took place between July 2003 and June 2004. The bill implements six of the audit recommendations, which will make the process much fairer for businesses and residents. Based on a 2006 report by 45 of the 67 county VABs, there is an 87 percent denial rate across the state. In addition, the bill was amended during the final days of session to include language instructing property appraisers to consider more factors before assessing a property at its "highest and best" use. This change is very positive for taxpayers in that it will lower the assessments of small businesses located in areas that have increased in value in the last few years.

AIF supports this bill because it contains improvements favorable to the taxpayer when contesting the property appraiser's value of the taxpayer's property. The changes to existing law will give AIF businesses a more level playing field when going before the VAB.

*CS/HB 909 was passed by both the House and the Senate and was ordered enrolled; Senate companion CS/CS/SB 2080 was laid on the table.*



**Stephen W. Shiver**

Director of Governmental Affairs for the Advocacy Group at Tew Cardenas ... over 10 years legislative and campaign experience ... former aide to House Speaker Tom Feeny and Majority Office Liaison to House Majority Leader Mike Fasano ... former Executive Director for the Republican Party of Florida ... has represented some of Florida's largest corporate and governmental agencies before the Florida Legislature ... graduate of Florida State University.

**Issues:** Economic Development

 Bill supported by AIF

 Bill opposed by AIF

 **HB 1237 – Relating to Corporate Income Tax by House Minority Leader Rep. Dan Gelber (D-Miami)**

The bill would mandate “combined” reporting, which would require all corporations that are members of a newly defined “water’s edge group” to file a tax return combining income from subsidiaries outside the state of Florida and then apportioning the combined income to Florida based upon a statutory formula. Under current Florida law, corporations operating both in Florida and in other parts of the United States pay taxes depending on the portion of their total sales, payroll, and property located in Florida, as opposed to those portions located in all states. Corporations, which are members of federally defined affiliated groups, have the choice of filing as a separate entity or as a consolidated group. Florida exempts “foreign source income” from its corporate-income tax. Income, such as dividends, paid to a corporation operating in Florida by subsidiaries located in foreign countries is not included in the calculation of Florida income.

AIF opposes any legislation that would bring about “combined reporting” or establish a unitary tax in Florida. Taxing our way out of a recession is not feasible and this type of legislation sends a terrible message to companies and investors looking to invest in our state. Florida tried this approach once before and it was a disaster, costing the state thousands of jobs.

*HB 1237 died in the House Government Efficiency & Accountability Council; Senate companion SB 2766 died in the Senate Commerce Committee.*

 **HB 1283 – Relating to Ad Valorem Tax Assessment Value Challenges by Rep. Dean Cannon (R-Winter Park) PRIORITY**

The bill would require the property appraiser to earn the presumption of correctness by showing that his or her assessment was arrived at by complying with the law and professionally accepted appraisal practices. Once done, the taxpayer has to show by a preponderance of the evidence that the assessment of value exceeds just value.

AIF supports efforts to increase fairness for property owners by requiring property appraisers to use the

“presumption of correctness” standard.

*CS/HB 1283 died in Senate messages; Senate companion SB 678 died in the Senate Community Affairs Committee.*

 **SB 1588 – Relating to Property Taxation by Sen. Mike Haridopolos (R-Melbourne)**

The bill seeks to fix a number of glitches found in the implementation bill for Amendment 1, which passed on January 29th. Among other provisions, it removes language requiring businesses to apply for the 10-percent cap on non-homestead property’s annual assessment increase.

AIF supports this legislation so that taxpayers in certain situations will know for sure if they are eligible for the benefits provided by the passage of Amendment 1.

*CS/SB 1588 passed both the House and the Senate and was ordered enrolled; House companion HB 7131 was laid on the table.*

 **SB 2094 – Relating to Sales Tax Exemption/Books/Clothing/School Supplies by Sen. Dan Webster (R-Winter Garden)**

The bill would allow a sales tax holiday for school items in 2008, but not before making some significant changes. For the past several years, Florida has had a Sales-tax holiday for back to school supplies. The first sales tax holiday for back-to-school supplies began in 1998, but in 2002 and 2003 it was not enacted due to revenue shortfalls. The bill was amended to shorten the time frame for the sales-tax holiday from 10 days to seven days. Now the sales-tax holiday will begin on August 2 and end at midnight on August 8. The amendment also changed the type of items eligible for sales-tax exemptions. These include clothing and wallets, or bags, including handbags, backpacks, fanny packs, and diaper bags, but excluding briefcases, suitcases, and other garment bags, with a sales price of \$50 or less per item. The final change allows school supplies having a sales price of \$10 or less per item to be eligible for the sales-tax holiday as well. In previous years books have been included in the sales tax holiday, but due to the fiscal impact, they were



**John Thrasher, Esq.**

Florida’s Speaker of the House from 1999-2000 ... while leading the House, helped to pass some of the landmark reforms advanced by Gov. Bush, including an overhaul of the state’s entire system of education ... the new medical school at FSU, John’s alma mater, honors his name ... more than 25 years of legislative and government affairs experience.

**Issues:** Legal & Judicial

not included in this year's list of items.

AIF has consistently supported sales-tax holidays for back-to-school supplies throughout the years. The holiday entices residents from neighboring states to cross Florida's border to purchase these items, thus generating extra revenue for Florida businesses.

*CS/SB 2094 died on the Senate calendar; House companion CS/CS/CS/HB 893 died in the Senate Finance and Tax Committee.*

 **SB 2790 – Relating to Cigarette User Fees by Sen. Ted Deutch (D-Delray Beach)**

The bill increases cigarette user fees, replaces all references to the term "tax" with "user fee," and substantially modifies the allocation of revenues to certain health care programs including the H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute, and the James & Esther King Biomedical Research Program among others. Increased cigarette taxes would only affect 20 percent of the population (those who choose to smoke), but the revenues from the tax are used by the entire population. In addition, proponents are being disingenuous by labeling these taxes as user fees. In addition, increasing the Florida tax means that it would become very profitable for cigarette smugglers to flood the Florida market with their illegal products and reap the profits. This increase in counterfeit cigarettes will certainly reduce tax revenues to the state, while also injecting a major criminal element into everyday life.

**AIF opposes efforts to increase cigarette taxes and the disingenuous labeling of these taxes as user fees. Just because taxing cigarettes may be popular; it is not right to punish a small subsection of the population for their lifestyle, while at the same time trying to benefit from increased tax revenues.**

*CS/SB 2790 died in the Senate Higher Education Committee.*

 **HB 5065 – Relating to Corporate Income Tax by Rep. Michael Grant (R-Port Charlotte)**

This bill is the "piggybacking" the congressional changes made during 2007 to the IRS Code to Florida's tax code, except for certain temporary increases in de-

preciation expenses and bonus depreciation expenses that were part of the federal economic stimulus package. It also speeds up the quarterly payments so that there will be five payments in this fiscal year rather than four. It accomplishes this by making the July 1, 2009 payment due on June 30, 2009.

AIF supports the passage of this bill so that Florida businesses do not have to endure the burdensome task of filing duplicative tax records. However, there will be some differences due to the bill not allowing the accelerated depreciation or the bonus depreciation that is allowed by the federal code.

*HB 5065 was passed by both the House and the Senate and was ordered enrolled. Senate companion CS/SB 1586 was laid on the table.*

 **HJR 7005 – Relating to Taxpayers' Bill of Rights by Rep. Frank Attkisson (R-Kissimmee)**

The bill amends the Florida Constitution to remove the government's presumption of correctness and places the burden of proof, by a preponderance of the evidence, upon the government to prove that a property assessment does not exceed just value. It also provides that the taxpayer is entitled to reasonable attorney's fees to be specified in general law.

AIF supports the joint resolution because it provides a level playing field for taxpayers who challenges the value of their property assessments. It will benefit our businesses which believe their properties have been over-valued by the property appraiser.

*CS/HJR 7005 died in Senate messages.*

## TRANSPORTATION

 **HB 311 – Relating to Jacksonville Transportation Authority by Rep. Hugh Gibson (R-The Villages)**

The bill expands the scope of the Jacksonville Transportation Authority to have a greater role in the planning, coordinating, developing, financing, constructing, owning, maintaining and managing transportation projects in the Jacksonville/Duval County metropolitan area.



**Stacey Webb**

Joined Southern Strategy Group after serving as Assistant Chancellor for Community Colleges at the Florida Department of Education, leading the division's legislative efforts on issues relating to economic and workforce development ... also served as Staff Director and Majority Office Senior Analyst with the House of Representatives ... 13 years legislative experience ... received a B.A. from Stetson University and a M.P.A. from the University of Central Florida.

**Issues:** Education, Florida Council on Education & Workforce Development

 Bill supported by AIF

 Bill opposed by AIF

AIF supports the ability of local governments in Florida to enter into regional transportation authorities. These authorities are empowered by this legislation to implement infrastructure improvements and to increase consideration for vital transportation corridors, seaports, airports and other regionally significant business centers.

*CS/HB 311 died in Senate messages; Senate companion SB 1000 died in the Senate Transportation Committee.*

**👍 SB 470 – Relating to Seaport Security Standards by Sen. Tony Hill (D-Jacksonville)**

The bill adds eight additional members to the Seaport Security Standards Advisory Council. Two designees will represent seaport tenants, two designees will represent seaport workers, one designee will be from the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Law Enforcement Division, two designees will be sheriffs who have law enforcement responsibilities on Florida's public seaports, and one designee will be a police chief who has law enforcement responsibilities on Florida's public seaports.

This committee substitute also adds two additional members to the Florida Seaport Transportation and Economic Development Council (FSTED). The substitute further requires this council to meet at least once annually to analyze and assess the impact of seaport security on the state's 14 designated public ports. The bill provides minimum guidelines for conducting the analysis and requires the council to submit a report to the Legislature with its analysis and recommendations.

AIF and its Florida Maritime Council support legislation that begins the process of examining the impacts of security regulation on the competitiveness of Florida's 14 deep water ports. Florida's security requirements are much more stringent than federal requirements, and consequently we are beginning to lose business to other ports in the region because Florida's security costs are significantly higher.

*CS/SB 470 died in the Senate Transportation Committee; House companion HB 657 died in the House Homeland Security & Public Safety Committee.*

**👍 SB 774 – Relating to Transportation by Sen. Carey Baker (R-Eustis) **PRIORITY****

This bill seeks to implement some of the recommendations offered by the Strategic Aggregate Review Task Force. The bill was amended to include a provision requiring local governments that disapprove mining applications (previously approved by the DEP) to do so by a super-majority vote of the governing body. The issue of aggregate mining is important to the business community because a reliable source of this raw material for road building is essential to the economy of Florida. Under the bill, approval of a mining application would require only a simple majority vote.

AIF supports efforts by the Legislature to develop new supplies of aggregate and to do whatever possible to expedite the availability of aggregate from the Lake Belt region of Florida. Producing aggregate and constructing roads provides jobs and supports the development of a healthy and competitive construction industry.

*CS/SB 774 died in the Senate Environmental Preservation and Conservation Committee.*

**👍 SB 816 - Relating to Uniform Traffic Control by Sen. Mike Bennett (R-Bradenton)**

This bill would implement the installation of cameras at traffic lights and also provide language for fines to be assessed for violation of traffic laws. Specifically, the bill preempts regulation and use of enforcement cameras to the state, requires certification of red-light camera system vendors, and provides for the authorization of traffic officers to issue uniform traffic citations for violations detected by cameras.

AIF supports legislation that allows for the installation of automated enforcement systems, such as red-light cameras, at busy intersections.

*CS/SB 816 died in the Senate Community Affairs Committee; House companion CS/HB 351 died in the House Policy & Budget Council.*

**👍 HB 1245 - Relating to Regional Transportation Authorities by Rep. Bill Galvano (R-Bradenton)**

This bill would greatly benefit the state's regional transportation authorities because it would allow



**Gerald Wester**

Managing Partner, Capital City Consulting, LLC ... former Chief Deputy over Florida Department of Insurance's regulatory staff ... more than 32 years lobbying experience ... expertise in insurance, banking, and health care issues ... Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Florida State University.

**Issues:** Insurance, *Financial Securities Council*

authorities in Northwest Florida, South Florida and the Tampa Bay area to receive 80 percent of the existing rental car surcharge dollars collected in the counties they represent. The bill would provide funds to support a regional approach to building needed transportation projects, which could include the more effective attraction of federal matching dollars for certain projects and consideration of public-private partnerships to build regionally significant toll facilities.

AIF supports the ability of multi-county areas in Florida to create regional transportation authorities, empowered to implement infrastructure improvements and to increase consideration for vital transportation corridors, seaports, airports, and other regionally significant business centers.

*CS/HB 1245 died in Senate messages.*

**👍 HB 1399 Relating to Department of Transportation by Rep. Gary Aubuchon (R-Cape Coral)**

HB 1399 was the omnibus transportation package for the 2008 session. Among the many provisions in the bill, the most talked about was the section which would have allowed the Florida Department of Transportation (DOT) to purchase a 61 mile stretch of a CSX rail corridor from north of Orlando to west of Kissimmee and use the rail line to establish a commuter rail service, which could be the historic first leg of a rail system eventually connecting central Florida commuters along the I-4 corridor. The state would purchase a \$200 million liability insurance policy to help cover any exposure to risk. The state would also be responsible for maintenance, dispatching, signalization and security along the corridor. The plan would commit CSX to spending \$198 million of the \$491 million on improving railroad infrastructure statewide. The project would also have given central Florida a significant chance to qualify for hundreds of millions in federal transit matching dollars.

AIF supports efforts by DOT to ensure that critical federal dollars are leveraged for infrastructure improvements. The concept of a Central Florida commuter rail system has the potential to positively impact the region by reducing congestion, attracting more tour-

ism, and providing an economic stimulus to the region and the state.

*CS/CS/HB 1399 died in the Senate Transportation Committee; Senate companion CS/CS/CS/SB 1978 died on Senate calendar.*

**👍 SB 2406 – Relating to Aggregate Mining by Sen. Mike Bennett (R-Bradenton) **PRIORITY****

The bill would prohibit local governments from duplicating regulatory requirements imposed by the Department of Environmental Protection, while preserving a local government's right to apply all other regulations. The bill also provides that certain lime rock environmental resource permitting and reclamation applications are eligible for expedited permitting.

AIF supports efforts by the Legislature to develop new supplies of aggregate and to do whatever possible to expedite the availability of aggregate where available. Producing aggregate and constructing roads provides jobs and supports the development of a healthy and competitive construction industry.

*SB 2406 died in the Senate Environmental Preservation and Conservation Committee.*

**👍 HB 5067 – Relating to State Infrastructure by the Economic Expansion and Infrastructure Council**

This bill was one of the many conforming bills for the House's proposed budget. What makes this bill important to the business community is that it included a \$640 million dollar sweep of the state's Transportation Trust Fund, which provides the necessary funding for road and other transportation projects. The dollars being swept would be used to plug the current budget holes facing the Legislature.

AIF opposes an effort to sweep dollars from the state's Transportation Trust Fund. Instead of using these funds for plugging budget holes, the Legislature should be looking for ways to disburse these dollars on roads now in order to reap the economic stimulus they will generate.

*HB 5067 was signed by officers and presented to the governor.*



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# Champions for Business

**W**hat 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) has published *Voting Records*, an analysis of every vote cast by every legislator on every major business issues. The votes each legislator actually casts provide 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 in 2003 to acknowledge lawmakers who do more than vote for business and provide leadership on key legislation. A *Champion for Business* is a legislator who takes risks for his or her 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 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 ten legislators 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. In addition, we have highlighted five legislators this year as Honorable Mentions for their contributions to furthering the business agenda. Last, but certainly not least, AIF is proud to present Council Awards to a group of policymakers who exhibited great leadership on behalf of AIF's Council System.

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 government.

# Throughout the 60 days of lawmaking, these were the leaders we

## Representative Thad Altman



(R-Melbourne) is receiving his Champion for Business Award this year because of his leadership and commitment to maintaining Florida's dominant position in the space industry. As the space shuttle program comes to an end, Florida must look for opportunities to maintain its historical dominance in space by establishing policies that will encourage investment in Florida's space infrastructure. Rep. Altman was the point person in the House of Representatives on all issues regarding space, as he sponsored a number of bills advancing the aerospace agenda. He ensured the passage of HB 1373, which expands the Qualified Defense Contractor Tax Refund Program to qualified space contractors. This legislation will prove instrumental in attracting new commercial space companies to Florida and help those already residing within the state. Rep. Altman was also instrumental in securing vital funding, during a tough budget year, for investments in existing space infrastructure. AIF is proud to designate Rep. Altman as a Champion for Business.

## Representative Anitere Flores



(R-Miami) is a first-time Champion for Business Award recipient and is being singled out for her leadership on education and workforce development issues. For some time now, Rep. Flores has been working on legislation designed to enhance Florida's curriculum standards and bring them in line with the current needs of employers in Florida. Rep. Flores reached out to AIF early in the process and listened intently to the recommendations made by members of the business community. Many of these provisions made it into Rep. Flores' curriculum standards bill, which

emphasizes the core subjects like reading, writing, and arithmetic. Just when it seemed as if no educational reforms would make it this year, Rep. Flores was able to include her language in SB 1908, an omnibus education package that is on its way to the Governor for his signature. For her commitment to improving Florida's workforce, we proudly recognize Rep. Flores as a Champion for Business.

## Representative Peter Nehr



(R-Tarpon Springs) is receiving his first Champion for Business Award for sponsoring and passing one of AIF's priority bills for the 2008 session — HB 909 Relating to Ad Valorem Taxation. This legislation will provide Floridians with a standard procedure by which they can challenge their local property appraiser's assessment of the value of their property. Rep. Nehr's bill incorporates the recommendations made by the Auditor General on how Value Adjustment Boards operate, providing a more balanced board to hear consumer concerns in local communities. Up until final passage of the bill, Rep. Nehr consulted with AIF and implemented many of the recommendations made by our members. It is evident that Rep. Nehr has Florida's small businesses' best interest in mind by including language that allows appraisals to be based on the actual use of the property at the time of appraisal, instead of under the highest and best use method. AIF is proud to recognize Rep. Nehr as a Champion for Business.

## Representative Ray Sansom



(R-Ft. Walton Beach) is receiving his first Champion for Business Award for his commitment to economic development innovations and for his strong support of the business community in Florida. Rep. Sansom

approached AIF last fall about developing an Economic Stimulus Package that would reinvigorate Florida's already lagging economy. AIF and 18 other business associations answered the call and with his input, assembled a package outlining a number of recommendations for investments in infrastructure projects in Florida. As chairman of the powerful House Policy and Budget Council, Rep. Sansom permitted the business community to present the package before the Council allowing ample time for discussion on the recommendations. When talks surfaced during session about moving the Division of Corporations from the Department of State to the Department of Revenue — a move vehemently opposed by AIF — Rep. Sansom was there to discourage any further consideration of this bad idea. AIF is proud to recognize Rep. Sansom as a 2008 Champion for Business.

## Representative Baxter Troutman

(R-Winter Haven) led the charge this year to bring relief to the countless number of businesses and Floridians who have been victims of secondary metal theft. Unscrupulous criminals have cost businesses millions of dollars in damages and have endangered public safety by stealing copper wiring from construction sites, digging up underground telecommunication wires, cutting utility wires and even stealing beer kegs. Rep. Troutman's legislation will help law enforcement find thieves and make it harder for them to unload their stolen goods. Rep. Troutman, a victim himself of metal theft, worked closely with members of the Floridians for Copper and Metal Crime Prevention Coalition (a broad-based coalition of over 30 businesses and associations who have been affected by this crime) to pass this much-needed legislation. We proudly recognize Rep. Troutman as a 2008 Champion for Business.

*turned to when we needed someone on whom we could depend.*

**Senator Mike Bennett** (R-Bradenton)



is no stranger to the Champion for Business Award, being a multiple recipient of this distinction. This year, AIF is proud to recognize Sen.

Bennett as a Champion for Business for his efforts to pass legislation dealing with the Administrative Procedures Act. His legislation provides additional incentives to state agencies to adopt their policies using the required rulemaking process (which provides opportunities for public participation) by prohibiting an agency from relying on unadopted rules, and increasing the attorneys' fees from \$15,000 to \$50,000 available to a business that successfully challenges unauthorized agency rules. Last session, this same legislation was passed but was unfortunately vetoed by the Governor, even though it passed the House and Senate without a negative vote. Sen. Bennett was able to bring the business community and state agencies together to hammer out the issues with the bill, and we believe the Governor will sign the bill.

**Senator Mike Fasano**

(R-New Port Richey) is receiving his first Champion for Business Award. As Chairman of the influential Transportation and Economic Development Appropriations Committee, Sen. Fasano plays an integral role in deciding how state dollars are allocated for economic development and infrastructure investments. AIF was able to count on Sen. Fasano during budget negotiations between the Senate and House, and nowhere was he more influential than in preventing members of the House from raiding close to \$700 million from the State Transportation Trust Fund. In addition, Sen. Fasano was an early supporter of AIF's Economic Stimulus Package (ESP). In fact, he was also instrumental in appropriating valuable affordable housing

dollars for down payment-assistance programs for first-time homebuyers — a recommendation set forth by AIF in its ESP. Sen. Fasano also sponsored AIF priority bills dealing with the New Markets Tax Credit Program and expedited permitting for targeted industries. In a year when state dollars were scarce, Sen. Fasano was a true friend to the business community, looking out for their needs every step of the way. For these reasons we are proud to recognize him as a Champion for Business.

**Senator Mike Haridopolos**

(R-Melbourne), now a three-time award



winner, continues to shine brightly as one of the top pro-business legislators serving in the Florida Legislature. His leadership and opposition on the proposed "tax swap" approved by the Taxation and Budget Reform Commission is critical, especially at a time when the business community is being attacked by enemies of the free-market system. This year Sen. Haridopolos co-sponsored the Senate companion to one of the few property tax relief bills passed by the Legislature — SB 2080 Relating to Value Adjustment Boards. This legislation implements recommendations from the Auditor General's report on Value Adjustment Boards and brings much needed fairness to this process. For this and countless other reasons, AIF is proud to recognize Sen. Haridopolos as a Champion for Business.

**Senator Bill Posey** (R-Rockledge), one of the top ranking members of the



Florida Senate, could have picked any subject to champion this year. We were thrilled when Senator Posey chose Florida's space industry as one of his top priorities. A number of space-related bills were filed by Sen. Posey, but none as important

as his legislation providing limitations on liability for commercial launch firms and their subcontractors who provide human spaceflight services from Florida launch sites. This legislation will keep Florida's competitive edge in the aerospace industry allowing us to recruit and maintain new business to Florida. Sen. Posey also co-sponsored legislation expanding an existing tax refund program to qualified space contractors. For his strong commitment to the future of space in Florida, AIF is proud to call Sen. Bill Posey a Champion for Business.

**Senator Jeremy Ring** (D-Margate)

continues to lead the way as an innova-



tive legislator in the area of economic development and further helping to position Florida's economy to compete in the 21st century. This year Sen. Ring sponsored and helped pass SB 2310, a creative and resourceful way to utilize existing funds in the Florida State Retirement System (FRS) to stimulate the economy. The bill allows the investment of as much as 1.5 percent, or \$2.1 billion, in specific businesses across Florida. An AIF priority for the 2008 session, it could have a tremendous impact on Florida's business environment. In addition to the infusion of capital in Florida-based businesses, the bill also provides for a \$40 million, one-time cash prize to the private sector firm that provides the most significant advancement within the reusable space vehicle industry. We proudly recognize Sen. Ring as a Champion for Business for providing a proactive solution to Florida's sputtering economy.

# Honorable Mention

The following legislators have also made significant contributions that further the business agenda in Florida. Their efforts and dedication to issues important to employers should be highlighted. We applaud these five legislators for their continued support of AIF and its member companies.

## Representative Dean Cannon



(R-Winter Park) continues to be strong supporter of the business community. This year he led the House of Representatives'

efforts to bring a commuter rail to Central Florida. Although the proposal ultimately failed due to strong opposition from enemies of the free-enterprise system, including the unions and trial lawyers, Rep. Cannon was nonetheless a vocal champion for this cause and has vowed to continue to work for the approval of this important project for Florida's future. As chairman of the Economic Expansion and Infrastructure Council, Rep. Cannon presided over a number of business-friendly bills, including the growth-management package and legislation crafted to help with Florida's aggregate crisis. Rep. Cannon also filed HB 1283, which requires property appraisers to earn the presumption of correctness when dealing with taxpayers. Unfortunately, this pro-business legislation was not accepted by the Senate, but we fully expect Rep. Cannon to file this legislation next year.

## Representative Jack Seiler



(D-Pompano Beach) was one of the legislators AIF turned to on issues relating to protecting private property rights. Throughout

the 2008 session he debated on the floor of the House in favor of business owners' rights to their property, especially during the debate on the "Guns in the Workplace" bill. Although this bill — opposed strongly by AIF — passed, Rep. Seiler understood the responsibil-

ity of employers to keep their workers safe. In addition, he argued convincingly about the injustice of a business going through all proper permitting processes for siting business activities, only to be denied the right to do business via an amendment to a bill.

## Representative Maria Sachs



(D-Delray Beach) is being recognized for her work on bringing more foreign languages to Florida's schools. Rep. Sachs

filed legislation (HB 207) this year that adds provisions relating to certification options for teachers of certain foreign language subjects so that students may access more languages, such as Chinese, Hebrew, Italian, and others. She was successful in navigating the legislative process during the last days of session to ensure that her language would ultimately be included in the omnibus education package (SB 1908) that passed this year. Having access to classes in modern languages that are used around the world for commerce is incredibly important to the business community. Access to these languages will give our students the foundation they need to compete in the global workforce, thus ensuring that Florida's businesses can compete with their counterparts across the world.

## Representative Franklin Sands



(D-Plantation), as the incoming House Minority Leader, has been a great friend to the business community. Time and time again he

has sought input from employer groups and continues to be sensitive to issues

affecting Florida's business climate.

Rep. Sands filed a number of pro-business bills including legislation dealing with impact fees, the My Safe Florida Home Program, and additional home-stead property tax exemptions for first-time home buyers. His true leadership shined during the last weeks of session as he worked to help pass business-friendly legislation and tried to defeat anti-business amendments during those tense times.

## Senator Lee Constantine



(R-Altamonte Springs) was a prime co-sponsor of legislation dealing with secondary metal theft and was a strong force in

helping to pass this important business-friendly legislation in the Senate. Due to the increasing worldwide demand for metals, metal theft is on the rise and can jeopardize the safety of individuals who are affected by the theft, as well as wreak havoc on communities by causing power outages and surges. The bill creates a paper trail to catch thieves and punish the limited group of scrap dealers who are the root of the problem. The legislation would also require secondary metal dealers to keep detailed records of their scrap metal transactions. Sen. Constantine was a great spokesman for the bill and effectively communicated the dangerous consequences surrounding this costly criminal activity for business owners and Florida residents alike.

# Council Awards

Associated Industries of Florida is made up of a diverse group of businesses and associations that represent a wide array of economic sectors. AIF has organized a number of Councils in order to best represent groups of employers that share a common subject area or expertise. AIF's council system has already produced excellent results, both legislatively and politically.

## Financial Securities Council

### Representative Dennis Ross



(R-Lakeland), the lead negotiator for the House of Representatives on property insurance issues, held firmly to his beliefs that exces-

sive regulatory rules are not the way to bring back the private insurance market to Florida. Many of the onerous provisions included in the original version of SB 2860, as approved by the Senate, were successfully removed by Rep. Ross. These included fine amounts that were excessive as well as provisions that would subject all lines of insurance (not just property insurance) to anti-trust provisions that would have led to a dramatic increase in litigation. Rep. Ross' long-standing position against government intrusion into the private insurance market has been a beacon of hope for the business community. For this and many other reasons, AIF's Financial Securities Council is proud to recognize Rep. Dennis Ross as its House Legislator of the Year.

### Senator Al Lawson



(D-Tallahassee) had the wherewithal to stand up against Senate leadership and oppose the issue of additional reforms to the property insurance market in

Florida. He was one of the few senators to vote against SB 2860 at each committee stop and on the floor of the Senate. Sen. Lawson debated strongly against extending the freeze on Citizen Property Insurance Corporation's rates as well as the establishment of dangerous regulatory reprimands against private insurers. He warned members of the Senate on the dangers of more government intrusion in the marketplace by telling them that

these practices would do nothing to entice insurers to expand coverages within Florida. AIF's Financial Securities Council is proud to designate Sen. Al Lawson as its Senate Legislator of the Year.

### Chief Financial Officer Alex Sink



(D), as one of Florida's cabinet members, has a strong voice in shaping public policy in our state. Following passage of Florida's landmark property

insurance reform (HB 1A), CFO Sink began expressing concern over Florida's reliance on assessments, or "hurricane taxes," to pay for deficits resulting from future hurricanes. As such, she proposed fiscally responsible legislation embodied in SB 2156, which reduces the risk of the CAT Fund by \$3 billion. Under current law, the CAT Fund is obligated to issue government revenue bonds in the amount of \$28 billion; but in this unstable economic market, many analysts believe this will be impossible. Unfortunately, this proposal failed during the final days of session. Had it passed, it would have been a great first step toward reducing the threat to all Floridians should a major storm strike our great state. For her commitment to sound fiscal policy and her concern over the potential consequences of assessments on Florida's economic climate, AIF's Financial Securities Council is proud to recognize CFO Alex Sink as a Champion for Business.

## Florida Energy Council

### Representative Paige Kreegel



(R-Punta Gorda), Chairman of the House Energy Committee, understood from the very beginning the major economic implications

surrounding the omnibus energy package passed by the Florida Legislature. His willingness to consider input from all stakeholders affected by the bill is clearly evident in the final product. His mastery of the complex scientific issues surrounding climate change and renewable energy also came in handy during debate on this contentious bill. His leadership on the issue was evident up to the last days of session when he sponsored a floor amendment requiring the Florida Legislature to ratify any rule established by the Department of Environmental Protection enacting California emission standards for automobiles. For this and many other reasons, AIF's Florida Energy Council is proud to designate Rep. Paige Kreegel as Legislator of the Year.

## Florida Maritime Council

### Representative Kevin Ambler



(R-Tampa) played a large role for AIF's maritime interests during the final days of the 2008 legislative session.

On behalf of port tenants across the state, he single-handedly took it upon himself to fight against legislation considered on the floor of the House that could have increased the cost of security screenings for employees working in one of Florida's 14 deepwater ports. Under this proposed legislation, the costs of credentialing would be two to three times the cost of accepting just the existing federal Transportation Workers Identification Credential (TWIC) alone. Rep. Ambler filed floor amendments to this bill that would have allowed Florida ports to accept the federal TWIC card in order to eliminate costly duplicate background checks. AIF's Florida Maritime Council is proud to designate Rep. Kevin Ambler as Legislator of the Year.



## 2008 AIF Scheduled Events

### June

- 2** AIFPC Candidate Interviews  
South Florida – Hyatt Regency  
Coral Gables
- 2** AIFPC Incumbent Reception  
South Florida – Hyatt Regency  
Coral Gables – 6-7:30 pm
- 3** AIFPC Candidate Interviews  
South Florida – Hyatt Regency  
Coral Gables
- 17** AIFPC Candidate Interviews  
Jacksonville – Hyatt Regency
- 17** AIFPC Incumbent Reception  
Jacksonville – Hyatt Regency

- 18** AIFPC Candidate Interviews  
Jacksonville – Hyatt Regency
- 30** AIFPC Candidate Interviews  
Sarasota – Hyatt Regency
- 30** AIFPC Incumbent Reception  
Sarasota – Hyatt Regency

### July

- 14** AIFPC Candidate Interviews  
Palm Beach PGA National
- 14** AIFPC Incumbent Reception  
Palm Beach PGA National

- 15** AIFPC Candidate Interviews  
Palm Beach – PGA National

### August

- 5** AIFPC Candidate Interviews  
Tallahassee – Double Tree
- 20-22** AIF Annual Conference  
Ponte Vedra Inn & Club

AIF Headquarters is located at 516 N. Adams St., Tallahassee. Members will receive complete information on all events via fax/e-mail.

For more information, contact Jared Walton at (850) 224-7173.



**ASSOCIATED INDUSTRIES OF FLORIDA**

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