



FLASLA Legislative Priorities Survey

Florida Chapter Members - the Government Affairs Committee would like for each of you to consider identifying legislative priorities that you feel will help advance landscape architecture in our state. We encourage you to take a few moments to complete the survey to help guide the Chapter's legislative focus and identify areas that our members find concerning.

<http://www.flasla.org/surveys/default.asp?id=GovernmentAffairsSurvey>

The following topics have been identified by the GAC as legislative items that influence the practice of landscape architecture in Florida or are topics that may interest. The schedule for the 2014 session is also posted below.

If you have questions or would like to get involved in assisting the Chapter with advocacy, licensure issues, and other legislative concerns, please contact Jonathan Haigh, Member at Large for Advocacy and Licensure at: memberatlargeAL@flalsa.org

SFWMD CONSUMPTIVE USE PERMIT (CUP) CONSISTENCY WORKSHOP

Today, August 12, SFWMD is conducting the first of four workshops throughout the South Florida to discuss CUP rule changes. If you aren't able to attend in West Palm Beach, there are opportunities in Homestead, Ft Meyers, and Kissimmee later this month. The District proposes to amend rules as part of a statewide effort headed by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and joined by all water management districts (WMDs) to increase consistency in the consumptive use permitting (CUP) program. The changes will address the goals of the DEP and the WMDs in streamlining the permitting process and making the permitting process less confusing for applicants. Additional information about the statewide CUP consistency initiative

and this rulemaking process is available at DEP's website at:
<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/water/waterpolicy/cupcon.htm>.

Aug 12, 2013, 10:00 a.m.

South Florida Water Management District, Bill Storch Conference Room, 3301
Gun Club Road, West Palm Beach, FL 33406

August 19, 2013, 1:00 p.m.

John D Campbell Agricultural Center, 18710 SW 288th Street, Homestead, FL
33030

August 22, 2013, 1:00 p.m.

South Florida Water Management District, Lower West Coast Service Center,
2301 McGregor Blvd., Ft. Myers, FL 33901

August 23, 201, 9:30 a.m.

Osceola County Commission Chambers, 4th Floor - Admin Bldg., 1 Courthouse
Square, Suite 4100, Kissimmee, FL 34741

SIGNED LEGISLATION UPDATE

Public-Private Partnership Guidelines Task Force

HB 85 by Representative Stuebe was approved by the Governor on June 27. Among other provisions, this legislation creates the Partnership for Public Facilities and Infrastructure Act Guidelines Task Force to recommend guidelines to the Legislature for creating a uniform process for establishing public-private partnerships, including the types of factors responsible public entities should review and consider when processing requests for public private partnerships. The task force will be comprised of seven members, including the Secretary of the Department of Management Services or his or her designee, who shall serve as chair, and six members appointed by the Governor, including one county government official, one municipal government official, one district school board member, and three representatives of the business community. Governor Scott announced the appointments to this task force last week. Task force members include:

Commissioner Frank Attkisson, Osceola County

Sonya Little, CFO, City of Tampa

Andy Tuck, School Board Member, Highlands County

George Burgess, COO, Becker & Poliakoff

Michael Olenick, VP Corporate Affairs and Chief Compliance Officer, Morganti Group

Jay Smith, VP Ajax Building Corporation

Task force members must have their first meeting by August 31. The task force must consider a laundry list of issues, including opportunities for competition, reasonable criteria for choosing among competing proposals, suggested timelines, procedures for financial review and analysis, and other items. Its final report must be submitted to the Governor, Speaker of the House, and Senate President by July 1, 2014. The task force terminates on December 31, 2014.

Associated Industries of Florida (AIF) is co-hosting a public-private partnership seminar with the National Council for Public-Private Partnerships and Associated Builders and Contractors of Florida. This seminar will take place November 6 in Orlando and is aimed at educating interested parties on the public-private partnership process in Florida. For more information or to register [click here](#).

ISSUES OF INTEREST TO FLASLA

BOLA Appointments

The Governor's Appointments Office is currently working on filling three vacancies on the Board of Landscape Architecture – two landscape architects and one layperson. If you are interested in applying for one of these positions, please [click here](#) and fill out the questionnaire. This is time sensitive and interested applicants should complete the questionnaire as soon as possible. If Governmental Affairs Committee members have questions or would like to discuss further they should contact contact Diana Ferguson at Rutledge Ecenia at 850-681-6788 or dferguson@reuphlaw.com.

Florida Water Forum

AIF and the Florida Chapter of the American Water Works Association (AWWA) will be hosting the 4th Annual Water Forum in Orlando on September 20. This event typically includes presentations from key policymakers on issues relating to water policy. For more information [click here](#) and to register [click here](#).

2014 SESSION DATES

September 23, 2013	Interim Committee Week
October 7, 2013	Interim Committee Week
November 4, 2013	Interim Committee Week
December 9, 2013	Interim Committee Week
January 6, 2014	Interim Committee Week

January 13, 2014	Interim Committee Week
February 3, 2014	Interim Committee Week
February 10, 2014	Interim Committee Week
February 17, 2014	Interim Committee Week
January 24, 2014	Senate Bill Drafting Request Deadline
January 28, 2014	Senate Bill Drafting Approval Deadline
March 4, 2014	Legislative Session Convenes Bill Filing Deadline – 12:00 pm
May 2, 2014	Legislative Session Scheduled to Conclude

FLORIDA POLITICAL NEWS

Legislator Residency Being Reviewed, New Rules Forthcoming

Senator Jack Latvala has raised questions regarding whether several legislators actually live in their districts, as required under state law. In response, House Speaker Will Weatherford and Senate President Don Gaetz stated that the Legislature does not have a “clear set of principles” to determine residency, but indicated that they intend to develop those standards and have directed top House and Senate attorneys to make recommendations. They also intend to ask Secretary of State Ken Detzner to provide a list of the polls at which all 160 legislators are registered to vote. Senator Latvala has expressed concerns regarding the residency of Democratic Senator Maria Sachs as well as Democratic Representatives Perry Thurston, Jared Moskowitz, Hazelle Rogers, and Alan Williams.

School Grading, Common Core Controversies

Florida Education Commissioner Tony Bennett came under fire several days ago for overhauling Indiana’s school grading system in his previous position, specifically to improve the grade of a school that was owned by a prominent political donor. Bennett has resigned in response to criticism over this issue and Pam Stewart has been named Interim Commissioner.

Common Core, a testing system for elementary and secondary school students tied to new national education standards, has also been in the news as some conservative activists have lobbied Florida officials to stop participating in Common Core initiatives. These grassroots activists have stated that the program represents federal overreach. Meanwhile, long-time education reform advocates have urged officials to move forward with Common Core.

In July, House Speaker Will Weatherford and Senate President Don Gaetz issued a letter calling for the state to break from a consortium of 20 states so that it can create its own state assessments. However, former Governor Jeb Bush's two education foundations support the consortium approach, and this week five former chairs of the Republican Party of Florida sent a joint letter backing the standards. Signatories to the letter include Senator John Thrasher, Carole Jean Jordan, Al Cardenas, Tom Slade, and Van Poole.

FLORIDA ECONOMIC NEWS

UCF Economic Report

The University of Central Florida released a report this week by the Institute for Economic Competitiveness. It projects that Florida's economy will grow over the next three years, but that growth will be slow. The report anticipates that growth will be fueled by population growth and an improving housing market, as well as the tourism industry, but other factors such as the European debt crisis and the Affordable Care Act's ultimate impact on the labor market could impact the economy negatively, slowing growth. However, the report states that Florida's economic recovery will outpace the growth of the national economy.

Unemployment in Florida Holds Steady

Florida's unemployment rate held steady at 7.1 percent in June. Figures released by the Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics show the number of jobs in Florida increased by 9,300 in June. Most of those jobs were in the public sector, but 2,300 of those jobs came from the private sector. The 7.1 percent unemployment rate is the lowest in Florida since September 2008 and remains below the national mark of 7.6 percent. Florida has been below the national average for four months.

General Revenue Collections Increase, State Debt Decreases

Earlier this week, the Revenue Estimating Conference increased its projection for general revenue collections during the 2014-2015 fiscal year by \$62.5 million for a total of \$28.9 billion. The increase is primarily attributable to an increase in estimated carryover funds from the current fiscal year. Actual revenues for the 2012-2013 fiscal year, which ended June 30, were \$27.6 billion, which came in at \$78.5 million more than

recent estimates. This jump reflects an improvement in overall economic conditions. Additionally, Governor Scott announced at the Cabinet meeting this week that the state has reduced its debt by \$3.5 billion in the last three years.

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<http://www.flasla.org/?page=governmentaffairs>