

2017 Legislative Advocacy Report

ADA Lawsuits



- TBBCoC **supported** Representative Edwards' legislation (HB 727) to curb the number of frivolous lawsuits filed against local businesses for violation of ADA building requirements.
- Voluntary program to retain an ADA expert to do evaluation for a certificate to help end lawsuits.
- **Legislation was passed and is waiting to be signed by Governor Scott.** ✓

Beach Renourishment



- TBBCoC **supported** Senator Latvala's legislation (SB 1590) to increase the amount of funding the state allocates for beach renourishment to a minimum of \$50 million; up from \$30 million.
- Representative Peters introduced the companion bill (HB 1213) in the House of Representatives.
- **Funding was included in the budget.** ✓

Business Rent Tax



- TBBCoC **supported** legislation (HB 7109) to permanently lower sales tax charged on commercial leases.
- Florida is the only state in the country to impose this type of tax on businesses.
- Tax is levied on total rent or license fee charged for renting any real property; residences are exempt.
- **Legislation was passed to reduce the Business Rent Tax from 6 percent to 5.8%.** ✓

Gambling Expansion



- TBBCoC **opposed** Senator Galvano's legislation (SB 08) that would expand gambling by turning every horse track, dog track and jai alai facility into a casino and adds 2 Vegas-style casinos.
- TBBCoC supports Representative La Rosa's legislation (HB 7037) stops casinos from spreading.
- **Legislation did not pass. There will be no changes this year.** ✓

Film Florida



- TBBCoC **opposed** Representative Renner's legislation (HB 7005) that would eliminate incentives for many organizations including Film Florida.
- **There was no money allocated for film incentives, however Film Florida saw other victories** [Click Here](#) =

Flood Insurance



- TBBCoC **supported** Senator Brandes' flood insurance legislation (SB 420) that would make it easier for private insurers to operate in Florida.
- Legislation extends to 2025 the rate flexibility afforded to private insurers who seek to enter the market to offer flood insurance as an alternative to the National Flood Insurance Program.
- **Legislation was passed and is waiting to be signed by the governor.** ✓

Local Regulation Preemption



- TBBCoC **monitored** Representative Renner legislation (HB 17) Prohibiting certain local governments from imposing or adopting certain regulations on businesses.
- **Legislation did not pass. No changes will occur this year.** =

Legislative Advocacy Updates Continued

Short-Term Rentals



- TBBCoC **monitored** Representative La Rosa's legislation (HB 425) that started out protecting private property rights of owners and vacation rental companies by establishing a statewide framework for the use of short term vacation rentals.
- However, HB 425 was amended to allow local governments to regulate length of stay.
- Senator Greg Steube's companion bill in the Senate (SB 0188) was amended and would result in no changes to local government regulations.
- **Legislation did not pass. There will be no changes this year. =**

Tourism



- TBBCoC **opposed** Representative Renner's legislation (HB 9) that would allow VISIT FLORIDA to remain in existence, however, regulating to a point of rendering it ineffective.
- HB 9 was added to another piece of legislation that passed.
- In separate action, legislators proposed \$25 million in funding and Governor Scott urged legislators to fund VISIT FLORIDA at \$100.
- **Governor Scott worked with legislators to fully fund VISIT FLORIDA at \$76million. ✓**

Transportation



- TBBCoC **supported** funding for Pinellas County transportation projects.
- **Legislators appropriated \$400,000 for Forward Pinellas for its water taxi work. However, Senator Latvala ended up securing \$1 million toward Forward Pinellas water taxi projects. ✓**

STATE: Transportation



- TBBCoC **supported** Senator Latvala's Legislation (SB 1672) to revamp the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transportation Authority (TBARTA).
- Legislation would downsize TBARTA from 7 counties to 5 (Hillsborough, Pinellas, Pasco, Manatee and Hernando), and it would change TBARTA's focus to transit (not only buses, but rail, autonomous vehicles and more).
- TBARTA board made up of 13 members - a county commissioner from each of the five counties, mayors from Tampa and St. Petersburg, 1 member from PSTA and HART each and the governor will name the remaining four members.
- **Legislation passed and is headed to the governor's desk to be signed into law. ✓**

Workers Compensation Insurance Reform



- TBBCoC **supported** Representative Burgess' legislation (HB 7085) to take a major step toward addressing much-needed reforms to Florida's broken workers' compensation system and **opposed** Senator Bradley's legislation (SB 1582) that doesn't go far enough to relieve businesses.
- HB 7085 will Realign the amount of attorney fees to the amount secured for the injured workers, place a cap on attorney fees of \$150 per hour, encourage affected employees to avoid drawn-out court proceedings, and reduce rates for job creators.
- **Legislation did not pass. There will be no Workers Compensation Insurance reform this year. X**

Resources:

- Tampa Bay Beaches Chamber Advocacy: <http://www.tampabaybeaches.com/advocacy.html>
- Florida House: <https://www.myfloridahouse.gov/>
- Florida Senate: <https://www.flsenate.gov/>