

TALLAHASSEE WEEKLY REPORT

July 25-29, 2011

Insurance

The Citizens Insurance Board of Directors voted this week to increase rates for sinkhole insurance, tentatively approving new premiums that would force many policy holders to either pay more or have their coverage dropped. The rate hikes, an average of 429 percent statewide, now go to the Florida Office of Insurance Regulation (OIR) for final approval.

Actuaries at Citizens say the new rates, which could cost some customers an additional \$4,000 a year, are necessary because current premiums don't cover payouts for sinkhole claims.

Senator Mike Fasano, a staunch opponent of rate increases, sent a letter to Insurance Commissioner Kevin McCarty asking that public hearings be held throughout the state before OIR makes a ruling on the increases.

Assisted Living Facilities

Below, please find a press release from the Agency for Health Care Administration related to the creation of a workgroup established to examine assisted living facilities:

***Workgroup Established to Examine Assisted Living Facilities
AHCA releases annual summary of ALF fines and sanctions***

Tallahassee, Fla.— Carrying out Governor Rick Scott's directive to examine the regulation and oversight of assisted living facilities in Florida, the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) announced the creation of the Assisted Living Workgroup. The workgroup's objective is to make recommendations that will improve the monitoring and safety in assisted living facilities.

"Assisted living facilities play a critical role for many seniors by providing safe, community living accommodations for residents. While most facilities live up to those standards, we've seen reports of some that do not," said Governor Scott. "The efforts of the workgroup will help ensure the safety and well-being of our residents."

The workgroup includes Sen. Ronda Storms, Rep. Matt Hudson as well as health care association representatives, policy experts, advocates, and assisted living facility administrators. Larry Polivka, Director and Scholar in Residence at the Claude Pepper Foundation, has agreed to serve as Chairman of the workgroup. The first meeting of the Assisted Living Workgroup is scheduled for August 8 in Tallahassee.

"I look forward to working with the members of the workgroup in our mutual effort to better serve residents of assisted living facilities," said Liz Dudek, AHCA Secretary. "I am also thankful

for the participation of our state partners from the Office of the Attorney General, the State Fire Marshal's Office, the Agency for Persons with Disabilities, and the Departments of Elder Affairs and Children and Families.”

The Agency also released its annual report of Assisted Living Facilities (ALFs) administrative fines, which highlights the over 300 ALFs penalized for serious or uncorrected violations. In addition, the annual summary of sanctions was released, which includes the 23 facilities whose licenses were revoked or denied at renewal or who had an emergency action imposed between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011.

For information about facilities AHCA licenses, please visit www.floridahealthfinder.gov.

The ALF annual report can be accessed at:

http://ahca.myflorida.com/MCHQ/Long_Term_Care/FDAU/Reports.shtml.

For more information about the Assisted Living Workgroup, please visit

<http://ahca.myflorida.com/SCHS/ALWG2011/alwg2011.shtml>

Miami-Dade Legislative Delegation

The Miami-Dade Legislative Delegation will be holding a public hearing on Monday, August 1 at 9:30 am in the City of Miami Commission Chambers.

The meeting serves as an opportunity for members of the delegation to hear from organizations, schools, municipalities, and other entities on their priorities for the upcoming session.

Senate Special Election

Governor Rick Scott announced this week that a special primary will be held on September 20, with the general election taking place on October 18 for Senate District 1. Incumbent Senator Tony Hill resigned in order to go work in the administration of newly elected Jacksonville Mayor Alvin Brown. The district includes Duval, Flagler, Putnam, St. Johns and Volusia Counties.

The two front-runners for the seat are former State Representatives Audrey Gibson and Terry Fields.

Redistricting

There will be two redistricting meetings held in Miami, the first on August 17 from 10 am-2 pm at Miami Dade College and the other the same day from 6 pm-9 pm at the Florida International University College of Law.