

Dear Commercial Alliance and Legislative Breakout Committee Members,

Before we get into our legislative update for week five of the 2018 Legislative Session, let me first say that our thoughts and prayers go out to the victims and families affected by the school shooting in Parkland this week. I don't know if any of you were directly impacted by the event, but as Realtors there is no doubt you are feeling the hurt and sadness in each of your communities.

Here in Tallahassee we are certainly feeling that sadness as well, and the conversations being had in the halls of the capitol have definitely pivoted in the wake of this tragedy.

While we don't yet know where those conversations will take us, we do have several updates for you regarding our legislative priorities. You can find those updates below, and as always, if you have any questions on these items or anything else, please don't hesitate to ask.

Assignment of Benefits (AOB)

No new activity took place this week regarding the AOB bills that Florida Realtors supports. As a reminder, the House has already passed HB 7015. This leaves SB 62, which is still awaiting consideration in its first committee. The main difference between the two bills is the manner in which attorney fees are treated. The Senate bill preserves one-way attorney fees for policyholders but extinguishes them for contractors. The House bill allows both insurers and contractors to recover attorney fees, depending on who the prevailing party is and the size of the recovery, if any.

Business Rent Tax Cut

The House Ways & Means committee filed their tax cut bill this week. The proposed committee bill WMC3 includes a 0.3% reduction of the Business Rent Tax. This rate cut is estimated to have a \$92.4 million-dollar impact to the state. The committee passed WMC3 by a vote of 14 to 6. The proposed committee bill will be filed and given a bill number and move on for further consideration.

Vacation Rentals

House Bill 773 by Rep. Mike La Rosa (R- St. Cloud) would allow municipalities to enact a local law, ordinance, or regulation to regulate activities that arise when a property is used as a vacation rental provided the regulation applies uniformly to all residential properties without regard to whether the property is used as a vacation rental. Last legislative session, Rep. La Rosa filed similar legislation that made its way through the legislative process but ultimately died when the Senate and the House could not come to an agreement. The bill has been referred to the Government Accountability Committee and the Commerce Committee. It was scheduled to be heard in committee this week, but was postponed due to time restrictions.

Senate Bill 1400 by Sen. Greg Steube (R-Sarasota) is waiting to be heard in its final committee stop, the Appropriations Committee. Below is the summary of what the bill would do:

The bill preempts vacation rentals to the state which would prohibit municipal governments from regulating vacation rentals.

Single Family and Multi Family Homes would not be affected by this legislation. The current licensing requirements would remain in effect; however, the license application would now require the operator's emergency contact telephone number.

The bill adds occupancy limits for vacation rentals which are set at the lesser of four persons plus two additional persons for each sleeping room, or one person for each 150 square feet of finished area.

Preempts the inspection of vacation rentals to the state. Inspections will only take place if a complaint is filed with the department.

When five or more vacation rentals in multifamily dwellings are under common ownership and any such vacation rental is rented out more than 180 days per year they will be subject to biannual inspections.

The bill maintains the grandfather provision so that any local law or ordinance passed before June 1, 2011 relating to vacation rentals would be maintained.

Affordable Housing

The House and Senate have already passed their respective budget bills. Each chamber has a different level of funding for the State and Local Government Housing Trust Funds. The legislature will now move into the budget conference process. This process will begin with the appointment of budget conferees and specific "allocations" for the budget subcommittees. We are working with legislators to advocate for the increase in the level of appropriation for the Housing Trust Funds.

Remote Notaries

Legislation that enables Florida notaries to support digital closings moved closer to passage in both chambers this week. The Senate bill (SB 1042) passed the Government Oversight and Accountability Committee, and the House bill (HB 771) passed the Transportation & Tourism Appropriations Subcommittee. The bill authorizes Florida notaries to perform notarial acts in the traditional manner (in person) or by use of a secure, recorded two-way live audio-video call. Enhanced requirements for identity verification, security and recordkeeping for electronic notarization are included in the bill. The legislation must still be considered in two more committees -- one in each chamber -- and has the potential to simplify transactions that involve out-of-state and out-of-country buyers and sellers. It's supported by the Florida Realtors.

Constitution Revision Commission (CRC)

The Commission has announced additional public hearings to get additional input from Floridians about potential changes to the Constitution. The full meeting schedule is listed on the Commission's website: flcrc.gov/Meetings/PublicHearings.

Carrie O'Rourke
PAC Major Investor
FLORIDA REALTORS
Orlando FL
