2015 State Legislative Session Outcome Report

Emergency Cardiovascular Care

CPR In Schools
SB 328/HB1311 - Relating to Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Training In Public Schools
This was our 4th year attempting to pass CPR as a graduation requirement in Florida and unfortunately we ended up with the same results as the previous attempts. Sen. Thad Altman, who has been our Senate Champion from the beginning of this campaign, once again sponsored our language in the Senate and we were fortunate enough to have Rep. Chris Sprowls, Republican from Clearwater, champion our efforts in the House. While we had Republican sponsors this year, it was the same argument we have been hearing all along, the chair of the Senate Education Committee, Sen. John Legg, does not want to put this mandate on the schools and refused to hear our bill in his committee.
Both Bills died in the first Committee of Reference

This year we also attempted to provide schools with an appropriation from the state, we asked the state to invest $400,000 of CPR training materials for the schools to create new CPR programs or replace old equipment as needed. We received a budget appropriation of $200,000 from the state in the final budget proposal that was sent to the Governor, unfortunately, the Governor vetoed the line item for the appropriation and we were not able to secure the funds for the schools.

Access to Healthy Foods

Healthy Food Financing Initiative (HFFI)
We took on a new issue this year in HFFI and gathered many different organizations together for support. We began by putting a steering committee together comprised of members from the following organizations; The Florida Chamber of Commerce, The Florida Retail Federation, The Florida Farmers Bureau, The Florida Alliance of YMCA’s, The Florida Council on Aging and the Budd Bell Clearinghouse. These organizations brought together the different mindsets from each sector our policy would touch and collaborated to create a policy everyone could agree on moving forward. We also worked closely with the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and a Florida based Community Development Financial Institution on the policy. As we came to an agreement on language, we were a little late to find a bill sponsor, however we were able to amend our language onto the Dept. of Ag bill, unfortunately we were asked by appropriations staff to withdraw the amendment for procedural reasons. We were still hopeful moving into the last week of session with adding our amendment back on to the Ag bill, however, the Legislature broke down and the House convened early and our opportunity for this year was lost.
We did receive a lot of support from members on both sides on our policy and we will be bringing the issue back up in the next legislative session.

American Heart Association
Access to Healthy Foods (continued)

SB 610 – Relating to Food Desserts by Bullard (HB 1107 by Lee, Jr.)
This bill would provide an income tax credit for certain businesses that sell nutrient-dense food items in areas designated as food deserts. The bill was heard in the first committee of reference in the Senate and then died in the Finance and Tax committee. The bill was never heard in the House.

Medicaid

SB 7044 Relating to Health Insurance Affordability Exchange
About midway through session, all members were talking about was Medicaid expansion and LIP (low income pool) funding. The AHA was actively supporting the Senate’s proposed language, known as FHIX, that would have expanded the population of coverage to 138% of the Federal Poverty Level. The bill was passed in the Senate and when sent over to be heard in the House of Representatives, the House decided not to hear the bill and abruptly convened regular session.
The bill was brought back up in a special session in June and was once again passed in the Senate and sent to the House for a vote. This time, however, the House voted the bill down and Florida once again did not pass Medicaid Expansion.

Tobacco Control

HB 671 Relating to Use of Tobacco Products in Motor Vehicles by McBearney (SB 548 – Clemens)
Prohibiting smoking a tobacco product in a motor vehicle with a minor is present. Result: Never heard in committee

SB 1386 - Relating to Cigarette Products of Nonsettling Manufacturers by Altman
Imposing a fee on the sale, receipt, purchase, possession, consumption, handling, distribution, and use of nonsettling manufacturer cigarettes that are required to have a stamp affixed or stamp insignia applied to the package of cigarettes on which tax is otherwise required to be paid; providing that the fee imposed is in addition to any other privilege, license, fee, or tax required or imposed by state law; requiring a settling manufacturer to certify the names of certain brand families to the Attorney General, etc.
Result: No House companion. Never heard in committee

Budget Update

James and Esther King Biomedical Research Program – Funding: $10,000,000 Increase of $2.5 million from previous Fiscal Year
William G. “Bill” Bankhead Jr. and David Coley Cancer Research Program – Funding: $10,000,000 Increase of $5 million from previous Fiscal year
Comprehensive Statewide Tobacco Prevention and Education Program from Tobacco Settlement Trust fund - $67,683,940 Increase of just over $1 million from previous Fiscal Year

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