



# FUBA

Florida United Businesses Association

# issues

## OUR BUSINESS IS SMALL BUSINESS

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### **CORPORATE INCOME TAX RELIEF FOR TORNADO VICTIMS**

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has granted relief to Florida taxpayers in four counties, Lake, Seminole, Sumter, and Volusia. If a taxpayer is in any of the areas affected by these early-February 2007 storms and is still capable of meeting its Florida filing obligations, the taxpayer should do so. The relief granted by the IRS extends the period to file returns until April 4, 2007. Florida's corporate income tax filing due dates are 15 days beyond the original or extended due date for filing Federal Income Tax returns. Therefore, Florida taxpayers will have until April 19, 2007, to file Florida tax returns with original or extended due dates that occurred during the period February 1, 2007 through April 18, 2007. The Department of Revenue (DOR) will waive any late filing penalties that would otherwise apply.

DOR realizes that certain taxpayers suffered severe losses that directly affected or continue to affect their ability to file tax returns even under the extended due dates. If you are in this circumstance, we ask that you contact DOR's toll-free line at 800-352-3671 as soon as possible to discuss your individual situation. DOR will work with all affected taxpayers on waiver of late filing penalties on a case-by-case basis.

### **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

The 2007 Session of the Florida Legislature began on Tuesday, March 6th. FUBA's lobbying team is working hard to make sure lawmakers hear from

small businesses when they are voting on legislation. Some Issues being discussed this session include:

- **Construction Contracts/Insurance:** FUBA is working to prevent general contractors from requiring that their subcontractors have a workers' compensation policy from a rated carrier.
- **Taxes:** FUBA is supporting a proposed constitutional amendment that would give businesses a \$25,000 exemption from the tangible personal property tax. We also support the "happy shopper" sales tax free days where back-to-school items are exempt from the state sales tax.
- **Workplace regulation:** FUBA is concerned about a bill that would require businesses to give employees leave from work if the employee of a family member is subject to domestic abuse.

If you would like copies of any proposed legislation, or if you have questions about issues moving through the Legislature, please call the FUBA offices and ask for Karen, Lance or Cameron.

### **MORE CHOICES, BETTER RATES FOR FLORIDIANS – SUPPORT CABLE LEGISLATION**

There are a lot of important bills being discussed in Tallahassee this year, with issues ranging from property taxes, protecting the environment,

homeowners insurance, and numerous other legislative packages aimed at the Florida consumer. With this in mind, FUBA has endorsed House Bill 529 sponsored by Representative Trey Traviesa (R, Tampa) and Senate Bill 998 sponsored by Senator Mike Bennett (R, Bradenton), which would streamline Florida's existing cable franchising process.

By making the process of obtaining a cable franchise agreement more simplified and expedited, Floridians will be able to have a choice in their cable providers leading to better rates and service. The issue of increased competition for Florida consumers is embraced by business owners, employees and all cable customers that are demanding for better services and prices from Florida cable providers.

Lawmakers in Tallahassee need to know how you feel about this issue and we encourage you to let them know that you support HB 529 and SB 998. Please contact your legislator by visiting [www.wewantTVchoicefl.com](http://www.wewantTVchoicefl.com). This website was created by TV4US, an advocacy group that also supports this good public policy.

### **ROOFING EXECUTIVE ORDERS EXPIRED OCTOBER 9, 2006**

As of October 9, 2006, certified and registered residential building and general contractors are no longer authorized to obtain permits to perform roofing and re-roofing repairs following the expiration of the Executive Orders, which were signed in response to the 2004 and 2005 hurricane seasons. Jobs for which permits were pulled prior to the expiration of the Executive Order may be completed.

### **EXAMINATION PERIOD INCREASED TO TWO YEARS**

Effective November 3, 2006, the Construction Industry Licensing Board revised a rule that provides that a candidate who has failed to achieve a passing score on one or more of the

required construction examinations has up to two years from the date of the first attempt to achieve a passing score on all required parts. If a passing score is not achieved within the two-year period, all past test scores shall be considered invalid and the candidate will be required to retake all portions of the examination. Each candidate will only be allowed six attempts to pass each part of the exam during the two-year period.

### **FINANCIALLY RESPONSIBLE OFFICER BOND HAS INCREASED**

Effective October 22, 2006, the bond required for Financially Responsible Officers increased from \$50,000 to \$500,000. This increase was made to correspond with the \$500,000 aggregate cap on claims against individual contractors for purposes of the Florida Homeowners' Construction Recovery Fund. The revised application forms are now available on the Department of Business & Professional Regulation's website and the increased amount will be required on all applications received after February 1, 2007.

### **DID YOU KNOW – FLORIDA DISASTER RECOVERY FUND DONATIONS ARE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE?**

The Florida Disaster Recovery Fund (formerly the Florida Hurricane Relief Fund) was created in 2004 to help Floridians with long-term recovery. The mission of the Florida Disaster Recovery Fund is to raise funds to help Floridians with recovery from natural disasters through strengthening families and rebuilding communities.

All donations to the Florida Disaster Recovery Fund are tax-deductible (Florida charitable registration #8536). Donations can be made securely online by visiting [www.VolunteerFloridaFoundation.org](http://www.VolunteerFloridaFoundation.org) or by calling 1-800-825-3786. Checks are also accepted and can be made payable to the Florida Disaster Recovery Fund and mailed to Volunteer Florida Foundation, 401 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32301.