



Updated January 6, 2012

2012 Legislative Priorities

Priority #1

FHBA supports a cost-effective, local-option septic tank inspection program.

Why: Periodic septic tank inspections are an important tool to protect homeowners and the environment. A unified state standard protects builders and homeowners from potentially oppressive local standards.

How: **SB 820 by Sen. Dean and HB 999 by Rep. Dorworth** provide state standards and a local government opt-in, effective upon becoming law.

Priority #2

FHBA supports the elimination of impact fees on transportation and schools.

Why: Impact fees are an inappropriate, inadequate method of funding infrastructure, which should be more effectively and efficiently financed through broad-based revenue sources. In addition, impact fees are a major hurdle in the provision of affordable housing for working families.

How: **HB 0603 by Rep. Weinstein and SB 0912 by Sen. Bennett** prohibit local governments from applying transportation or school concurrency or requiring proportionate-share contribution for construction of new developments, and prohibit the imposition of new or existing impact fees on new development, for a specified period of time, effective July 1, 2012.

Priority #3

FHBA supports streamlined permitting for installation of on-site sewage treatment systems.

Why: Minor remodeling and repairs should not force homeowners to incur the expense of upgrading or expanding their septic tanks.

How: **SB 0820 by Sen. Dean and HB 0999 by Rep. Dorworth** provide that a system modification, replacement, or upgrade is not required unless a bedroom is added to a single-family home, effective upon becoming law.

Priority #4

FHBA supports legislative funding for the final phase of a study of passive septic tank systems.

Why: Homeowners will benefit from cost-effective passive nitrogen treatment technology options for new construction or retrofitting existing septic tanks, potentially saving them thousands of dollars.

How: Legislative budget process.

Priority #5

FHBA supports continued funding for building code education.

Why: Education of contractors increases building code compliance, which better protects the health and safety of the occupants.

How: **HB 0651 by Rep. Davis and SB 0704 by Sen. Bennett** allocate a portion of funds derived from the surcharge on permit fees to the Florida Building Code Compliance & Mitigation Program, which in turn funds educational initiatives. Bills become effective June 1, 2012.

Priority #6

FHBA supports a return to full funding of Sadowski affordable housing dollars.

Why: Despite the economic and housing downturn, affordable housing for working families is still needed in Florida and Sadowski is one of the few tools available to vital down payment assistance, and creates jobs.

How: Legislative budget process.

Priority #7

FHBA supports property tax breaks to encourage energy-efficient home improvements.

Why: In 2010, Florida voters changed the state constitution to keep homeowners from being penalized when the value of their home rose due to the implementation of energy-saving improvements. The change needs legislative implementation to be effective. Homeowners will benefit from more efficient homes and lower utility bills.

HB 0133 by Rep. Frishe and SB 0156 by Sen. Latvala exclude the value of certain home improvements from assessed value of residential property, beginning January 2, 2013.

Priority #8

FHBA supports measures that would lower workers compensation rates for Florida contractors and trades professionals.

Why: High workers comp rates affect Florida's economic competitiveness versus other states, and represents a threat to the growth of businesses and the preservation and creation of jobs.

How: **HB 0511 by Rep. Hudson and SB 0668 by Sen. Hays** revise the requirements for determining the amount of reimbursements for repackaged or relabeled prescription medication, effective July 1, 2012.

Priority #9

FHBA opposes local wage-theft programs.

Why: There are established government and private remedies to resolve wage-related issues without creating another level of regulation and bureaucracy.

How: **HB 0609 by Rep. Goodson and SB 0862 by Sen. Simmons** prohibit cities and counties from adopting laws, ordinances, or rules that address wage theft, effective July 1, 2012.

Priority #10

FHBA supports a limitation on the implied warranty of fitness and merchantability to the structure of a new home.

Why: Florida's implied warranty law as it relates to new homes was never intended to cover issues related to off-site improvements and such an extension would be costly to builders and home buyers.

How: **HB 1013 by Rep. Artiles and SB 1196 by Sen. Bennett** provide legislative intent to affirm limitations to doctrine of implied warranties and fitness and merchantability or habitability associated with the construction and sale of a new home, effective July 1, 2012.
