



FLORIDA SECTION GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT JANUARY 2015

Tonya S. Mellen, P.E.

The next call is scheduled for Thursday, January 29, 2015 at 12:00 PM.

- The single most important issue to the GRC this year is the support for a long-term, comprehensive federal transportation funding bill. The current extension expires at the end of May 2015. It will be difficult for legislators to agree on a funding source and ASCE needs to lead on this issue. It will be the main topic at the annual Fly-In in March.
- An Act Relating to Public-Private Partnerships (HB 63) revises portions of the Florida Statutes that pertain to the design-build projects and public private partnerships (20.60 and 287.055). It creates the Division of Public Private Partnerships under the Department of Economic Opportunity, authorizes use of public-private partnerships for certain contracts, revises provisions related to unsolicited proposals received by responsible public entities, and restricts and requires certain provisions in financing agreements. The bill has been referred to the Government Operations and the Economic Development and Tourism subcommittees and the Appropriations and State Affairs Committees.
- House Bill 65, Public Records and Public Meetings/Public-Private Partnerships is a bill that provides exemptions from public records requirements and public meetings requirements for unsolicited proposals held by responsible public entity for specified period, provides definition, and requires that closed meetings be recorded. The bill has been referred to the Government Operations and the Economic Development and Tourism subcommittees and the State Affairs Committees. This bill and HP 63 seem to streamline the process of procuring contractor/owners for large public-private partnerships. We will continue to monitor their progress through the next session.
- Senate Bill 0166, Hydraulic Fracturing prohibits hydraulic fracturing in Florida. This bill has been referred to Environmental Preservation and Conservation, Commerce and Tourism, Community Affairs and Fiscal Policy.
- The ASCE National held a webinar on Advocacy on December 18, 2014 which was informative, mainly on assets available to members through the national Government Relations staff. I contacted Maria Matthews regarding the GR University. It is a one day, extensive workshop and I would like to set up a session in Orlando during late January or early February.

- The GRC is preparing for the FES PE Days conference February 3-5 in Tallahassee. Updated Florida Report Cards will be included in the packets to be distributed by attendees at their meetings with the legislators.
- The ASCE Legislative Fly-In is March 24-26 in Washington, DC. The Florida Section has excellent participation in this event. I would like to get a list of all members attending.
- Tonya is still seeking new members for the GRC, especially from the North Florida and the Panhandle area.