

# The Capitolist

## **AIF on tort costs: “It’s depressing to realize how much money Florida families are actually paying in this tort tax”**

Jordan Kirkland

This week, business leaders in Florida released the results of *Economic Benefits of Tort Reform*, a rigorous economic study detailing the state’s poor legal climate that continues to wreak havoc on small businesses.

The study, released by [Citizens Against Lawsuit Abuse](#) (CALA), a six-state organization that seeks to hold trial lawyers accountable for cutting jobs and clogging the court, found that tort costs are affecting Florida’s economy in a major.

The key takeaways from the report include \$10 billion in annual costs, over \$15 billion lost in gross product, 160,000+ jobs lost, and a “tort tax” at \$719.01 a person.

Highlighting the study was **Bill Herrle**, executive director of the National Federation of Independent Businesses, a nationwide association of small businesses.

“This study underscores the urgent need for lawsuit reform in Florida,” said Herrle. “Small businesses are especially vulnerable to legal attacks. The cost of defending against a single baseless lawsuit can be enough to put a small business out of business —even if the case ultimately is thrown out of court. The small business community is eager to work with Governor DeSantis and legislative leaders to curb lawsuit lending, pass accuracy-in-damages reform, and stop lawsuits brought in ‘bad faith’ with the intent to cancel policy limits.”

Herrle was joined at the press conference by tort reform advocates in the Florida legislature, including Sen. **Doug Broxson**, who chairs Banking and Insurance, and Rep. **Bob Rommel**, who chairs the Civil Justice Subcommittee. Both Republicans were instrumental in getting an assignment of benefits (AOB) bill across the finish line last legislative session.

Also in attendance was the [Associated Industries of Florida](#) (AIF), an association that promotes free enterprise and economic prosperity across the state. After the release of the report, AIF expressed the urgency to push more tort reform in 2020.

“It’s depressing to realize how much money Florida families are actually paying in this tort tax,” said **Stephen Trickey**, Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer at AIF. “AIF and our member companies have long advocated for tort reform in our state, and we are thrilled to have Governor DeSantis in office — somebody that truly does believe in the need for tort reform. We look forward to working with the House and Senate to get something done this legislative session.”