

**Contact: Edie Ousley**  
Florida Chamber of Commerce  
Phone: (850) 521-1231  
Cell: (850) 251-6261  
[eousley@flchamber.com](mailto:eousley@flchamber.com)  
[www.FloridaChamber.com](http://www.FloridaChamber.com)



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## New Florida Chamber Statewide Poll Shows Strong Support for AOB Reform

*Consumer Protection Coalition Urges Senate to Put Consumers First, Hear and Pass SB 62*

**TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (January 18, 2018)** – New statewide polling data commissioned by the Florida Chamber of Commerce shows voters overwhelmingly support Assignment of Benefits (AOB) insurance reform to help lower the cost of living for Floridians.

Conducted on behalf of the Consumer Protection Coalition, statewide polling results show:

- More than 85 percent of voters (85.1 percent) **DISAPPROVE** of allowing a repair contractor hired after you've suffered property damage to have the right to sue your insurance company without your knowledge or consent, and
- More than 65 percent (65.9 percent) of voters **APPROVE** of requiring a repair contractor to pay for their own attorney if they sue your insurance company when there is a dispute.

During the first week of the 2018 Legislative Session, the Florida House passed its priority AOB reform legislation – House Bill 7015 by Rep. Jay Trumbull – which addresses attorney fees in AOB lawsuits. The Senate has not yet signaled it wants to protect consumers from AOB fraud and abuse that's driving up the cost of living for Floridians – despite clear evidence that AOB abuse is hurting consumers statewide. Senate Bill 62 by Sen. Dorothy Hukill has not yet received a hearing.

AOB abuse has exploded in recent years with the number of lawsuits involving an AOB growing from a mere 405 in 2006 to more than 28,000 in 2016 – an increase of more than 6,800 percent. Last year, 20,000 lawsuits were filed as of July, and stakeholders agree that SB 62 is the solution that will best protect consumers from falling victim to unscrupulous repair vendors and contractors that would seek to abuse AOBs to turn a profit.

“Senator Hukill’s bill is the right fix for protecting consumers against rising property and auto insurance costs associated with this fraud and abuse,” said Edie Ousley, Vice President of Public Affairs for the Florida Chamber of Commerce.

Professional Insurance Agents of Florida

Steve Burgess, Former State Insurance  
Consumer Advocate

The Consumer Protection Coalition also supports House Bill 7015 and applauds House leadership and Rep. Trumbull for sending a strong signal on behalf of consumers and passing AOB legislation in the first week of the session.

The facts are clear:

- 85 percent of voters disapprove of AOB lawsuits without their consent or knowledge,
- More than 65 percent of voters believe repair contractors should pay their own attorney fees if they sue the insurance company,
- More than 2,240 consumers have signed petitions seeking AOB reforms,
- Six national editorials and news stories by the *Wall Street Journal* have urged the Florida Senate to put the needs of consumers ahead of the trial bar and to pass AOB reforms.

"Unfortunately, some bad actors have been abusing the AOB process, causing an increase in litigation. This results in an increase of insurance premiums for our citizens," said Senator Dorothy Hukill. "Without question, reforms are needed to curb this abuse before it gets even worse."

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*The Consumer Protection Coalition is a broad-based group of business leaders, consumer advocates, real estate agents, construction contractors, insurance agents and insurance trade groups pushing for reforms to end Assignment of Benefits (AOB) abuse. Learn more about the Coalition at [www.FightFraud.Today](http://www.FightFraud.Today), follow the Coalition on Twitter [@CPC\\_FL](https://twitter.com/CPC_FL) and "like" our page at [FB.com/consumerprotectioncoalition](https://www.facebook.com/consumerprotectioncoalition).*