

# 300 WORDS (more or less) about AGENT CONTINUING EDUCATION

**PROBLEM**—Recently, a flaw in Florida’s Agents Continuing Education (CE) statute surfaced when Citizens Property Insurance Corporation (Citizens), the state-run insurer of last resort, received approval for a course that it will “force” every appointed agent to attend. Since all carriers can now follow suit, the entire “CE” marketplace could be monopolized by one or a few carriers. The possibility of Citizens, or any other carrier, using its appointment process to coerce agents to attend programs that are not about its procedures was not contemplated when the existing CE law was enacted. But, until the move by Citizens, there was no problem because no company was doing it.

**BACKGROUND**—There are two types of education classes insurance agents attend: the first is usually required by a carrier of its appointed agents and is about the carrier’s procedures and processing requirements. These are usually tied to the agents’ appointments. The other training is required by law and qualifies an agent to represent “any” carrier. By DFS rule, these approved CE programs cannot be about one carrier’s procedures. They must be of general application and consumer benefit because they certify the agent to represent “any” company. Currently, there are in excess of 1,400 DFS-approved vendors of agents’ CE courses competing via price, venue, and other features.

**DISCUSSION**—HB 565 by Rep. Nelson and SB 2528 by Sen. Deutch merely prevents insurers from terminating agents exclusively because they choose to take another vendor’s CE training. This provision does not in any way impede Citizens (or any insurer) from offering CE training or from terminating agents who don’t take non-CE training on the company’s internal procedures. It also allows companies whose agents are employees to be exempt from this provision. We do not know of any private carrier or insurance trade group that opposes this change.

**Additionally**, the bill accomplishes the following:

- ◆ It adds to the list of exemptions for the Customer Service Representative (CSR) licensing examination those with a degree (with prescribed insurance curriculum) from an accredited institution of higher learning.
- ◆ It repairs a long-existing glitch requiring insurance consultants who don’t sell insurance to still be appointed with an insurance company.
- ◆ It makes exam requirements for correspondence courses like those of approved online programs.

**SOLUTION**—Please support the passage of HB 565 and SB 2528.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:  
Laura B. Pearce, Esq., FAIA Director of Governmental Affairs, or  
Kyle Ulrich, FAIA Grassroots/PAC Coordinator  
E-mail: [lpearce@faia.com](mailto:lpearce@faia.com), [kulrich@faia.com](mailto:kulrich@faia.com)

Prepared by:



PO Box 12129

Tallahassee, FL 32317-2129

Telephone: 850-893-4155 ◆ Fax: 850-668-2852 ◆ <http://www.faia.com>