



PROPER PLANNING MAY CREATE PEACE OF MIND



June 2006

FLORIDA'S ELDER LAW LEGISLATIVE CHANGES

This year was a successful year for the Florida Legislature as it relates to elder issues. This month's newsletter provides an overview of some of the legislation.

- 1) Funding for Aging Resource Centers: \$3.3 million dollars of funding was reinstated for the Aging Resource Centers across the state. The ARCs are a single point of entry into the system that serves the needs of seniors.
- 2) Increased Nursing Staff (HB5007 Effective 7/1/06): An average of 2.9 hours per day of direct care (certified nursing assistant) is required to be provided to each resident of a skilled nursing facility on a weekly basis. See F.S. 400.23(3)(a)1.a.,b.
- 3) Increased Funding for the Medicaid program (HB5007 Effective 7/1/06):
 - (a) Adult vision services have been restored to the program through \$9.6 million dollars of funding. Medicaid recipients will now be able to access vision services and obtain eyeglasses (2 pair per year). See F.S. 409.906(23).
 - (b) Adult hearing services

“Contact our firm to learn how these and other legislative changes impact your clients.”

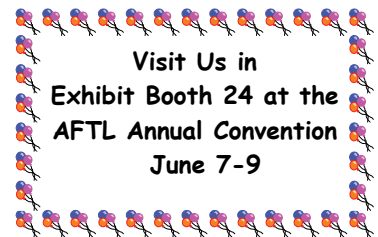
have also been restored through \$2.2 million dollars of funding. Medicaid recipients will now be able to access hearing aids and related services. See F.S. 409.906(12).

(c) \$7.0 million dollars of funding was approved to provide full or partial dentures and related services to adult Medicaid recipients. See F.S. 409.906(1)(b).

(d) An additional 1,000 slots were added to the Nursing Home Diversion program (\$4.6 million). The purpose of the program is to provide necessary services and care in a non-institutionalized setting.

4) Homestead Exemption for Low Income Seniors: HJR 353 was enrolled on 5/4/06 and will be submitted to the electors at the next general election. It would amend Section 6 Article VII and create Section 26 Article XII of the State Constitution. It allows counties or municipalities to increase the maximum homestead exemption from \$25,000.00 to \$50,000.00. If adopted it will take effect on 1/1/07. To be eligible, a Florida resident must be age 65 and have household income not exceeding \$20,000.00.

Contact our firm to learn how these and other legislative changes impact your clients. We welcome the opportunity to collaborate with you and your clients by providing expert guidance and creative solutions to fulfill your clients' legal needs.



**Visit Us in
 Exhibit Booth 24 at the
 AFTL Annual Convention
 June 7-9**

Meet The Staff

Flo Koplo, C.P.

Guardianship	Probate
Trust Administration	Court Appointments

Kathy Russo, C.P.

Debra Pitts, Legal Assistant

Special Needs Trusts	Medicaid & SSI
Facility Residents' Rights	Estate Planning

Myrna Hambro
 Client Liaison

Hillary S. Josephs
 Business Development
 Coordinator