

Citizens insurance board gets consumer voice

Written by The News Service of Florida

Mar. 25

news-press.com

Following up on a law passed last year, Gov. Rick Scott has appointed Tavernier banker Bette Brown as a consumer representative on the Citizens Property Insurance Corp. Board of Governors.

Lawmakers last year approved a wide-ranging Citizens bill that included giving the governor authority to name a board member who "serves solely to advocate on behalf of the consumer."

Brown, whose appointment was announced Monday, is chief credit officer for Community Bank of Florida. "Her policyholder focus and proven commitment to serving her community will be an asset to Citizens and its policyholders," Chris Gardner, chairman of the state-backed insurer's board, said in a prepared statement.

Meanwhile, the House Insurance & Banking Subcommittee today approved a bill that could lead to additional insurers taking part in a new computerized "clearinghouse" that is designed to help shift policies from Citizens into the private insurance market.

The bill (HB 1109), sponsored by Rep. John Wood, R-Winter Haven, would allow what are known as "surplus lines" carriers to seek policyholders through the clearinghouse. Surplus lines carriers are not licensed and regulated like other insurance companies.