

INDUSTRY IMPACT: 2016 ELECTION RESULTS

Keeping Your Eye On Challenges and Opportunities for the Vision Industry as a New White House and Congress Come to Town

Yesterday's election will have implications for all industry sectors, including healthcare, trade, tax, labor and the environment. Rest assured that this shifting political landscape will have an impact on the business of eyewear manufacturing and distribution.

Although early in the Election Day most eyes were turned towards the Presidential race, a variety of U.S. Senate races also drew significant attention. At the end of the day, Republicans capitalized on opportunities to maintain majority control of the Senate – something they gained in the 2014 midterm Elections.

Senate majority not only gives the GOP more votes on the Floor, but also the power to decide what legislation goes to the Floor and Chairmanship of all committees, the ability to block/advance the Republican-controlled U.S. House of Representatives from sending their bills to the President, and the power to confirm a Supreme Court Justice.

With Donald Trump winning the race for President, his ability – and that of the U.S. congress – to repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and advance an alternative healthcare agenda will likely rest squarely on the shoulders of the U.S. Senate. The Republican Party was able to maintain a majority in the U.S. House, and their leadership and Members have made no secret about their aspirations to repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Therefore, the Republican-controlled Senate will be responsible for blocking/forwarding these attempts to get their legislation on the President's desk, while also advancing their own legislation. Key healthcare issues to watch in the new Congress will focus continued attention on the ACA while also zeroing in on more specific patient care, coverage and provider issues.

Key Issues

The Vision Council expects a number of key issues to receive attention from the new 115th Congress, White House and Federal Agencies in 2017, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children's Vision Coverage Benefit and the ACA;
- FDA and the Unique Device Identifier (UDI) for eyeglasses;
- Medical Device Tax-related issues;
- Customs and Border Patrol (CBP & Homeland Security) issues;
- Trade Policy;
- Tax Reform; and
- Environmental oversight.

Several friends of the vision community were re-elected yesterday in addition to the many other legislators that have worked closely on eye safety, vision health and eyewear issues with The Vision Council over the last few years, including:

- Congressman Kevin Yoder (KS);
- Congressman Michael Burgess, M.D. (TX);
- Congressman Bill Pascrell (NJ);
- Congresswoman Doris Matsui (CA);
- Congressman Erik Paulsen (MN);
- Congressman Frank Pallone (NJ);
- Congressman Eric Swalwell (CA);
- Senator Rob Portman (OH);
- Senator-Elect Chris Van Hollen (MD)

With only 71 days until the Presidential Inauguration, a new White House Administration will soon set about the business of selecting political appointees as well as establishing Cabinet and Agency agendas and priorities. Additionally, the current pre-election U.S. Congress will convene its "Lame Duck" session beginning this Monday, November 14, 2016.

With so much on the line in the 115th Congress, The Vision Council's member involvement and the work of the Government Relations Committee in the policy arena will be more important than ever. Given yesterday's election results, it is imperative for organizations to hit the ground running to educate and define themselves as well as their public policy priorities early in 2017 to the new White House and U.S. Congress.

The Vision Council will continue to monitor and update members as more details emerge regarding the Congressional legislative agenda.