

SIIA Endeavors

written by Bruce Shuntan

Association Continues to Improve its Political Positioning During Times of Change

Provided below are comments and updates from SIIA President & CEO Mike Ferguson in connection with the recent election results and how the association continues to position itself to best represent the interests of its members.

Like many of you, several members of the SIIA team had little sleep last night as we watched the election results come in. While Republicans maintaining a majority in the House comes at no surprise, Senate Republicans kept a thin majority, meaning a largely status quo policy perspective in Congress. What does bring change is the somewhat unexpected victory of Donald Trump in the presidential race, meaning a same-party Congress and Administration for the first time in a number of years. With congressional and presidential races now decided, questions loom: what does this mean and where do we stand?

With a SIIA team that has been actively involved in political and policy activities in Washington, we are better prepared than ever to be strongly engaged and effective advocates for you. With a single political party controlling both the White House and both chambers of Congress, there will be a greater likelihood for substantive legislative activity, including changes to the Affordable Care Act and potential consideration of other health care reform proposals.

You may be interested to know SIIA has met with more than 175 Members of Congress and their staff in the last two years to discuss the importance of the self-insurance marketplace generally, as well as specific policy proposals. With the House and Senate remaining largely status quo, these meetings have paved the way for SIIA to be actively engaged when the new Congress convenes.

Similarly, I think it's important to note that the Self-Insurance Political Action Committee (SIPAC) has financially supported about three dozen members of Congress this election cycle who are positioned to support the self-insurance industry. As of today, I am pleased to say that SIPAC has a 100% election success rate with our candidate support, even in tough battleground states.



SIIA President & CEO, Mike Ferguson

With a change in Administration, so too will there be federal regulatory changes affecting self-insured group health plans, captive insurance companies and self-insured workers' compensation programs. SIIA has been developing important relationships with "career" regulators who will maintain their current positions throughout the transition and we will be proactive in engaging with new political appointees who will have influence over our industry.

In order to establish policy priorities for 2017, the SIIA Government Relations Committee will have a timely meeting in Washington, DC on November 30. During this time, we will review potential healthcare replacement blueprints and impacts on our industry, ranging from strengthening self-insurance in general to supporting employer based healthcare, among other

anticipated proposals. A new Congress and Administration will certainly mean new positioning and new issues that may arise, but we have worked hard to lay the groundwork to be an even more effective advocate for you.

To help you stay informed and engaged in 2017, we have enhanced our educational offering in two ways. First, for the Self-Insured Health Plan Executive Forum, scheduled for March 28-29, 2017 in Tucson, AZ, we have included multiple sessions focused on the latest legislative/regulatory developments.

Second, we are bringing back SIIA's dedicated Legislative/Regulatory conference, which has been scheduled for May 2-4, 2017 in Washington, DC. This event will feature a great program of speakers and topics, along

with an opportunity for attendees to meet with their elected representatives in their Capitol Hill offices.

Supplementing this educational/informational initial, SIPAC will be holding multiple fund-raising events over the course of the year where members will have the opportunity to help SIIA build and deploy its political contribution "war chest." Watch for the event schedule announcement before the end of the year.

While political and policy uncertainty may remain, SIIA is poised to be a constant advocate for you, fighting for your interests in Washington and in states across the country. If you have questions, would like to better understand policy issues, or wish for a political/policy briefing from the SIIA team, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly at mferguson@siaa.org. ■

