

# Insulation Advocate

## Insulation Advocate: Update on October and November's Activities

### Making the Most of 2014

#### November's Midterm Election Results

After a contentious election season, the results are in. The biggest change to the 114th Congress will be the switch in control of the Senate from a Democratic majority to a Republican majority. As most political operatives and observers expected, the Republican Party won a majority of seats in the 2014 election and will now control the Senate for at least the next 2 years. This outcome is a game-changing switch, as both Houses of Congress will now be controlled by Republicans. At this time, the Republicans hold 53 seats in the Senate and the Democrats hold 46 seats, with a run-off election occurring in Louisiana on December 6, 2014 to determine the last remaining seat (at this point it appears Republican candidate Bill Cassidy will win the election). While this will no doubt cause a massive shift in the types of legislation and issues that the Senate will pursue, the Republican Party will not have carte blanche authority, and will need 6 or 7 Democrats to join them to get to the 60 votes needed to block filibusters and move legislation forward. This will in turn cause major legislative endeavors in the Senate to have to be crafted with bipartisan compromise and input from both sides of the aisle.

Compare that with the House of Representatives, where the November election gave the Republican party their biggest majority in decades, and the 114th Congress may be setting itself up for a collision course on major legislative packages. Conservatives in the House of Representatives are amped up to continue their crusade against the Affordable Care Act, against major regulations that the Administration has and will continue to pursue over the next 2 years, and in favor of major overhauls of the tax code and the federal budget. While these efforts will likely fly out of the House of Representatives with massive vote margins, they will be sending these initiatives to the Republican Senate where they will need to find 6-7 Democrats to support any package. This will likely be an ongoing struggle between the House and Senate, and this is before you even get President Obama involved with his veto pen and executive authority.

#### Moving Legislation During Congress's Lame Duck Session

There are only 2 weeks remaining for the current 113th Congress to wrap up its business, and we fully expect a hectic sprint before this Congress comes to a close and the 114th Congress begins its



Congressman Weber Speaks at NIA's  
Committee Days 2014 Luncheon

work in January of 2015. While many people are beginning to focus on the prospects for congressional action in 2015, there are still many issues that Congress must deal with before the holidays.



**Attendees Listen to Congressman Weber at Committee Days Luncheon**

The biggest issue Congress is currently facing is how to fund the federal government for the remainder of the 2015 Fiscal Year. As you may remember, the government is currently being funded through a short-term extension, which expires at midnight on December 11, 2014. Congress must act before December 11 to ensure that the government does not shutdown. While it appears that both sides are coming together to work out a funding agreement, what that process ultimately looks like is still on the negotiating table. One of the options would be to pass an omnibus package that would include most, if not all, of the 12 appropriations bills in 1 bill.

This strategy would greatly impact the National

Insulation Association (NIA), as we have language included in the House version of the Energy and Water Appropriations bill, which contains very friendly mechanical insulation language, similar to the language in H.R. 4801, the Thermal Insulation Efficiency Improvement Act, that would have the Department of Energy study the use, or lack thereof, of mechanical insulation in federal facilities. NIA and our government relations team at The Keelen Group will continue to push for this language to be included in any final package and remain hopeful of its success should an omnibus package ultimately move through Congress.

NIA's focus also remains on moving the Thermal Insulation Efficiency Improvement Act, which passed the full House of Representatives by unanimous voice vote on June 23, 2014, forward through the Senate. We have maintained constant communications with the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources staff and the offices of Senator Rob Portman (R-OH) and Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH). Both Senators are seen as champions of energy efficiency in Washington, D.C., as they have worked tirelessly on comprehensive federal energy efficiency legislation in the Senate for the past 2 years. Their support is key for moving our bill through the Senate. The next 2 weeks will be hectic and things will be moving very quickly. I look forward to updating you on our major initiatives in the coming weeks.

#### **Congressman Weber Speaks at NIA's Committee Days 2014**

In other news, on November 11-12, NIA held its annual Committee Days meeting in Fort Worth, Texas. We were very excited to welcome Congressman Randy Weber (R-TX) as our Luncheon speaker. Congressman Weber, a former small business owner, is a member of the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, where he serves as the Vice Chairman of the Energy Subcommittee. Congressman Weber's engaging speech focused on the importance of small businesses in the

American economy, and he advocated for members of Congress to put aside partisanship and work together to govern effectively. At the end of his presentation, NIA President David Dzina presented Congressman Weber with a Recognition of Service Award for his hard work as a public servant. NIA is extremely grateful to Congressman Weber for taking the time to come and speak at our event, and for answering questions from attendees. I believe it is hugely beneficial for our members to hear directly from legislators, and this type of event can help to facilitate collaboration on future legislative initiatives.

Overall, 2014 has been a productive year for NIA, with major legislative victories in the form of mechanical insulation language being included in the Farm Bill, which was enacted in February, and the passage of the Thermal Insulation Efficiency Improvement Bill by the House of Representatives. We are excited about the initiatives we have planned for 2015, and hope to enjoy the continued support of our membership, which is so crucial to the insulation industry's and NIA's continued growth.



**NIA President David Dzina Presents Congressman Weber with Recognition of Service Award**

Best Regards,

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NIA is a not-for-profit trade association representing both merit (open shop) and union contractors, distributors, laminators, fabricators, and manufacturers that provide thermal insulation, insulation accessories, and components to the commercial, mechanical, and industrial markets throughout the nation. Since 1953, the northern Virginia-based association has been the voice of the insulation industry and is dedicated to keeping the commercial and industrial insulation industry up to date on the latest industry trends and technologies. For more information, visit [www.insulation.org](http://www.insulation.org).