Election 2016: Republicans Make Gains Nationally and in Connecticut

The November 8, 2016 election resulted in some significant changes in the political landscape, both nationally and here in Connecticut, including gains by Republicans in the state legislature leading into the 2017 Legislative Session.

Governor Dannel Malloy held a press conference on November 9 to address the election results, calling for cooperation between the parties in the upcoming session.

“I plan to invite legislative leaders from both parties to begin informal discussions in the weeks ahead about how we move forward together. We should sit together around a table and have a frank discussion of our goals but, more importantly, of how we achieve those goals, how we change the ways we work together, share ideas, and make progress,” said Gov. Malloy.

“Connecticut can show the country that we can continue to make progress, even when we feel divided. We can demonstrate that it is possible to fight hard throughout a tough election, and then get back to work on behalf of our constituents.”

The following are some of the highlights from the November 8, 2016 election:

On the national level, Republicans Donald Trump and Mike Pence defeated Democrats Hillary Clinton and Tim Kaine by garnering the required 270 electoral votes in spite of narrowly trailing in the nationwide popular vote. Connecticut U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal defeated Republican Dan Carter, while Connecticut’s Democratic incumbents in the House of Representatives beat their Republican challengers to retain their respective seats in Congress.

Those returning to Washington include: Congressmen John Larson (D-1), Joe Courtney (D-2), and Jim Himes (D-4); and Congresswomen Rosa DeLauro (D-3) and Elizabeth Esty (D-5). All returning members of Congress will be sworn into office in January for another two-year term. Nationwide, the Republican Party has retained control of the U.S. House of Representatives. In the coming weeks, Congress is expected to reconvene in a lame-duck session to enact legislation to continue to fund the federal government.

American Hospital Association President and CEO Rick Pollack issued the following statement: “The AHA looks forward to working with the new administration and Congress... Amid the changing political landscape, our priorities remain the same -- advancing the transformation of health care, ensuring access to coverage, preserving adequate resources for health care, protecting patient access to care, enhancing the quality of care and patient safety, and making health care more affordable... Better health and healthier communities are goals everyone can support. We look forward to working with the new Administration and Congress on the nation’s healthcare challenges and will continue to do everything we can to meet our commitment to the people and communities we serve.”

In the Connecticut State Senate, Republicans picked up three seats in Tuesday’s election, creating an 18-18 tie in the Senate. The last time the Senate was tied was in 1893. Republicans gained one of the two open Senate seats, retained the other open seat, and picked up two other seats by beating Democratic incumbents.

In cases of a tie vote during the Legislative Session, Democratic Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman will cast the deciding, tie-breaking vote. Committee representation by party caucus and Senate leadership power will be determined at the start of the 2017 Legislative Session after the Joint and Senate Rules are drafted and adopted.

Senate incumbents who lost their bids for reelection are: Dante Bartolomeo (D-Meriden), who was defeated by challenger Len Suzio (R-Meriden) in the 13th Senate District; and Joe Crisco (D-Woodbridge), who was defeated by challenger George Logan (R-Ansonia) in the 17th Senate District.

In the open 18th Senate District, Heather Somers (R-Groton) defeated Tim Bowles (D-Griswold). Senator-elect Somers will replace Sen. Andy Maynard (D-Stonington), who was first elected in 2006. In the 30th Senate District, current state Rep. Craig Miner (R-Litchfield) beat David Lawson (D-New Milford). The 30th Senate District seat is being vacated by Sen. Clarke Chapin, who was first elected in 2012.

There were also changes in the Connecticut House of Representatives, with House Republicans picking up a net of eight seats in the election. Democrats will retain a majority in the House, but with a smaller margin of 79-72. This margin could change slightly once election results are finalized. The Secretary of the State ordered recounts in 99th House District (14 vote margin), the 103rd District (54 vote margin), and the 53rd District (47 vote margin). The recount deadline for both races is November 16, 2016.

House incumbents who lost their bids for reelection include: Incumbent Elizabeth “Betty” Boukus (D-Plainville), who was defeated by challenger Dr. William Petit, Jr. (R-Plainville) in the 22nd House District; Incumbent Phil Miller (D-Ivoryton), who was defeated by challenger Bob Siegrist (R-Higganum) in the 36th House District; Incumbent John Scott (R-Groton), who was defeated by challenger Christine Conley (D-Groton) in the 40th House District; Incumbent Aundre Bumgardner (R-Groton) who was defeated by challenger Joe de la Cruz (D-Groton) in the 41st House District; Incumbent Christine Randall (D-Dayville), who was defeated by challenger Ann Dauphinais (R-Danielson) in the

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44th House District; Incumbent David Alexander (D-Enfield), who was defeated by challenger Greg Stokes (R-Enfield) in the 58th House District; Incumbent David Zoni (D-Southington), who was defeated by challenger John Fusco (R-Southington) in the 81st House District; and Incumbent Theresa Conroy (D-Seymour), who was defeated by challenger Nicole Klarides-Ditria (R-Seymour) in the 105th House District.

The winners of the open House seats include: William Duff (R-Bethel), 2nd House District; Tom Delnicki (R-South Windsor), 14th House District; Derek Slapp (D-West Hartford), 19th House District; Holly Cheeseman (R-Niantic), 37th House District; Kevin Skulczyck (R-Griswold), 45th House District; Pat Boyd (D-Pomfret), 50th House District; Robin Green (R-Marlborough), 55th House District; Michael Winkler (D-Vernon), 56th House District; Carol Hall (R-Enfield), 59th House District; Scott Stoms (R-Windsor Locks), 60th House District; Brian Ohler (R-Canaan), 64th House District; David Wilson (R-Litchfield), 66th House District; William Buckbee (R-New Milford), 67th House District; Stephanie Cummings (R-Waterbury), 74th House District; Christopher Zogas (D-Bristol), 79th House District; Joshua Elliott (D-Hamden), 88th House District; Craig Fishbein (R-Wallingford), 90th House District; Alphonse Paolillo (D-East Haven), 97th House District; Liz Linehan (D-Cheshire), 103rd House District; Adam Dunsby (R-Easton) 135th House District; and Michael Ferguson (R-Danbury), 138th House District.

In other races with open seats, Chris Soto (D-New London) defeated candidates Andrew Lockwood (PC-New London) and Ronna Stuller (GP-New London) in the 39th House District. Also, Michael DiMassa (D-West Haven) defeated Richard DePalma (R-West Haven) in the 116th House District. Representative-elect DeMassa previously beat incumbent Louis Esposito in the Democratic primary.

State lawmakers will meet in the in the coming days to caucus and vote on party leadership positions.

America's Hospitals Continue to Improve Patient Care

An annual report released on November 7 by The Joint Commission found that hospitals across the country continue to improve patient safety and quality related to treatment of common conditions, despite the many challenges hospitals face in a rapidly changing healthcare environment.

The Joint Commission’s 2016 Annual Report: “America’s Hospitals: Improving Quality and Safety,” summarizes data on 33 accountability measures, such as children’s asthma, that were reported by more than 3,300 hospitals accredited by the organization last year. Other measures captured in the report include inpatient psychiatric services, venous thromboembolism care, stroke care, perinatal care, immunization, tobacco use treatment, and substance use care. According to a press release from The Joint Commission, those measures were chosen for reporting because they provide concrete data about the types of treatment or practices for common conditions for which people enter the hospital and seek care. Connecticut hospitals have been working through CHA to address several of these issues, including asthma, perinatal care, venous thromboembolism, and substance use care.

Of the 33 measures described in The Joint Commission report, 29 are accountability measures, focused on evidence-based care processes that are closely linked to positive patient outcomes. The measures are relevant for accreditation, public reporting, and pay-for-performance programs that hold providers accountable to external oversight entities and the public for their performances.

Connecticut’s Two Organ Procurement Organizations Join Forces

On January 1, 2017, Connecticut’s two federally designated Organ Procurement Organizations (OPOs) – LifeChoice Donor Services and New England Organ Bank – will join forces under a newly created parent organization, New England Donor Services. The governing boards of the two organizations pursued the affiliation with the goals of increasing the availability of organs and tissues for transplant and realizing system efficiencies.

The affiliation of the two OPOs will establish a centralized corporate structure with a single clinical and administrative workforce while maintaining the existence of separate OPO service areas for the purpose of organ procurement and allocation. Service to Connecticut hospitals will continue without interruption, with the existing agreements remaining in place between each hospital and its designated OPO. The only change hospitals are likely to experience is the use of the name New England Donor Services in some instances.

Alexandra K. Glazier, who will serve as President and CEO of New England Donor Services, said: “The process of referring and coordinating organ and tissue donation across over 200 hospitals under extreme time urgency is a vitally important but challenging task. By leveraging the strengths of New England’s two Organ Procurement Organizations under one system, we expect that this affiliation will result in more life-saving and life-enhancing donation and transplants for patients in New England.”

New England Donor Services will coordinate the recovery of organs and tissues in Connecticut hospitals and in nearly 200 hospitals across New England.

CHA to Host Ninth Annual State of the State: Connecticut Perinatal Quality Collaborative

The Connecticut Hospital Association will host the Ninth Annual State of the State: Connecticut Perinatal Quality Collaborative, on November 21, 2016.

Participants will hear from experts on strategies being used to combat the national opioid abuse epidemic affecting babies and their families. The program will include discussion about Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS), the term used for babies affected by opioid addiction. NAS is considered a preventable event of patient harm. When it is recognized early in mothers, treatment can start and neonatal withdrawal can be avoided.

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The conference will feature a number of speakers, including Kristina Stevens, LCSW, DCF, Administrator, Clinical and Community, Consultation and Support Division, the Department of Children and Families, who will share the impact of NAS in Connecticut and discuss program activities addressing this problem. Mary Coughlin, MS, NNP, RNC-E, President and Chief Transformation Officer, Caring Essentials Collaborative, LLC, will discuss the link between NAS and trauma-informed care that can help to support families as they recover and heal. Mara Coyle, MD, Professor of Pediatrics, The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University, will share patient- and family-centered approaches to help clinicians deliver compassionate care to moms and their infants as they strive to overcome substance abuse.

The collaborative is sponsored by CHA, the Connecticut Children's Medical Center, the March of Dimes, and Yale New Haven Children's Hospital.

To register, click here.

Education Updates

Creating Sustainability for High Reliability Organizations
Tuesday, November 15, 2016
9:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.
Event Registration

This session is designed for drivers of change and covers techniques to ensure the changes resulting from high reliability approaches are ongoing.

Medicine, Nursing, and Quality continuing education credits are offered for this session.

HRO Top Ten Problem Lists and Action Plans
Tuesday, November 15, 2016
1:00 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.
Event Registration

When issues are identified in Safety Huddle, how does one solve them and maintain the other projects? Problem Solving with the Top 10 is a tool for prioritizing and implementing projects without losing sight of the core value of safety.

Medicine, Nursing, and Quality continuing education credits are offered for this session.

HRO Safety Coach Training
Wednesday, November 16, 2016
9:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.
Event Registration

Safety Coaches are peer mentors, designed to recognize and acknowledge good high reliability behavior and to remind people about opportunities to improve behavior that does not stay true to high reliability concepts.

Medicine, Nursing, and Quality continuing education credits are offered for this session.

Worker Safety and Worker Engagement: A High Reliability Approach
Wednesday, November 16, 2016
1:00 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.
Event Registration

This session supports CHA's efforts to take care of the staff who take care of patients. Worker Safety and Worker Engagement: A High Reliability Approach discusses behaviors, techniques, and measurement for worker safety, as used by other high reliability hospitals that are further along their journey.

Medicine, Nursing, and Quality continuing education credits are offered for this session.

HRO Leadership Method Training
Thursday, November 17, 2016
9:00 a.m. - 4:15 p.m.
Event Registration

Leadership Method Training is for organizations that are new to high reliability or for new management employees in organizations that are already on the high reliability journey. Both hospital and ambulatory organization leadership practices will be addressed. The leadership session is designed to teach hospital or ambulatory leaders the concepts of high reliability science and behaviors. The sessions are structured for leaders at the manager level and above.

Medicine, Nursing, Quality, and Radiology continuing education credits are being offered for this session.
HRO Cause Analysis - Two-Day Training
Session I: Monday, December 5, 2016
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Session II: Tuesday, December 6, 2016
1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Event Registration

Cause analysis teaches staff how to evaluate events, patterns of events, and causes of events, and then helps staff ascertain how to implement solutions. The sessions are for quality, safety, risk management, and other staff who respond to events.

Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, and Quality continuing education credits are offered for these sessions.

Overview of USP Chapter <800> Hazardous Drugs—Handling in Healthcare Settings (for Quality Professionals and Infection Preventionists)
Tuesday, December 6, 2016
9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
View Brochure | Event Registration

This half-day program will provide a history and overview of the <800> standards. This session is intended for the accreditation, regulatory, and quality/infection prevention experts who oversee hospital survey preparedness, as well as anyone else who wants an introduction to the standards.

This training will be provided by Jennifer Osowiecki of Cox & Osowiecki, LLC, a Hartford law firm representing all levels of healthcare institutions and providers in regulatory, litigation, licensing, and business matters.

IG Boot Camp: From Principles to Practice
Thursday, December 8, 2016
8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
View Brochure | Event Registration

Now more than ever, education is important not only to move Information Governance (IG) forward, but also to lead the organizational effort. AHIMA’s IG Boot Camp comprises six webinars and a one-day, hands-on, intense, exercise-based deep dive into the application of IG tools and resources to help staff create their organization's IG plan. Attendees will leave the boot camp with an understanding of the IG discipline, IG principles, competencies, tools, and an IG plan. It is recommended that attendees complete the six webinars prior to the in-person boot camp.

Feedback