

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

HR Public Policy: the 113th Congress and the Second Term Obama Administration

Information presented by: Lisa Horn (Director, SHRM Congressional Affairs) at the HR FLORIDA “Day on the Hill” on 2 April 2014

HR Public Policy Agenda

- *2014-15 Federal Budget Process (deficit looms)*
 - *\$1.014 Trillion Budget Approved*
 - *\$1.1 Trillion Budget released by Obama Administration on 4 March 2013*
 - *The difference will likely be made up through TAX REFORM legislation*
 - *This shortfall is exacerbated by the fact that the Federal Debt is projected to increase by 50% by the next decade.*

- **TAX REFORM**
 - *Currently there is a tax proposal released by the House Ways and Means Committee that makes significant changes in employer benefits to include:*
 - *Repeal Child Care Credit*
 - *Repeal Work Opportunity Tax*
 - *Repeal Education Assistance*
 - *Repeal adoption, housing and moving expenses*
 - *Repeal some retiree plans*
 - *May modify exclusions from taxable income for employer provided health care and retirement plans*
 - *Most likely to see this legislation after the elections*
 - *Currently H.R. 243 “Bowles and Simpson Plan for Lowering America’s Debt” contains language which would make changes to the Internal Revenue code and would repeal various tax credits, deductions and exclusions. STATUS: As of 7APR14, It remains in the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform, House Administration, Rules, and the Budget.*

- **IMMIGRATION REFORM**
 - *Remains an Obama Administration priority*
 - *E-Verify support under H.R. 1772 “Legal Workforce Act” where E-verify is mandatory and pre-empts state laws. However, more changes are needed in the language to ensure ID theft in the verification process is addressed.*

- *“SKILLS Visa Act” Supplying Knowledge-based Immigrants and Lifting Levels of STEM Visas Act or SKILLS Visa Act - , H.R. 2131 - Amends the Immigration and Nationality Act to set worldwide employment-based immigration levels at: (1) 140,000 through FY2013, and (2) 235,000 beginning in FY 2014 reduced by the number of returned visas resulting from the elimination of the diversity immigrant program.*
 - *This act provides easier mobility of global talent and would eliminate the backlog of high wait time for Green Card employment.*
- **LABOR AND MANAGEMENT RELATIONS**
 - *“Working Families Flexibility Act of 2013” - H.R. 1406/S.1662 - Amends the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to authorize private employers to provide compensatory time off to private employees at a rate of 1 1/2 hours per hour of employment for which overtime compensation is required. Authorizes an employer to provide compensatory time only if it is in accordance with an applicable collective bargaining agreement or, in the absence of such an agreement, an agreement between the employer and employee.*
 - *Ambush Election Rule (2011) – NLRB rule that changed policies on Union Elections. It shortens the time between filing petitions and the Union elections (10 days vice 30 days)*
- *National SHRM POSITION: Not anti-union; however, SHRM wants to see a BALANCE of Labor and Management and wants to engage State SHRM Councils to join SHRM with a voice in the coming year.*
- **WHAT’S THE IMPACT TO FLORIDA?**
 - *UNIONS: During the 2014 Employment Law Conference in D.C., Department of Labor Secretary Michael Perez spoke of continued support under this administration for organized labor.*
 - *Florida is growing at a rate whereby it will soon reach a population that will rank it as THIRD largest in the United States.*
 - *Florida State Chamber of Commerce (Greg Blasé) projects the state will have the 19th largest economy (top 20) in the world.*
 - *Panama Canal Expansion can have an great impact to the economy*
 - *As a consequence, Union interest will focus on where to develop organized labor support.*

Feedback or comments:

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