



Construction Industry Round Table

Legislative News

A force for positive change in the design / construction industry

1/09/2015 – New Political Reality Taking Shape in Congress With Keystone and TRIA

With the mid-term election results now fully in-place for the 114th Congress, bills long bottled-up by the former Democratic Senate majority are coming to the floor for votes. Already, the full Congress as voted on and sent to the President a six-year extension of the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act (TRIA) that will help facilitate large construction projects (the bill gradually will raise the amount of terrorism-related insurance losses triggering federal backup to \$200 million by 2020). [The new Republican lead Senate voted (93-4) to reauthorize the program, on a bill the House had already sent forward by a (416-5) vote].

The Senate is now expected to take up the Keystone XL Pipeline authorization legislation that will attempt to get around the delaying tactics of the President and his environmentalist allies. The GOP-controlled House of Representatives voted 266-153 on Friday (01/09/15) to approve the Keystone XL pipeline despite a presidential veto threat. The bill has already garnered strong Senate bi-partisan support but has yet to be sent to the President for his signature. Most agree that the pipeline will create (or sustain) tens of thousands of good paying jobs in the design/construction community, while proceeding ahead on the most environmentally-studied pipeline project in history [the Nebraska Supreme Court cleared a legal hurdle just hours before the House vote].

On a Separate Note: CIRT firms doing public project work in **Maryland** (i.e., entering into or maintaining a contract of \$200,000 or more with state or local government entities), as of January 1, 2015, must register within one business day of any contract awarded (which is also “triggered” by contract extensions or renewals). The new system, administered by the State Board of Elections, requires electronic reporting of contributions made by the contractor, as well as by its PAC and subsidiaries, and its officers, directors, and partners.