



Outdoor Advertising Association of America

Election Results: Transit Wins Big, Trump Pushes Road Spending, New Line-up in Congress

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The edgy election produced big outcomes for the \$7 billion out of home (OOH) industry.

Transit Won Big

Commuters worried about congestion voted to tax themselves for local transportation projects. Not all transit ballot measures passed, such as a regional proposal in Detroit, but most were approved:

- “Measure M” increases sales taxes for a \$120 billion project in Los Angeles County for new rail lines, a new station at the airport, a rail tunnel, a downtown street car, and highway improvements.
- Seattle’s \$54 billion transit package provides for 62 miles of new rail, new stations, and transit upgrades. Voters approved higher taxes on sales, property, and vehicles.
- Atlanta voters approved two sales-tax measures for road improvements and transit service extensions.

Trump’s Plan

President-Elect Donald Trump wants to pump \$1 trillion into infrastructure improvements over 10 years.

“We are going to fix our inner cities and rebuild our highways, bridges, tunnels, airports, schools, hospitals,” Trump said November 9 after Hillary Clinton called to congratulate him. “We are going to rebuild our infrastructure, which will become, by the way, second to none, and we will put millions of our people to work as we rebuild it.”

During the campaign, Trump and Clinton called for increased spending on infrastructure. Trump’s plan is bigger, relying on tax incentives to spur investment.

Increased road and bridge construction underscores the importance of strong laws and regulations to protect billboards and property rights:

- Payment of just compensation when government removes billboards for public purposes
- Relocation of billboards to suitable sites in lieu of condemnation

If Trump focuses on transportation during the first 100 days on his administration, watch for a speedy appointment of a new secretary of transportation to replace current Secretary Anthony Foxx. Typically, a new President first nominates Cabinet members for Defense, State, and Treasury; the Department of Transportation is handled in the second or third round.

Congress

The election brought significant changes in Congress affecting the OOH industry.

Longtime ally Sen. Harry Reid (D-NV), who refers to himself as “The King of Billboards,” will retire. Replacing Reid as Democratic Leader is Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-NY), who views advertising as a hometown industry.

Another staunch ally in Congress, Sen. Jim Inhofe (R-OK) has been chairman of the Senate’s Environment & Public Works Committee. Inhofe must give up the gavel of this committee because of term limits on chairmen.

Senate Republicans soon will select a new committee chairman. Sen. John Barrasso (R-WY) is next in seniority on this committee.

In the US House, the OOH industry focuses on the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee. It’s chairman, Bill Shuster (R-PA) won primary and general elections this year. Shuster’s term as chairman extends two more years.

Reps. Sam Graves (R-MO) and Jeff Denham (R-CA) have signaled interest in succeeding Shuster as chairman.

After the election, OAAA members posted nonpartisan congratulatory public service messages on billboards featuring winning congressional candidates, such as Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH).

