



# RAN

Retail Association of Nevada

JANUARY 2015

LOOKING OUT FOR BUSINESS

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NEVADA NEWS

## 2015: RAN'S GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS TEAM *By Mary Lau*

### FOR MANY IN NEVADA'S RETAIL INDUSTRY THE BEGINNING OF

the year is a time for some R&R. While many industries are busy making plans to enhance products, services, and provide new experiences, the Retail Industry is coming down from its holiday high. Santa is back at the North Pole, the Reindeer are tucked in, and the elves are doing whatever it is elves do in the off season. Just a few weeks ago, store shelves were empty, lines were impossibly long and jingle bells could be heard yet again from a speaker unseen. Now, the shelves stand full of promise, waiting to be loaded down with new products from a new year.

New Year's Day marks a turning point for Nevadans interested in State Government. While many are watching football and dutifully paying their gaming taxes, some are starting to realize February 2nd is a lot closer than it seemed before Christmas, just a few short weeks ago. Newly Re-elected Governor Brian Sandoval will soon give his State of the

State speech, jump starting the beginning of a 150-day marathon of legislative activity.

934 Bill Draft Requests have been pre-filed with the Legislative Council Bureau (as of the printing of this issue) and are already being written into the language of the Nevada Revised Statutes. These bill drafts seek to make changes that are important to certain industries, certain lawmakers, and certain constituents. They encompass changes to prescription drugs, rules for employing key workers, new traffic rules, and many more—all designed to have an impact on our daily lives of running businesses or raising a family.

RAN exists to monitor and influence these changes of law. We work to make it easier to operate responsible businesses, and put a stop to changes of law that place hurdles to success. We're often successful because of the hardworking Government Affairs Team RAN has cultivated for decades.

Inside this issue of Nevada News you will find a description of each team member and his or her

responsibilities. The Retail Industry accounts for 135,112 direct jobs, the second largest industry by employment.

These employees work for thousands of different and individualized retailers leaving RAN with the responsibility of representing a very large segment of Nevada's economy.

We invite you to take a look at just who is RAN's government affairs team and how—interconnected—we work to protect your business. ■

*See story on page 2*

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# RAN'S GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS TEAM AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES



**MARY LAU**  
*President/CEO*  
*Retail Association of Nevada*

Mary Lau is entering her twenty-eighth year as President/CEO of the Retail Association of Nevada (RAN). Her knowledge of Nevada's economic, structural, and political atmosphere makes her one of the most sought-after commentators on policy issues facing the Silver State.

As a frequent guest of many of Nevada's talk shows, newspaper columns, and open forums, Mary provides the Retail Association and its members the exposure and expertise that helps the retail industry marshal its agenda through the Nevada Legislature.

Mary directs a Government Affairs staff (see below) that ensures RAN's members are fully represented in every category of issues that affect Nevada's retailers. Always accountable for the attainment of the retail industry's legislative portfolio, Mary takes her role as President of the Association to heart. Mary is responsible for managing the challenging issues that transcend the retail industry, and concentrates on how the retail industry interacts with Nevada's other large industries, with the goal that the state's business community works together toward a more transparent, prosperous, and successful Nevada.

Having been at the helm of RAN through many volatile legislative sessions, Mary's experience makes her an invaluable resource to her staff, legislators, policy makers, and the state. ■



**BRYAN WACHTER**  
*Taxes;*  
*Workers' Compensation;*  
*Transportation;*  
*Coordination of the Team*

Senior Vice President for Government and Public Affairs is a newly created position that is responsible for RAN's

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**LIZ MACMENAMIN**  
*Health Care;*  
*Pharmacy;*  
*Regulatory Practices*

Liz MacMenamin, Vice President of Government Affairs, will be the lead lobbyist on the RAN team for all health care and pharmacy issues in

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**LEA TAUCHEN**  
*Grocery/General Merchandise; State Agencies; Local Government/ Municipalities*

Lea Tauchen serves as the vice president of administration and government affairs for the Retail Association of Nevada

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**AMANDA SCHWEISTHAL**  
*Finance;*  
*Support Coordination/ Information*

Amanda Schweisthal, a UNLV graduate, joined RAN immediately following the 2013 Legislative Session where she served as an intern in the

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# THE TEAM *Continued from page 2*

## BRYAN WACHTER

overall Government Affairs Strategy—inside and outside—of the legislative session. Bryan Wachter joined RAN in 2007 and was recently named RAN’s Sr. Vice President. Bryan serves as RAN’s chief spokesman representing the Association in all forms of media and in many different situations; whether at a charity event presenting members of RAN to the larger community or defending the Retail Industry on TV, Bryan enjoys working for an extremely fluid and important industry in Nevada.

During the legislative session, Bryan is directly responsible for coordinating the positions and execution of RAN’s tax policies. Additionally, he follows other issues such as workers’ compensation and transportation. Many times the retail industry’s tax concerns can seem to outweigh the policy consideration of RAN’s many other priorities, however, Bryan’s job is to narrate the multifaceted context among all of the retail industry’s priority issues. Whether the priority is taxes, healthcare, general merchandise, elections, transportation, or employment issues, Bryan coordinates RAN’s

*Continued on page 4*

## LIZ MACMENAMIN

the upcoming 2015 legislative session.

She will also be the team member monitoring legislation that will have an impact on the regulatory process in Nevada.

After reviewing the bill draft request list, it appears that health care will be a widely discussed issue of the 78th Legislative Session. The discussions will focus on the mental health crisis in our state, the prescription drug abuse issue, education of health care providers, and the need for more health care providers due to the expansion of Medicaid recipients.

Several legislators have requested bill drafts regarding the licensing of health care professionals and the need for reciprocity in the licensing process to enable providers to practice in Nevada, while assuring availability and safety to the public.

One such bill draft will open up the discussion of reciprocity for certain active members of the military.

The regulatory process and the administration of the regulations that impact the members of RAN is an area that RAN has followed closely in the past and will continue to do so this session.

The association will also track any legislation that may impact health insurers in Nevada.

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## LEA TAUCHEN

(RAN). She has been with RAN since January 2005. Lea leads the association’s government affairs activities for the grocery and general merchandise sectors of the membership at the Nevada Legislature, state agencies, and the local government municipalities.

Lea follows legislative issues that may encompass a wide variety of issues such as food, alcohol/tobacco, wage, labor, commerce, consumer protection, data security, energy efficiency, sustainability, or theft/crime. Grocery and general merchandise issues comprise such a broad range of topics that legislators may not realize how their particular requests could impact the retail industry. RAN serves as the resource to provide industry information and perspective.

Many proposals have already been submitted. Over six hundred bill draft requests (BDRs) have been given numbers and a brief one-sentence description, but the bill language has not yet been drafted or released. Here are some BDRs to watch that may impact grocers and general merchandisers:

### FOOD/ALCOHOL/TOBACCO

**BDR 144** — Makes various changes to the regulation of e-cigarettes.

**BDR 175** — Revises provisions governing the sale of electronic cigarettes and

*Continued on page 4*

## AMANDA SCHWEISTHAL

Assembly Minority Leader’s office.

She will provide RAN with the resources and logistical support to navigate a complex legislative process.

Amanda serves as the Manager of Public Affairs supporting RAN’s public information mission.

In addition to speaking on RAN’s behalf, Amanda is responsible for following legislative issues pertaining to elections and campaign finance. RAN encourages all of its members to be politically active; Amanda’s role is to ensure that small businesses have the same chance to participate in the democratic process.

Hailing from Henderson, Nevada, Amanda will relocate to Carson City for the 2015 Legislative Session where she will coordinate the activities of RAN’s government affairs team by tracking bill draft requests (BDRs), bills, resolutions, and amendments. Her role ensures that RAN’s members are constantly updated on a weekly basis as to the activities of the Nevada Legislature. RAN’s weekly report, *The Express Lane*, provides a look at the actions taken on legislation the previous week and a preview of the legislation likely to be taken up the following week.

Amanda assists RAN’s Senior Vice President, Bryan Wachter, in monitoring and

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# THE TEAM *Continued from page 3*

## **BRYAN WACHTER**

considerable government affairs team to provide an overall coherent message.

The Retail Association believes that taxes are necessary to provide Nevada's citizens the opportunity to test their strengths and succeed in the global marketplace. Infrastructure, education, logistics, and the many other programs to which Nevada allocates resources, serve to assist Nevadans. How Nevada levies those taxes should be based on a few concrete principles; taxes should be as broad as possible, they should be easy to calculate, easy to remain in compliance, and should be levied at the lowest rate possible. RAN is committed to working with lawmakers and the Governor to design a tax structure that provides for Nevada's needs while remaining consistent to those few tax policies. ■

## **LIZ MACMENAMIN**

With the advice and guidance of the members, RAN will determine the position of the association and will work to educate the newly elected legislative body on these issues. ■

## **LEA TAUCHEN**

licensure of machinery used to manufacture cigarettes.

**BDR 179** — Revises laws

related to cottage-food industries.

**BDR 442** — Revises provisions governing alcoholic beverages.

## **CONSUMER PROTECTION**

**BDR 471** — Requires smartphones sold in Nevada to be equipped with antitheft technological solutions to protect consumers from unlawful use of their personal data and financial information.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

**BDR 249** — Creates provisions related to exempt employees who are lactating.

**BDR 295** — Makes various changes to encourage employment of veterans and their spouses in Nevada.

**BDR 425** — Amends the State Constitution to provide a minimum wage of \$15 per hour. (This proposal is a Senate Joint Resolution.)

**BDR 433** — Provides protection for Nevada businesses and individuals against bad faith assertions of patent infringement.

**BDR 543** — Amends the constitutional provision governing the minimum wage. (This proposal is a Senate Joint Resolution.)

## **ENERGY**

There are a large number of BDRs that address provisions related to energy, energy efficiency, and renewable energy. ■

## **AMANDA SCHWEISTHAL**

engaging with the public through social media, the RAN newsletter and the Association's website. By following RAN's Twitter account—@NVRetail, members will have access to up-to-the-minute announcements that may have a major impact on their businesses. ■

# CREATE A WINNING BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP

*By Barbara Wold*

## **T**ODAY'S SMART BUSINESS OWNERS

understand that the sharing of ideas and resources among like-minded businesses can lead to newfound success. Develop and plan for long-term partnerships that will help grow your business for years to come.

The opportunities for these kinds of partnerships are endless. No matter what kind of business you're in, you share customers with other businesses. Find yourself a business buddy or two and you'll pass those customers around and keep them in your local shopping district and

community.

A business partnership can be a positive experience, so consider the following:

### ● **Have The Same**

**Vision:** For a partnership to be successful, all parties involved must agree on the same strategic direction of the companies. Set a clear agreed course for the businesses that meets the needs of all partners.

### ● **Define Business**

**Roles:** A winning business partnership capitalizes on the strengths and skills of each partner. Divide business roles according to each individuals strengths. E.g. one partner may be strong in marketing, operations and finance, the

other sales, human resources and leadership.

### ● **Hold A Monthly Partner Meeting:**

A strong business partnership is built on an open communicating relationship. Meet on a monthly basis to share grievances, review roles and go over new ideas.

Building a small business can be more rewarding and profitable in a partnership environment. Consider a business partnership when you have someone to compliment your skill set and add value to your company. Partnerships can work when the right foundation is laid in the beginning. ■



# OUTLOOK FOR MOST RETAIL ISSUES IMPROVE AS REPUBLICANS TAKE SENATE

By J. Craig Shearman/NRF

## REPUBLICANS WON CONTROL OF THE SENATE

and strengthened their majority in the House in hotly contested midterm elections, that were driven largely by lingering voter concern over the slowly recovering economy. The election results change the political atmosphere surrounding a wide range of policy issues facing the retail industry and are likely to make most — but not all — retail policy priorities easier to achieve.

“Republicans have finally claimed the control of the Senate that has eluded them for the past two election cycles and are looking forward to a series of important legislative and regulatory battles with President Obama during the last two years of his term,” NRF President and CEO Matthew Shay said in a memo to the NRF Board of Directors.

Among the Senate winners was former NRF Board member David Perdue, a Georgia Republican who took the seat held by retiring Senator Saxby Chambliss, also a Republican. Perdue is the former CEO of Dollar General.

The political action committee contributed to the campaigns of 103 House and Senate candidates, and 90 percent won.

Control of the Senate

could determine the fate of a number of key issues:

### HEALTH CARE

Many once thought Republican control of the Senate would herald the demise of President Obama’s Affordable Care Act. But without the 60 votes needed to overcome a presidential veto, repeal is not likely. Specific ACA fixes could end up on the agenda, such as defining full-time as 40 hours a week rather than 30 under the “employer mandate” requirement to provide health coverage to full-time workers. Smaller bipartisan fixes such as lessening reporting burdens could also be seen. Medical malpractice reform may also emerge as a priority in Congress after years of strident opposition from the trial bar.

### SALES TAX FAIRNESS

Republican control of the Senate changes the prospects for passing legislation that would require online sellers to collect sales tax the same as local stores. While sales tax fairness legislation enjoys bipartisan support in the Senate (which passed the Marketplace Fairness Act in 2013), the support of Senator Richard Durbin, D-Ill., as majority whip has been extremely valuable in making the issue a priority. With Durbin in the minority,

the issue may be more challenging in 2015.

### TAX REFORM

The outlook for comprehensive tax reform improves greatly under Republican control. While tax reform is one of the few policy issues that enjoy strong bipartisan support in concept, there are many difficult drafting decisions that could derail the legislation. With House and Senate tax writers from the same party, it should be easier to reach agreement and draft legislation that could be passed by both chambers.

### LABOR

Obama’s proposals for a minimum wage increase and overtime expansion should have a tougher time becoming law under Republicans. They could hold hearings or push legislation to reverse Department of Labor regulatory initiatives like overtime and National Labor Relations Board regulations and rulings on issues like micro-unions or “ambush” union-organizing elections. Obama, however, would likely veto measures that overturn efforts by the agencies.

### DATA SECURITY AND CYBERSECURITY

Republican control

makes passage more likely for a federal data breach notification bill that would preempt the sometimes-conflicting laws currently on the books in 47 states. If it is unable to pass in the lame duck session, cybersecurity legislation that enables robust sharing of cyber threat information among private sector entities could see a boost in a Republican Senate.

### GLOBAL TRADE

The Republican majority could mean early consideration in 2015 for long-stalled trade legislation, including Trade Promotion Authority and renewal of trade preference programs. Trade preference programs such as the Generalized System of Preferences and the African Growth and Opportunity Act allow apparel and other products from covered countries to be brought into the United States duty-free, holding down their cost for retailers and consumers.

### PATENT REFORM

Republican control could open a clearer path for passage of comprehensive patent reform legislation that would limit the efforts of “patent trolls” that have targeted the retail industry with frivolous lawsuits and threats of suits. ■



# RENO/SPARKS/WASHOE LOCAL OFFICE ELECTION RESULTS

By Lea Tauchen

## RENO CITY COUNCIL

The Reno City Council replaced three of seven office holders this election cycle.

The newly elected members were sworn-in and took their seats on November 12, 2014.

The Council is comprised of the mayor, five ward representatives, and one city at-large representative. Terms are four years. Term limits are twelve years. Mayor Bob Cashell and two outgoing council members, Dwight Dortch and Sharon Zadra, had reached their term limit.

The candidates for the Reno City Council were impressive. Hillary Schieve defeated Raymond "Pez" Pezonella to lead the City of Reno as mayor. Naomi Duerr overcame Elisa Cafferata for Ward 2. Paul McKenzie won over Bonnie Weber for Ward 4. They will join fellow council

members Jenny Brekus, Oscar Delgado, and Neoma Jardon who were not up for reelection this cycle.

Hillary Schieve vacated her Council seat as the at-large member to move into her new mayoral role. The Council declined to hold a special election to find a replacement for the seat. Instead, they accepted applications from interested residents, conducted interviews, and selected the best candidate for the position. Seventy-four applicants were vetted. Ultimately, the Council voted to appoint current District 24 Assemblyman David Bobzien (D). He was sworn into office at the Council meeting on December 3, 2014. The Washoe County Commission is now responsible for accepting applications from

residents in Assemblyman Bobzien's district that are interested in replacing him in the Legislature. The Commission will appoint an applicant before the 2015 Legislative Session begins in February.

## SPARKS CITY COUNCIL

The Sparks City Council also had the Mayor and two members up for reelection this cycle. Mayor Geno Martini was re-elected to his role over challenger Gene Newhall. Ed Lawson will continue to represent Ward 2, as he beat Edward "Ed" Goodrich. Charlene Bybee defeated Kristopher Dahir to represent Ward 4 and replace Mike Carrigan due to term limits. They will return to join fellow council members Julia Ratti, Ron Smith, and Ron Schmitt who were not up

for reelection this cycle. The newly elected members were sworn-in and took their seats on November 10, 2014.

## WASHOE COUNTY COMMISSION

The Washoe County Commission will swear-in one returning member and two new members in January to begin their four year terms. Bob Lucey defeated Terri Thomas to represent District 2 and replace David Humke who reached his term limit. Kitty Jung will retain her District 3 seat, as she overcame David Gurney. Jeanne Herman won over John Gavin to represent District 5 and fill Bonnie Weber's former seat due to term limits. They will join fellow Commissioners Marsha Berkbigger and Vaughn Hartung. ■

# SOUTHERN NEVADA APPOINTED LEGISLATORS

By Amanda Schweisthal

## AT THE DECEMBER 2, 2014, CLARK COUNTY

Commission meeting, former Gaming Control Board Chairman Mark Lipparelli was unanimously appointed to fill the two-year vacancy in State

Senate District 6. Senator Mark Hutchison, the sitting senator in that seat, was elected as Lieutenant Governor in November and will preside over the Senate in the 78th Legislative Session, which begins on February 2, 2015. Senator Hutchison

was in the middle of his four-year term which ends in 2016.

Also appointed by the Clark County Commission was Glenn Trowbridge, who filled the vacancy in Assembly District 37 left by Wes Duncan. He was elected in November,

but left his seat to take a position as chief assistant to Attorney General Adam Laxalt. Trowbridge was the former director of Clark County's Parks and Recreation Department. Both newly appointed legislators are Republicans. ■



# SERVANT LEADERSHIP

By James Larsen

## DO YOU KNOW PEOPLE WHO ARE

more responsive to other people's needs than to their own? Parents of elementary-age children come to mind, racing down the street to the school bus stop, bathrobes flapping in the chilly breeze and slippers slapping slick sidewalks on a frosty fall morning with a forgotten lunch box carried at arm's length. Of course they're cold, but the needs of the child are more important. This action illustrates an approach to leadership that is both ancient and modern called servant leadership. It was the subject of a recent study by Robert Liden, from the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Simply put, servant leaders are alert to and responsive to the needs of others, especially employees and customers. Their attention is focused outward, and their priorities place their own needs below the needs of others. In the workplace, a servant leader would notice, for example, an employee who was falling ill and would send that person home even if it

meant that the leader must fill in and stay late to complete management tasks that were neglected.

In ancient Palestine, servant leadership was a startlingly new concept when Jesus first introduced it to his bewildered disciples. They had slowly begun to regard Jesus as a new Messiah, and Jewish tradition led them to expect the Messiah to become a political/military

***"In Liden's research, servant leadership emerged in highly interdependent work groups. Restaurant managers revealed servant leadership when they shifted their attention to the needs of others and shifted their priorities to place their own needs at a lower level than employees and customers."***

leader. They wanted to join in and become junior Messiahs. Jesus told them that any of them who would lead the others must become a servant to them all, and he bent down and washed all their feet to show them how to lead as a servant.

Today, an evolving body of research helps to explain when, why, and how servant leadership works. Professor Liden has made the most recent contribution. He studied the emergence, efficacy, and influences of servant leadership in 71 restaurants located in 10 metropolitan areas.

In Liden's research, servant leadership emerged in highly interdependent work groups. Restaurant managers revealed servant leadership when they shifted their attention to the needs of others and shifted their priorities to place their own needs at a lower level than employees and customers. When this happened, employees noticed and

reacted strongly. First, they shifted their own attention and priorities so that serving others became the rule for everyone in the work group rather than the exception. They copied the leader's behavior. Liden called what emerged a serving culture, where both leaders and employees shared an outward focus and a responsiveness reflecting shifted priorities.

Second, this serving culture stimulated employees to work together to carry out all the duties needed to make their restaurants great places to enjoy

good food. Their customer service reflected a servant leadership philosophy, and it was excellent. Employees who worked in these restaurants personally identified with the group and felt fulfilled when the restaurants did well, and they became much more creative in responding to needs customers presented.

Finally, Liden discovered that the emergence of this serving culture was the most important result of servant leadership. It was this shift in focus and priorities in the entire work group that had

such a profound impact on individual employees and such a positive impact on objective business measures of restaurant success.

Servant leadership begins simply: a change of focus and of priorities. Liden found that, like a seed, servant leadership slowly emerges into a strikingly successful way to come together, produce a useful product/service, and fulfill the needs of employees and customers. In highly interdependent work settings, we should try it. ■

Reference: [businesspsych.org](http://businesspsych.org)





# Nevada Notes

## WHAT IT TAKES TO WORK IN RETAIL

To outsiders, retail work looks easy. Smile, point and then mash some cash register keys, right? Here are 10 things you might not know about working retail:

1. You're in charge of the physical space, especially at a mom-and-pop shop.
2. Things have to look nice, and that takes homework.
3. Obviously, working a shop floor is more physical than slouching at a desk. Comfy shoes are necessities.
4. People are everywhere, and you have to deal with them in many ways.
5. You are your own IT staff. The cash register updates inventory as items are sold — but if the item isn't in the database, you're hosed. Credit card processing is done online, so if the Internet is out, you're hosed.
- 5.5. And when that stuff fails, you can't swear out loud. Ever.
6. You'll need arts and crafts skills.
7. You're doing improv theater. Staff uses flattery, self-deprecation and chutzpah to soothe an angry customer, without the man even realizing it. He walked away smiling
8. You need a big

- memory for the stock
- 9. Filthy lucre. Of course, you have to handle money, and in several different ways including cash (gets your hands dirty), credit (tech problems) and checks (some people want to write checks!).
- 10. Talk, talk, talk. People may tell their life stories.

## Retail Jobs in Nevada

There are about 144,000 retail-trade workers in Nevada, according to the Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation. They average 31.5 hours worked a week, at an average of \$14.92.

## If Your Kid Wants a Retail Career

Most retail operations hire temporary help around Christmas, and that's a good way to watch seasoned customer-service employees in action. It's most important to have an interest in what the store is selling — that way, you're on common ground with the customer.

RGJ

## SUMMARY OF 2014 STATE ELECTIONS

Recently, NACDS provided a summary of the 2014 mid-term elections, with an emphasis on the federal level. As promised, this memo includes an

overview of the state elections, which will shape the operating environment on pivotal state issues.

## 2014 State Legislature Elections: Increase in Republican Control and Divided Control of State Governments

Many individuals characterized the results of the 2014 mid-term elections as a Republican wave—and if that term is appropriate for the federal elections it also pertains to results at the state level. It also is worth noting that the last two-midterm elections have reflected the historical trend that the party not in control of the White House made gains in the state legislatures and in the U.S. Congress.

This year's midterm elections have resulted in significant Republican gains in state legislatures, with three state legislatures moving to Republican control. Due to this shift, Republicans now control 30 state legislatures, Democrats control 11, eight legislatures are divided, and Nebraska is unicameral.

The elections also produced an increase in the number of states in which one party does not have control of the entire state government.

## State Leadership: Organizing in the Aftermath

With 11 new governors to date, control of three state legislatures shifting to the Republicans, and a total of 19 state governments under divided control, efforts in the states turn toward the build-up of gubernatorial transition teams and action to determine chamber leadership positions and committee chairs.

Although some states are making progress in the interim, many states with changes in party control will have a slower start in the New Year as they inaugurate new governors, and as legislators work to organize new chamber and committee leadership. Also of interest are key vacancies in state agencies, such as recent departures of state Medicaid Directors in Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska and Wisconsin.

## Individual State Results

### • NEVADA

For the first time since 1929, Republicans control both the House and the Senate, in addition to the Governor's seat. Governor Brian Sandoval (R) captured more than 70% of the votes. State Senator Michael Roberson (R) became Majority Leader after the Republicans

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# National Notes

## US ORDERS MASS. TO FIX FOOD STAMP PROCEDURES

Massachusetts last year became one of the first states to require food stamp cards to include photos of recipients, but the new program has created such confusion that some low-income families are unable to buy groceries and the federal government is demanding that the state quickly fix the problem.

The cards, known as EBTs, an acronym for Electronic Benefit Transfer, act like debit cards and are issued to heads of households. But some store cashiers have turned away the recipients' family members or others in the household — who can legally use the benefits — because they do not match the photos. Such practices violate federal rules, which require retailers to treat food stamp recipients like any other customer.

In addition, the USDA said, many families had benefits cut off for up to three weeks because their old cards were deactivated before they received new cards in the mail.

Massachusetts's staff met with the state's largest retail trade group, for

example, asking it to spread the word about handling the new cards.

The Department of Transitional Assistance estimated it spent \$1.5 million to take photographs and mail the cards to about 225,000 recipients. The agency began sending the cards about a year ago.

The department has fielded many phone calls from supermarket staff and managers trying to understand the photo requirement.

Bill Rennie, vice president of the Retailers Association of Massachusetts, said he met with state and USDA officials about the photo cards shortly after the law was passed. But he said neither the trade group nor its members received any "direct correspondence, guidance, or information on how to handle the cards."

"We would have hoped the state would have directly notified [retailers]," he said.

*Boston Globe*

## SOARING GENERIC DRUG PRICES SCRUTINIZED

Some low cost generic drugs that have helped restrain health care costs

for decades are seeing unexpected price spikes of up to 8,000 percent, prompting a backlash from patients, pharmacists and now Washington lawmakers.

Experts said there are multiple, often unrelated, forces behind the price hikes, including drug ingredient shortages, industry consolidation and production slowdowns due to manufacturing problems.

In November, some members of Congress sent letters to the makers of 10 generic drugs that have seen price increases of over 300 percent or more in recent months.

The price for one of those, the antibiotic doxycycline hyclate, rose more than 8,280 percent during a six-month period from an average of \$20 per bottle to \$1,849 per bottle. The increases were calculated by the Healthcare Supply Chain Association using the average prices of the drugs and other price data.

An analysis of 280 common generic drugs by Professor Stephen Schondelmeyer found that roughly a third recorded price increases in 2013. The University of Minnesota researcher said

those numbers show that generic price increases are not limited to a few isolated cases.

Dr. Aaron Kesselheim of Harvard Medical School recommended several new government policies, including allowing the Food and Drug Administration to accelerate the clearance of generic drugs for which there are few manufacturers. He also said that federal officials should be notified of all drug price increases greater than 100 percent. In previous cases where drug shortages have led to price spikes, FDA has approved emergency imports of extra supplies from foreign sources.

AP

## A MODEST LIFELINE: A LOCAL GROCERY STORE

In southwest Kansas, where small communities have struggled since the Dust Bowl to retain businesses and residents, a town's viability is measured by what has not yet closed.

Losing a post office is considered the kiss of death. Losing a school can be a terminal diagnosis.

But losing a grocery store, as Plains did in 2001, is a problem that is most

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## Important Information for SIG Members

*NRS requires all existing members of a self-insured group to be notified of all new members.*


*NRNSIG new members are listed below.*

- A TLC Cleaning Company LLC
- Adajar Medical Inc.
- Carson City Airport Authority
- CPC of Nevada LLC dba Custom Powder Coat
- Dependable Home Solutions LLC
- EZ Tag LLC
- LV Station Management Inc dba Country Club Auto Spa
- Quirk & Hendricks Inc dba Lone Mountain Veterinary Hospital
- Reno News Distributors
- Sidener Physical Therapy LLC dba Reno Sports & Spine Institute
- Sky Tavern Junior Ski Program
- Vida Accounting, Inc.
- Vista Publishing Inc dba Home and Land Magazine

**NRNSIG** members who wish to register a negative vote on a new group member, please write NRNSIG at 575 S. Saliman Road, Carson City, NV 89701, indicating which member and the reason(s) for the negative vote.

## NOTE FOR MEMBERS

If you would like us to profile your business in our newsletter, or have any questions about RAN or the NRF Partnership, please contact Piper at [Piper@rannv.org](mailto:Piper@rannv.org) or call the business office at 775-882-1700.





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# TAVERNS ORDINANCE AMENDED

By Amanda Schweisthal

## AT THE DECEMBER 2, 2014, CLARK COUNTY

Commission meeting, Chairman Steve Sisolak, Susan Brager, and Chris Giunchigliani proposed various versions of amendments for the ordinance affecting slot machine operations in taverns.

The following day, the Commission approved the amendments that require taverns to have a fully-operating kitchen and ADA-compliant bar and table height, and to pass a revenue test that shows slot machine revenue is incidental—50% or less—to all of the tavern’s revenue. The ordinance also differentiates between

slot machines that are embedded into the bar top and stand-alone machines. If the above requirements are not met within six months, the tavern must reduce their slot machines from 15 to 7. The regulations passed on a 6–1 vote.

The ordinance has not been amended since 2011. Dotty’s, the slot

parlor chain which will be the most affected by the passed ordinance, operates 120 taverns in Nevada, and estimates it will cost them \$10 million for complying with the new ordinance. To read the ordinance, go to: [www.clarkcountynv.gov/Depts/business\\_license/Announcements/pages/](http://www.clarkcountynv.gov/Depts/business_license/Announcements/pages/)

## NEVADA NOTES *Continued from page 8*

gained two seats. In the Assembly Republicans took control by winning 10 additional seats. Republicans also claimed all statewide Constitutional offices.

NACDS

### EMPLOYER’S UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE TAX INCREASES TO 2 PERCENT

Carson City, NV. —The

Employment Security Division increased the unemployment insurance tax rate from 1.95 percent to 2 percent as of January 1.

The Council’s recommendation was based on current economic conditions and the state of the trust fund. The state’s trust fund was depleted in October 2009, as Nevada began experiencing the

worst unemployment in the country, with a record number of people qualifying for unemployment benefits. When the trust fund ran out of money, like many other states, Nevada began borrowing from the federal government to continue paying benefits, which ESD paid back last year through the issuance of bonds.

All Nevada employers subject to unemployment

insurance (UI) contributions and eligible for experience rating are affected by the regulation. This change increases the estimated revenue collected by \$15 million, compared to keeping the average contribution rate at 1.95 percent in 2015, and would increase the average cost per employee with wages greater than or equal to \$27,800 by \$14.

Press Release

## NATIONAL NOTES *Continued from page 9*

certainly cause for concern.

“A grocery store is the heart of the town,” said Jeanne Roberts, who is leading the effort to open a new shop. Many people in Plains are fighting — against the odds, but with some notable success — to bring fresh groceries back to their one-square-

mile city limits.

Supporters of the project believe a grocery store will serve as a catalyst for further development and an antidote to the demographic trends that have ravaged this part of the country.

For some, traveling to another town to buy food

might not be an option for much longer. There are seniors who are getting too old to drive.

Plains once had two places to buy food, and both went out of business.

There is a newly remodeled library, a busy post office and a high school a few miles outside

of town. But there are also empty storefronts, residential streets with overgrown sidewalks. It can either thrive in its own right or fade into a bedroom community whose residents drive somewhere else to work, eat and shop.

NY Times



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### WASHINGTON RETAIL INSIGHT

# ADMINISTRATION AIDS LABOR ALLIES WITH AMBUSH ELECTION RULE

## WASHINGTON: THE NATIONAL RETAIL FEDERATION (NRF)

released the following statement from Senior Vice President of Government Relations David French on the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) final rule on ambush elections, which would expedite the union election process:

"This is a devastating rule for employees throughout the retail industry. These men and women will be forced to make a decision that could drastically change their

workplace environment without adequate information and time to consider the issues before them. The NLRB already conducts a vast majority of representation elections within a reasonable time frame and this rule is simply unnecessary and unfair.

"This rule is the latest attempt by the Obama Administration to aid their allies in Big Labor at the expense of employers and employees. After failing to achieve legislative success with the Employee Free Choice Act, even with a strong Democratic

majority in Congress in 2009 and 2010, the Administration has been relentless in trying to slip major elements of the legislation into law through regulatory action.

"Undermining the integrity of the union organizing process by speeding up elections ensures that workers will not have access to all of the facts when making decisions. The only winners here are union organizers.

"The National Retail Federation is considering both a legal and legislative strategy to combat the outrageous erosion of

employee and employer rights at the NLRB. "It comes as no surprise to us that the NLRB would want to avoid public scrutiny for such a controversial rule by putting it out on a Friday in December right before the holidays."

*NRF is the world's largest retail trade association, representing discount and department stores, home goods and specialty stores, Main Street merchants, grocers, wholesalers, chain restaurants and Internet retailers from the United States and more than 45 countries. ■*