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Election 2020 Snapshot:

Helping our automotive, and transport and logistics industry sectors clients make sense of the U.S. election

Public policy has a significant and direct impact on businesses in the Transportation and Mobility area.

Those businesses are highly regulated in the U.S. but are global in scope and the technology deployed is evolving rapidly and changing business models. Emission limits, safety issues, and trade rules are particularly important.

Anticipated changes



Vehicle Emissions:

A Biden victory suggests the stringency of federal GHG emission limits and fuel economy will increase significantly. Many of these changes can be made through existing regulatory authority, and will essentially force the heavy use of electric vehicles before wide acceptance by consumers has been achieved.

Were there a “Blue Wave” of Democratic President and Congressional control, as many anticipated, comprehensive environmental legislation likely would have funded EV charging infrastructure and support for consumer purchases of EVs. Republican control of the Senate makes that type of support for EVs less likely and more challenging to achieve. “Divided” government could provide a difficult context for the auto companies: imposing more strict federal emission limits necessitating EVs without the legislation to help facilitate a significant transformation.



Vehicle Safety Rules:

The rapid technological change in the industry with new driver assist methods and a goal of autonomous vehicles (AV) means regulations on safety will need modification. Shifting from crash survivability to crash avoidance is a significant change. While Republicans have nominally been more accepting of risk and willing to pass legislation to advance AV development, Democrats have remained more hesitant. This legislative challenge will continue. A Biden Administration is also likely to be more cautious on regulatory issues regarding new autonomous technologies.



Aviation:

The single most important issue currently facing the aviation industry is the impact of COVID-19. President-elect Biden has indicated his support for further stimulus funding to assist the aviation industry. Congress has also expressed bi-partisan support for the same, however, deadlocked negotiations on broader stimulus issues continue to stifle progress.



Commercial Drones:

The Biden Administration can be expected to support enabling regulation for the commercial drone industry, allowing safe and secure drone operations at scale which will unlock a multi-billion dollar industry with huge benefits for the American public. There is bipartisan support for American leadership in aviation innovation, and so a Republican Senate would likely agree with this approach.



Passenger Rail:

The Biden Administration has expressed strong support for a transformative high speed rail infrastructure program, but if Republicans retain control in the Senate, and with competing needs for COVID recovery and other infrastructure funding, a major high speed rail program is unlikely. Incremental improvement in higher speed passenger rail is more likely.



Trade:

Both parties are concerned about jobs in the U.S. and believe various policy actions in China require a more active U.S. policy in response to preserve U.S. jobs and the nation’s technology leadership and capacity. The “tone” around these trade related issues is likely to change with more discussion with U.S. allies and less abrupt changes, but the policy goals and substance should not shift dramatically.

Privacy, cybersecurity and artificial intelligence are significant issues for the industry. In general, Democrats are more restrictive on data use and more worried about artificial intelligence. We expect regulatory oversight to reflect that concern.

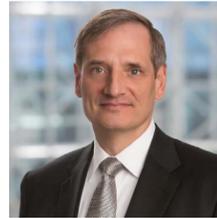


We can help

We routinely and actively assist clients on all aspects of the many regulatory and legislative issues involved with the rapid transition of the industry. We are recognized thought leaders that help clients anticipate, and get ahead of, regulatory and legislative change, while also impacting the development of those regulatory structures.

Government policy will help shape a rapidly evolving technological landscape that is altering long settled business models. We advise clients on all related regulatory and legislative issues and strategies.

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