Most golf industry experts hail political shift with new Congress

Two potentially damaging laws under consideration before November's election are far less likely to be passed under the new regime, according to the NCA's Elizabeth Kirby-Hart.

In its Contract with America, the Republicans promised to investigate immigration reform. Whether that will include the Commission on Immigration Reform's test program and/or some other measures to control illegal workers should be known within six months, Kirby-Hart said.

"The people we hire in maintenance are minorities," said Grigg of his home course. "We've always gone by the letter of the law in hiring. We're very careful about checking employees out. We have a human resources person who does a terrific job. But the Immigration Service still caught us on one guy last year. You shouldn't punish an employer if he is honestly trying. We feel we try very hard to follow the law."

While a Republican-controlled Congress is heartening, the golf industry should remain vigilant on other fronts, association representatives warned.

"You may start to see regulatory agencies push more liberal agenda to bypass Congress," Kirby-Hart said. "Regulatory agencies are controlled by the executive rather than the legislative branch of government. The Environmental Protection Agency could get more involved with pesticide reform, the Occupational Health and Safety Administration with workers."

And state legislatures could pick up where the formerly Democrat-controlled Congress left off. GCSSA's Jones added.

"Just because the federal structure has changed, doesn't mean state legislatures won't pursue certain issues," Jones said.

"The Association of State Attorneys General, for instance, has already advised private clubs they should be ready to defend practices that exclude women."

P.G.M. takes over at Grand Geneva Resort

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