

Environmental Issues and the Presidential Candidates: How Will The Incoming President Affect My Business?

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With all the hype surrounding the 2016 presidential candidates (and their Twitter accounts), it seems that environmental issues are getting lost in the noise. The two leading candidates, however, could not be more divided on these issues. If you are a business owner, it is important to understand where these candidates stand on environmental issues (such as climate change and energy), and how this election may impact your future business decisions and environmental compliance.

Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton focuses on cleaning up and preserving the environment with pro-government strategies. If elected, she promises to combat climate change by enforcing existing laws and enacting additional regulations on businesses to limit emissions and improve air quality. On the energy front, Mrs. Clinton is skeptical of the need for offshore drilling, opposes the Keystone XL pipeline, and supports renewable energy, such as solar and wind, as opposed to coal and fossil fuels.

Republican candidate Donald Trump, on the other hand, vows to protect businesses when it comes to environmental issues. He is a climate change skeptic and supports energy from coal, oil and gas. Mr. Trump has gone as far as suggesting that, if elected, he would abolish the EPA and free businesses from unnecessary regulations. Mr. Trump also supports tapping into domestic oil and gas reserves to reduce energy costs, create jobs, and make the United States independent from foreign oil.

One hotly-contested environmental issue dividing the candidates is the future of the Clean Power Plan (the "CPP"), a set of EPA regulations set in place by the Obama administration that takes aim at controlling greenhouse gas emissions from coal-burning power plants. Critics of the CPP claim that it will burden residents and businesses by driving up electrical costs. Although enforcement of the CPP has been halted by the United States Supreme Court (pending litigation in the lower district courts), both candidates have gone on the record to express their opinions about its future. Hillary Clinton not only supports the CPP, but suggests additional actions to expand its reach. Donald Trump, however, vows to rescind the CPP within his first one hundred days in office.

For a better understanding on how this upcoming election will impact your business, please contact Lauren Woleslagle Rulli or (412) 594-5510