

Glass Half Full

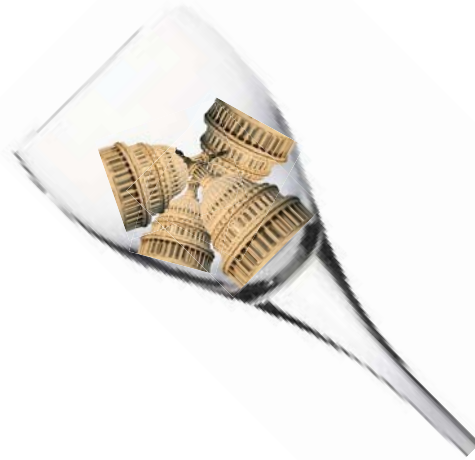
Lobbyist Encouraged That Legislators Are Hearing Industry Representatives

Another election year, another non-stop media blitz. Through a parade of television news features, stories in print and ballgame-interrupting advertisements, hundreds of candidates in Illinois did everything they could to get the people to listen to them.

Despite recently passed increases in taxes on both individuals and businesses, there's been some encouraging signs that the listening isn't just happening in one direction, as Builders Association lobbyist Jeff Glass of Capitol Consulting Group is enthusiastic about legislators listening to what the Chicagoland commercial construction industry is saying.

"We've opened that door of communication with lawmakers and now we're being invited to meetings on a regular basis when those legislators deal with building issues at the state level," Glass said. "They know who the Builders are and what they do."

"Like anything else, you have to start from square one. I'm happy to say at this point that we've moved a few squares."



As Republicans stormed through national House and Senate races, some signs of unhappiness due to the recession and the state of the job market were evident at the state level, as well. Those signs weren't enough to unseat Governor Pat Quinn, who narrowly defeated Republican Bill Brady despite losing the vast majority of counties in the state. Quinn - who stated at the Builders Association Annual Meeting in 2009 that he wanted to be the "building Governor," then irked some builders by stepping into the middle of last summer's labor strike - mentioned a desperate

Builders Association PAC Donations

<u>Candidates</u>	<u>Amount Donated</u>
Bill Brady For Governor (R)	\$10,500
Democratic Party of Illinois	\$5,000
Tom Cross (R, House)	\$5,000
Christine Radogno (R, Senate)	\$5,000
House Speaker Michael Madigan (D)	\$1,500
Illinois Senate Democratic Fund	\$1,000
Suzi Schmidt (R, Senate)	\$1,000
Carol Sente (D, House)	\$1,000
Hamilton Chang (R, House)	\$500
Brian Doherty (R, Senate)	\$500

PAC Contributions

Democratic
Donations:
\$8,000

Republican
Donations:
\$27,500



**Total
contributions:
\$35,500**

need for a significant tax increase to balance the state's constantly flatlining budget.

"Pat Quinn, to his credit, did run on raising taxes," Glass said. "He didn't sugarcoat things. He was telling people at campaign stops 'Guys, we're in a crisis here, and nobody's got a band aid and there's no easy solution.'

"What he was also saying, though, is that his victory was a 'mandate' for that tax raise. When there's 102 counties in Illinois and you lose all but four or five of them, I don't know how much of a mandate that is."

Job creation and cuts to spending may be the focus of the Illinois legislature before the details of a tax increase, as Democratic majorities have shrunk slightly in both the House and the Senate.

The Builders Association is grateful for the participation of its members in legislative activities, both in donations to the PAC Fund and by participating in the Government Relations Committee.

For the state election this fall, the Builders Association donated over \$35,500 from the PAC Fund to both sides of the aisle in state races. Candidates receiving those donations are listed in the graphs below.

"We can be proud of getting past the party labels and doing our due diligence," Glass said. "Every donation we made was a careful consideration based on both our relationship with the candidate and the candidate's background. There's a lot more to speak of in terms of relationships with those lawmakers than there was three

years ago, and we look forward to continuing to cultivate that and be a source of information on the construction industry and what would help it."

Chicago's first new Mayor since *The Simpsons* first aired will be faced with a City Council that will also see a lot of new faces.

"Obviously, it's going to be a bit of a waiting game," Glass said. "We don't know enough to really say what (the new Mayor and Aldermen) will do for construction yet.

"Everyone wants a strong economy. One of the best signs of a strong economy are cranes at work when you head into town. That's the message we want to get out there."

Glass is pleased with the inroads the Association has made in Springfield in a short amount of time.

"When we were hired, we got clear direction from the Builders Association," he said. "The organization wanted to play a background role, but wanted to make sure also that legislators knew the Builders Association and that we could make an impact when we felt it was needed.

"In the course of three years, we've been able to sit down and talk to these guys and explain our positions. We've been able to pick and choose our battles and we're to the point now where legislators will ask our opinion before considering legislation that might impact the industry."

To get involved in our Government Relations activities, contact Albert Leitschuh at aleitschuh@bldrs.org.

PAC Donations

Candidates	Amount Donated
David Harris (R, House)	\$500
Ryan Higgins (R, House)	\$500
David Luecthefeld (R, Senate)	\$500
Sam McCann (R, Senate)	\$500
John Millner (R, Senate)	\$500
Dennis Reboletti (R, House)	\$500
Skip Saviano (R, House)	\$500
Tim Schmitz (R, House)	\$500
Sara Feigenholtz (D, House)	\$250
Art Turner (D, House)	\$250

Thanks to those that have contributed to the PAC Fund on their 2011 Dues Renewal Forms since our last issue:

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- *McShane Construction Company*
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