

# The Construction Legislative Week in Review

## Where do the Presidential Candidates stand on AGC's top legislative issues

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Now that the debates are done and the election is only three weeks away. You need to know where the candidates stand on key construction industry issues. The chart below shows the differences between the Presidential candidates on important construction industry issues.

### Where do the Presidential Candidates Stand on AGC's Top Legislative Issues

+ = Supports AGC Position - = Opposes AGC Position

Candidate	Death Tax Elimination	Health Care Employer Liability	AIR 21 Airport Construction	TEA 21 Highway Construction	Contractor Blacklisting	Project Labor Ergonomics	Endangered Species Reform	Wetlands Reform
Bush	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Cheney	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Gore	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-
Lieberman	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-

**EPA Funding Bill Passed, Includes Important Environmental Provisions:** AGC led efforts to include language in the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) funding bill that would prevent EPA from designating counties in nonattainment of the 8-hour ozone standard. If a county were to be placed in nonattainment, the Federal Highway Administration would be forced to cut off highway funds from the state. The Supreme Court will review the validity of EPA's standard November 7. In addition, language was included in the bill that would reinstate the one-year grace period. This clause had allowed counties placed in nonattainment of air standards one year to revise a conformity plan. The grace period was struck down by the courts in a lawsuit initiated by the Sierra Club. AGC supported total maximum daily load legislation (TMDL) that was also incorporated in the EPA funding measure. EPA finalized a TMDL regulation in August that Members of Congress believe is not complete, does not represent the actual cost to the states, and does not identify resources and personnel needed to develop an effective program. This bill will require EPA to perform a cost assessment and further study of the TMDL rules. For the third straight year, Congress has prevented EPA from implementing the Kyoto Protocol without Senate approval of the treaty. The Protocol would require the United States to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by an arbitrary amount, but do not require developing countries to do the same. The Energy and Water Appropriations bill was attached to the EPA bill. The President has indicated he will sign this legislation.

**Three Appropriations Bills Remain Unfinished:** The House and Senate Republican leadership is still battling over the final three appropriations bills (Commerce, Justice, Foreign Operations, and Labor, Health and Human Services) with Democrats and President Clinton. Congress is hoping to finalize the remaining bills and adjourn for the year on October 25.

**House Passes WRDA 2000 and Everglades Bill:** Today, the House passed the Water Resources Development Act of 2000 (WRDA 2000), which includes funding to begin the Florida Everglades Project. WRDA 2000 instructs the Army Corps of Engineers to undertake a number of projects to address water resource needs across the nation. The bill authorizes \$5.1 billion in flood control, navigation improvements, environmental protection, and restoration, and other national water infrastructure projects. The bill also provides funding and authorizes the Corps to begin a 20-year project to restore the natural water flow into the Florida Everglades. The Senate already passed its WRDA 2000 bill, so the House and Senate will now work to resolve their differences before Congress adjourns for the year.

**Tax Bill Almost Ready:** GOP leaders are putting the finishing touches on a 10 year, \$300 billion tax cut bill. While it has yet to be officially unveiled, it will contain numerous provisions to encourage retirement savings such as increased 401k and IRS contribution levels. It will also contain "community renewal" provisions designed to spur development in distressed economic areas. Among the benefits will likely be reduced capital gains rates and payroll taxes for economic investment in lower-income areas. The bill may also contain some provisions to encourage school construction. Finally, the bill is expected to contain small business tax provisions to offset the impact of a minimum wage increase. Among these may be a repeal of the installment sales prohibition that Congress passed last year.