

Legislative Update

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Tuesday, November 5 was Election Day. While the Presidential election dominated headlines, there were significant State races that will impact the upcoming legislative session. Former President Donald Trump won the election and will be sworn in as the 47th President on January 21, 2025. He has begun the process of putting together his transition team and will begin to vet candidates for key White House and cabinet positions.

As of this writing, we do not know the final composition of the U.S. Senate, but the Republicans flipped at least four seats, so they will have the majority. This means that New York Senator Charles Schumer, who currently serves as the Senate Majority Leader, will become the Senate Minority Leader in the next Congressional session. As of now, the Republicans will have 53 seats, though there are still a couple of races that are too close to call, so this majority may grow.

Further, as of this writing, we do not yet know the final results for the House of Representatives, but it appears that the Republicans will hold the majority though there are still 27 races that are too close to call. In New York, three seats flipped from Republican to Democratic control, and it was thought that these changes would help to ensure a Democratic majority in the House. However, Republican wins in other states have offset those gains, so the New York gains may not have the impact that was anticipated.

In terms of races for the State Legislature, the Democrats retained their majorities in the New York State Senate and Assembly, but the Democratic Senate will not keep their supermajority. To maintain the supermajority, Democrats needed to win 42 seats. However, Senator Iwen Chu, from Brooklyn, lost her reelection bid, and the Democrats did not flip any Republican seats, so the Democratic Majority in the Senate will be 41 Democrats and 22 Republicans.

In the Assembly, we know that two Democratic incumbents, Assemblymembers Gina

Sillitti and Monica Wallace, were defeated in their reelection bids. However, three Republican Assemblymembers, Ed Flood, John McGowan and Michael Novakhov, also appear to have lost. If the Election Night results hold for these races, the Assembly Democratic Majority would grow by one seat to 103 from the current 102 seat Majority. The Assembly Republicans would see their numbers go from 48 to 47 members.

Beyond the election, we are still wrapping up legislative issues from the 2024 session. Of the over 400 bills we are tracking for ANA-NY, 33 passed both houses this year. There are still 21 bills waiting to be sent to the Governor for her to act on. This is not unusual because the Governor's staff needs time to review the legislation before making recommendations for the Governor. The Governor has until December 31, 2024, to act on the bills awaiting her signature.

One of the bills awaiting the Governor's action would require health insurance coverage for scalp cooling systems for the preservation of hair during cancer chemotherapy treatments. ANA-NY worked with the Oncology Nursing Society – New York City (ONS-NYC) to support this bill. It is important to allow cancer patients to better afford access to a technology that will help them combat one of the most difficult side effects of chemotherapy. Minimizing the side effects of chemotherapy would help patients in their fight against cancer and remove the visual reminder of the fight they are in. We are not certain of the Governor's position on the bill at this point, but we will continue to work with the patient advocacy groups and healthcare professional organizations to advocate for her to sign the bill into law.

Further, as we wrap up our legislative work from the 2024 session, we are preparing for the imminent beginning of the 2025 session, which should begin on Wednesday, January 8, 2025. At the Annual Meeting in October, the membership voted to approve the 2025 legislative priorities. There are five pillars of the

legislative priority list: attaining health equity, expanding nursing workforce development and support, expanding patient access to care, ensuring workplace health and safety, and health system transformation. These guiding principles will shape the work we do during the upcoming legislative session.

Finally, we would like to remind you that ANA-NY has a Political Action Committee (PAC). The ANA-NY PAC will be supporting candidates that support the profession and issues of importance to our members. We urge you to visit the ANA-NY PAC web site and donate.

If you have any questions about the legislative process or the priorities of ANA-NY, please contact a member of the Legislative Committee. As always, we welcome your questions, thoughts, ideas or comments on legislation or the bill track. ■

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