

## Emerging Leaders of Gaming “Decision 2016” Webinar Recap

by Michael Vanaskie

No matter what your political stance, the 2016 election results likely came as a surprise. With the results sure to shake up the political community, there are many unknowns as to what's in store from a legislative perspective. The potential impacts on the gaming industry have been at the forefront of our minds at The Innovation Group just as they likely are for many of our industry peers.

To help sift through the political banter and take an in-depth look into the election's potential impacts on gaming, last month The Innovation Group's Emerging Leaders of Gaming™ program hosted a webinar on the topic. The webinar, which was produced in association with the American Gaming Association, was the fourth and final webinar in the Emerging Leaders' 2016 series. The series is scheduled to continue in 2017 and will continue to offer unique insights on current trends within the gaming industry.

Attendees could not have asked for a better-suited panel of experts for the “Decision 2016” webinar. The webinar was hosted by recent Global Gaming Business Magazine “40 under 40” honoree Whitaker Askew, vice president of government relations for the American Gaming Association. Panelists for the webinar included some of the industry's leading lobbyists from both sides of the aisle, Kirk Blalock, co-founder and principal at Fierce Government Relations; Shanti Stanton, principal at Subject Matter; and Aurene Martin, managing partner at Spirit Rock Consulting.

The roundtable discussion during the webinar covered topics ranging from the public opinion on gaming to Trump's stance on Tribal gaming. The political and gaming experts shared their opinions and insights on a variety of potential outcomes for gaming throughout the discussion. For example, the panelists appeared to agree on the fact that Harry Reid leaving his U.S. senate seat is a potential opportunity for the gaming industry. While this may seem counterintuitive to some as the one-time Chairman of the Nevada Gaming Commission was undoubtedly pro-gaming, the panelists believe this provides an opportunity to help gaming become even more of a national issue versus a Nevada issue.

There were countless other issues discussed during the webinar including sports betting, how the industry can and should operate in this new political era, and how gaming will fit into president elect Trump's presidential administration, among others. For those who were unable to attend the webinar, [a replay of it can be found here on the Emerging Leaders web page](#), as well as video/audio from their prior 2016 webinars.

Based on feedback from attendees, we believe “Decision 2016” as well as the other webinars in the 2016 series were a success. As mentioned earlier, The Innovation Group and the American Gaming Association are excited to continue the Emerging Leaders Webinar Series in 2017. To stay up to date on the 2017 Emerging Leaders Webinar Series schedule, please [click here to join The Innovation Group's mailing list](#).