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In This Issue:

- 1. RYAN CHANGES TUNE ON CHARITABLE DEDUCTION**
- 2. PLAINTIFFS WANT ACA SUBSIDIES CASE SENT TO SUPREME COURT**
- 3. WHITE HOUSE EASES LOBBYIST BAN**
- 4. POWER OF A 'MEMBER SPOTLIGHT' SHINES ON ASGE**

1. RYAN CHANGES TUNE ON CHARITABLE DEDUCTION: Rep. Paul Ryan (R-WI), likely the next chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, firmly committed this week to protecting the charitable deduction in any rewrite of the tax code.

Ryan, who as a vice presidential candidate in 2012 backed a cap on deductions of \$17,000, said in a television interview this week that charitable deductions are the "one exception" he would make to any cap on deductions as part of comprehensive tax reform.

"This is really the one exception I make this for," Ryan said in a CNBC interview. "Charities ought to be a tax expenditure that is still preserved because civil [society] is one of the most important components of American life, of getting people involved in our communities and philanthropies. I think that is a very important thing to preserve and that's pretty much as a supply side or a low tax-rate guy."

Ryan has offered tepid support for the tax reform discussion draft released earlier this year by current Ways and Means Chairman Dave Camp (R-MI), saying only that it's a "good start to the conversation." But this week, Ryan did endorse a plan in the Camp draft to scale back the mortgage interest deduction for higher-income earners, and he shares Camp's view that the corporate tax rate should be lowered to help American companies stay competitive.

"In the global economy we are in, when we tax our employers at much higher tax rates than our foreign competitors are taxing theirs, it's putting us at a competitive disadvantage and it's slowing down our economy," Ryan told CNBC.

Tax reform is widely considered to be off the table for the rest of the year, but congressional tax writing committees plan to prioritize tax reform when the next Congress is seated in January.

2. PLAINTIFFS WANT ACA SUBSIDIES CASE SENT TO SUPREME COURT: Plaintiffs who recently won an important court decision over whether the federal government can give subsidies to consumers who purchase health insurance

through a federal health Exchange under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) now want the case decided directly by the Supreme Court.

While the DC Circuit Court of Appeals agreed with the plaintiffs in *Halbig v. Burwell* that subsidies should only be allowed to offset the cost of health insurance purchased through a state Exchange, the federal government has asked for a rehearing of the case before the full panel before it can be appealed to the Supreme Court.

In a submission filed Monday with the DC Circuit Court, the plaintiffs said continued uncertainty about the subsidies is “simply not tenable.”

“Only the Supreme Court can lift that doubt by giving a definitive answer to the challenge raised here,” the plaintiffs said.

The subsidy for health insurance is vital to the success of the Exchange system. Roughly 85 percent of 2014 Exchange consumers purchased health insurance with the assistance of a subsidy.

For now, purchasers are still able to claim the subsidy for insurance purchased through a federal Exchange, as the DC Circuit has delayed issuing a mandate until the en banc review. Legal experts have said it’s not yet clear if the Supreme Court will take up the case, particularly if a review by the DC Circuit results in a new ruling.

States that have elected to run their own Exchanges have experienced mixed results. Maryland, a state that experienced widespread technical problems when it attempted to launch its health insurance web site last year, is rebuilding its Exchange before the next enrollment period opens on Nov. 15. State officials say the relaunch is on track, but that the tens of thousands of Marylanders who purchased coverage through the Exchange last year will need to re-enroll through the new site or risk losing any subsidies that helped pay for their coverage.

3. WHITE HOUSE EASES LOBBYIST BAN: The Obama administration last week reversed a long-standing ban on registered lobbyists serving on government advisory boards.

The ban had been in place since 2009, and was part of President Obama’s attempt to limit the influence of lobbyists on his administration. The revised rule put out by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) last week states that registered lobbyists can serve on advisory boards as long as they are representing a corporation or trade group and not acting on their own behalf.

The change comes after the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia rejected the administration’s call to dismiss a lawsuit filed by six lobbyists who claimed the ban violated their First Amendment rights to petition the government.

ASAE was one of many associations that were critical of the rule when it was first put in place. At the time, ASAE urged the White House to reconsider the ban, pointing out that many association professionals serve on agency advisory

boards because they have expertise in a subject area that can lead to the development of informed, effective policies.

4. POWER OF A 'MEMBER SPOTLIGHT' SHINES ON ASGE: This week's Power of A "Member Spotlight" focuses on another of ASAE's 2014 Summit Award winners – the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy (ASGE).

ASGE received a Summit Award this year for its Ambassador Program, which provides ready access to advanced medical care techniques to physicians and international centers in developing countries that lack information on therapies in which gastrointestinal endoscopists specialize. Since 2010, nearly 300 physicians have been trained from Nigeria, Kenya, Sudan, Egypt, Vietnam, Taiwan and Southeast Asia, Brazil, Ecuador and the Solomon Islands and over 50 physician volunteers have donated their time to the program. Read more about ASGE's Ambassador Program on ASAE's [Power of A](#) web site.

The Power of A Awards were established in 2010 to recognize and celebrate the extraordinary programs and initiatives undertaken by associations that enrich lives, create a competitive workforce, prepare society for the future, drive innovation, and ultimately make a better world. ASAE is profiling each of the six Summit Award winners over the coming weeks, leading up to the Summit Awards Dinner Oct. 1 at the National Building Museum in Washington, DC. Subsequent spotlights will highlight the programs of Power of A Gold and Silver Award winners.