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**1. BRADY COMMITTED TO INTERNATIONAL TAX REFORM:** House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Kevin Brady (R-TX) says he has Speaker Paul Ryan's (R-WI) backing to pursue international tax reform this year.

"He's firmly behind our efforts to take solid steps this year both on international tax [reform] and lay the groundwork for growth reform in 2017," Brady told The Hill this week.

Brady will hold a retreat with Ways and Means Republicans on Monday to outline strategy for the year and has scheduled a Jan. 26 hearing to begin the committee's efforts to identify pro-growth ideas that help create jobs, boost wages and expand opportunities for the workforce.

Brady clearly sees international tax changes as a way to grow the economy at a faster pace.

"There is growing momentum for addressing our international tax code, making it far more competitive, encouraging companies to reinvest their profits back in the United States and growing our economy by keeping companies from relocating their intellectual property overseas," Brady said.

There is less enthusiasm for pursuing international tax changes in the Senate, but Brady will find a ready collaborator in Sen. Charles Schumer (D-NY) who was heavily involved in efforts last year to negotiate an international tax reform deal in order to pay for longer-term highway and infrastructure investments.

**2. COALITION CALLS FOR STUDY GROUP ON DC'S PAID LEAVE PLAN:** ASAE is part of a coalition of Washington, DC-based organizations urging the DC Council to convene a working group to discuss how best to create a fiscally sustainable paid leave program in the nation's capital.

The DC Council has heard numerous concerns from the business community as well as from the city's chief financial officer and city administrator's office about the cost of establishing a universal paid leave program for almost every full-time and part-time employee in the District.

The District's "Universal Paid Leave Act of 2015" was introduced last October and, if enacted, would be the most generous family-leave law in the country, providing nearly every worker in the District up to 16 weeks of paid leave to recover from an illness, bond with a new child, or care for a sick relative.

The benefit would be paid for with a tax on DC employers of up to 1 percent of employees' salaries. ASAE believes the bill as currently drafted would create significant problems and burdens for all associations based in the District and many employees working or residing in the District.

In a Jan. 21 letter to DC Council Chairman Phil Mendelson, the coalition points out that "there is no consensus on what the ultimate cost would be for the District Government, employers and employees if the legislation were enacted by the Council." The purpose of the working group would be to take a more thoughtful, deliberate approach to understand the different fiscal analyses produced by various stakeholders in order to more accurately predict the cost of the program.

The District's paid leave bill was ripped by the editorial board of the [Washington Post](#) Jan. 17 as a "preposterous plan" pushed on the District by the Obama administration. The initial study that led to the proposed 16-week paid leave plan was funded with a grant from the Department of Labor.

**3. IRS SHIFTING PRIORITIES FOR ADVISORY PANEL:** The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is downsizing and revising the focus of its Advisory Committee on Tax Exempt and Government Entities (ACT), according to an [agency report](#) issued Jan. 19.

ACT members provide observations and recommendations to the IRS about current tax issues impacting different affected communities, including the tax-exempt sector. ACT currently has 21 members but the IRS said it will not be filling six upcoming vacancies, which will bring the size of the committee down to 15 members beginning in June.

The IRS said the changes are reflective of structural changes within the agency, including shifting legal work to the Office of Chief Counsel, as well as a "shift in priorities" for the IRS Tax Exempt and Government Entities (TE/GE) Division.

"It is a good time to review and revise ACT's focus and better align it with what's going on within the changing environment of TE/GE," said Sunita Lough, commissioner of the TE/GE Division. "We will continue to consider more refinements of the ACT structure in coming months and potentially make more changes in 2017. We also remain committed to getting

feedback and input from our stakeholders, both operationally within TE/GE and through the ACT.”

Going forward, ACT’s focus will be on tax administration issues broadly as opposed to more compartmentalized focus on the five functions of TE/GE (Employee Plans, Exempt Organizations, Federal, State and Local Governments, Indian Tribal Governments, and Tax Exempt Bonds).

**4. ENTER THE 2016 POWER OF A AWARDS:** ASAE is now taking applications for the 2016 Power of A Awards, honoring associations engaged in activities and initiatives that strengthen the industries and professions they represent and improve society at large.

The Power of A Awards was established in 2010 as the premier program honoring the vital contributions of the association community. The Awards recognize and celebrate the extraordinary year-round efforts of associations to enrich lives, create a more competitive workforce, prepare society for the future, drive innovation, and make a better world.

Last year, over 1,000 association leaders joined us in Washington, DC to celebrate the Power of A Summit Award winners. Make sure you are among this year’s honorees! It takes just 15 minutes to apply, but the recognition helps sustain associations’ investments in impactful programs and initiatives. To find out more or apply, visit the [Power of A Awards](#) site.