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***Regulatory Oversight Podcast: 12 Days of Regulatory Insights: Day 1 - The Impact of the 2024 State AG Elections***

**Hosts: Chuck Slemp and Stephanie Kozol**

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**Stephanie Kozol:**

Hello and happy holidays. We are thrilled to bring you a special edition of our *Regulatory Oversight* podcast called "The 12 Days of Regulatory Insights." Over the next 12 episodes, we will explore a variety of critical regulatory topics, providing you with concise and insightful discussions from members of our regulatory investigation strategy and enforcement practice group, and State Attorney's General team. We will also feature guest commentary from several of our esteemed colleagues in other areas of the firm, as well as future team members from Locke Lord. Each episode will highlight key trends and developments from this past year in various areas, designed to keep you informed and engaged during this holiday season. I am joined today by my colleague, Chuck Slemp, to discuss the recent State attorney's general elections and how the outcomes may impact the regulatory landscape in 2025 and beyond. Chuck, welcome.

**Chuck Slemp:**

Hey, thank you Stephanie. And before we get started today, I want to remind all of our listeners to visit and subscribe to our blog at [RegulatoryOversight.com](https://www.regulatoryoversight.com) so that you can stay up to date on developments and changes in the regulatory landscape. For those who don't know Stephanie, she's our Senior Government Relations Manager for the State Attorney's General team and has over 15 years of experience in government relations, specializing in political outreach and strategic relationship building with state officials. And I serve as counsel here at the firm with the State Attorney's General team, having previously served four AGs in Virginia, and as Chief Deputy Attorney General of Virginia. And I'm so excited about our conversation today, Stephanie.

**Stephanie Kozol:**

Thank you, Chuck. Let's go ahead and jump right in. As we discuss this year's AG races and the changes that will take effect next year, it's important to note that several incumbent Attorneys General were running for reelection in 2024.

**Chuck Slemp:**

That's right. In addition to several notable races, open seats in 2024, Attorneys General in Missouri, Indiana, Montana, and Vermont all sought reelection.

**Stephanie Kozol:**

AG Bailey of Missouri, AG Rakita of Indiana, AG Knudsen of Montana and AG Clark of Vermont, all won their reelection efforts continuing to serve in their role as AG for an additional term. Chuck, now that we've gone through some of the reelections, let's go ahead and shift to the states that we saw leadership changes in during the election.

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**Chuck Slempp:**

Sure thing. The recent State Attorneys General elections have brought some significant changes in leadership across various states. This election cycle, we saw new AGs elected in North Carolina, in Oregon, Pennsylvania, Utah, Washington, and West Virginia.

**Stephanie Kozol:**

Plus the AGs in North Carolina, Washington and West Virginia won their respective Governor's races, which is quite a shift.

**Chuck Slempp:**

Let's focus on North Carolina. Democrat Jeff Jackson, who has a background as a former prosecutor, was elected. Jackson's focus includes combating crime, addressing the Fentanyl crisis, and defending the rights and freedoms of North Carolinians. Current Attorney General Josh Stein was also elected Governor. Now, Stein is a familiar face having served as AG in North Carolina for quite some time.

**Stephanie Kozol:**

Well Chuck, similarly in West Virginia, current AG Morrissey ran for Governor, was elected this November. Morrissey has served as AG since 2013. With his election to the governorship, Republican J.B. McCuskey was elected to succeed him in office. McCuskey is currently the state auditor. He has a long background in civil service and state governance and will likely focus on job creation, energy independence, and financial responsibility.

**Chuck Slempp:**

Another notable leadership change is in Washington state where the current AG, Bob Ferguson, was elected Governor in November. Washington's new AG is Nick Brown. He was elected to succeed Ferguson. Brown has a rich background in public service and private practice, and this diverse experience will undoubtedly influence his approach to the new role.

**Stephanie Kozol:**

Let's shift to another open seat like Oregon. Currently, AG Ellen Rosenblum has served in the office for over a decade. Ellen currently serves as the NAAG or the National Association of Attorneys General President, but announced earlier this year that she was not running for reelection. Interestingly, this is the first time in 16 years that there was a race for Oregon's next AG with no incumbent.

**Chuck Slemp:**

Wow. And Oregon's former State House Speaker, Dan Rayfield was elected in November to fill Ellen's shoes. Given his background as a trial lawyer and public official, Stephanie, I think we can expect to see strong leadership continue from that office nationally.

**Stephanie Kozol:**

I agree. And in Utah, current AG, Sean Reyes decided not to seek another term as well. Reyes has actually served as AG since 2013, and then Republican Derek Brown came in and won election in this seat. With his experience in constitutional and appellate law, he will be another strong leader to watch as we move forward next year.

**Chuck Slemp:**

One of the most widely watched races in the nation was the election in Pennsylvania. And that's not just because it was considered a key battleground state in the presidential race, but everyone in the regulatory space was also watching closely the Attorney General election. As the votes were tallied, Republican Dave Sunday was elected. Sunday has a robust prosecutorial background, and his focus on public safety and the opioid epidemic will likely shape his tenure in office. Now, with all of those new AGs taking office Stephanie, can we explore the anticipated policy shifts, or maybe consistencies, enforcement priorities that we anticipate to see in the year ahead in 2025? What do you think you're seeing?

**Stephanie Kozol:**

Thanks, Chuck. Yeah, great question. Let's maybe start in North Carolina. Jeb Jackson's focus on criminal justice and his experience as a former prosecutor will likely be key in combating crime, fighting the Fentanyl crisis, and defending the rights and freedoms of North Carolinians. Succeeding current AG and Governor-elect Stein, we anticipate that these offices will work very closely together on a host of regulatory and consumer protection issues.

**Chuck Slemp:**

Yeah, I agree, and I think that's only natural. And in Oregon, Dan Rayfield, again former service as Speaker of the House will make him, we believe an effective policy advocate. He's expected to emphasize public safety and consumer protection issues in his state. And notably, it's already been announced that he's going to keep several key senior staff from Ellen Rosenblum's office such as Lisa Udland, who is the current Deputy Attorney General, and she'll continue in her current role. She brings more than 10 years of leadership experience to that office. Jen Baker was announced as coming in as the incoming Chief of Staff. Baker served a similar role for Rayfield while he was speaker

**Stephanie Kozol:**

In Pennsylvania, one of the top campaign issues for AG elect Dave Sunday was public safety. Protecting senior citizens is a key issue for him. He served as prosecutor in the District Attorney's office for over 10 years and as a Special Assistant US Attorney. So it's not surprising

that he'll prioritize public safety, protecting citizens and addressing drug trafficking, human trafficking, and fighting criminal activity during his tenure.

**Chuck Slemp:**

Next, we actually have two AG elect Browns. We've got one from Utah and one from Washington, so let's go through them. Utah's Derek Brown was previously a law clerk for a federal appellate judge. He's a former state rep and also served as a top aide to two United States Senators. And so with all of that experience, we can anticipate that Brown will likely be a policy leader among state AGs. And in Washington, the other Brown, AG elect Nick Brown is anticipated to continue the policy focuses of his predecessor in office, Governor elect Bob Ferguson. We anticipate they'll work closely together and continue the legacy of advocating for gun violence prevention and defending the civil rights of Washingtonians.

**Stephanie Kozol:**

And last but not least, let's not forget, West Virginia. JB McCuskey will likely be a watchdog for West Virginia citizens and is likely going to focus on job creation, energy independence, and consumer protection issues. That office has been a leader in the opioid cases historically, and we can anticipate continued leadership on that issue.

**Chuck Slemp:**

Stephanie, with the time we've got left, can we look ahead just a little more to 2025?

**Stephanie Kozol:**

Absolutely. How do you foresee the relationship between the state AGs and the federal regulatory agencies evolving? What are you seeing and what are you thinking Chuck?

**Chuck Slemp:**

Well, as you know, the relationship between the state AG and the federal regulatory agencies is always dynamic. And having served in the office in Virginia, I note that that can vary depending on the political landscape. And so with new AGs coming in and a new president, we'll see, I think a mix of cooperation and contention, naturally.

**Stephanie Kozol:**

Naturally. Well, the President elect's cabinet is still coming together and appointments are currently being made day by day. As the new AGs take office, I'm sure we'll see newly elected Democrat AGs opposing policies by the Trump administration, much like we saw previously from Republican AGs under the Biden administration. The dynamic will likely be shaped by the regulatory landscape in the coming years. What else are you seeing, Chuck, anything?

**Chuck Slemp:**

Well, that's insightful analysis, and I think we could say a lot more on that topic, but unfortunately, I think we're out of time. Stephanie, thank you again for joining me today, and I know our listeners enjoyed your valuable insights and the conversation.

**Stephanie Kozol:**

Well, thank you, Chuck. It was indeed a pleasure to speak with you today and join you on this podcast. And I want to thank our audience for tuning in to this special holiday series. Tune in next time as we continue our "12 days of Regulatory Insights" holiday series.

**Chuck Slemp:**

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