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**Ohio Speech & Hearing Governmental Affairs Coalition
Legislative Activities Report
February 2019**

After much anticipation a sharply divided Ohio House used the first session of the 133rd General Assembly to elect a new leader, making Rep. Larry Householder the speaker for the second time in his career. Soon thereafter, on February 6, 2019, the House elected the following members of the leadership teams:

- Rep. Jim Butler – Speaker Pro Tempore
- Rep. Bill Seitz – Majority Floor Leader
- Rep. Anthony DeVitis – Asst. Majority Floor Leader
- Rep. Jay Edwards – Majority Whip
- Rep. Laura Lanese – Asst. Majority Whip

- Rep. Emilia Sykes - Minority Leader
- Rep. Kristin Boggs - Assistant Minority Leader
- Rep. Kent Smith - Minority Whip
- Rep. Paula Hicks-Hudson - Assistant Minority Whip

Speaker Householder wasted little time announcing his top staff member, naming Jonathon McGee as chief of staff. McGee has more than 25 years of public and private sector experience, serving as deputy chief legal counsel under Governor George Voinovich and most recently serving as executive director of the Ohio Cable Telecommunications Association. McGee will also serve as majority caucus legal counsel, a position he held from 2001-2004 under Speaker Householder's prior stint as the chamber's leader. Speaker Householder also named Christine Morrison as the budget director for the caucus. Ms. Morrison began her career in the House, becoming a caucus policy advisor and policy director in 2005. Matthew McAuliffe, a veteran of state government, was named deputy chief of staff for House Republicans. McAuliffe most recently served as director of Cabinet Affairs and special advisor to former Governor John Kasich.

In the Senate, the Republican caucus voted to retain Sen. Larry Obhof as president. He will be joined by Sen. Bob Peterson as president pro tem, Sen. Matt Huffman as majority floor leader and Sen. Jay Hottinger as majority whip. Sen. Kenny Yuko was elected minority leader. Joining him are Sen. Cecil Thomas as assistant minority leader, Sen. Sean O'Brien as minority whip, and Sen. Sandra Williams as assistant minority whip.

On February 8th, the House released its committee membership rosters. Of particular importance to GAC is the House Finance Chairman, Rep. Scott Oelslager, the House Finance Health and Human Services Subcommittee Chairman, Rep. Mark Romanchuk, and the House Primary and Secondary Education Subcommittee, co-chaired by Rep. Bob Cupp and Rep. John Patterson. These four Chairmen will have direct impact and oversight to the biennial budget deliberations impacting the Ohio Medicaid, Ohio Department of Health and Ohio Department of Education budgets. Also of importance to GAC is the House Health Committee, which will be chaired by Rep. Derrick Merrin.

On February 15th, the Senate announced its committee rosters. Again, of primary importance to GAC are the Senate Finance Committee, chaired by Senator Matt Dolan, and the Senate Health Committee, chaired by Senator Dave Burke.

The FY20-21 biennial budget bill will likely not be introduced until March 2019. This is later than most budget bills are introduced, but in keeping with tradition with a new administration for which the Constitution provides a March 15th deadline for introduction. The process will begin in the House Finance Committee and then will move to the Senate Finance Committee in April. The Senate will have to finish its work by mid-June so that conference committee can finish its work and get the bill to the Governor's desk by June 30th.

On the legislative front, GAC continues to watch for any movement on art therapy and music therapy licensure. A new topic for vigilance is LEAD-K, which would legislatively mandate ASL for school children. This is a controversial national movement that ASHA has been watching carefully. Several states have passed LEAD-K, and we are on alert to watch for it in Ohio. Our concerns center on parent choice as the gold standard when considering access to amplification or communication via ASL. As of this date, no efforts are underway to move forward on this in Ohio, but it is on GAC's radar screen.

Ohio's Communication Disability Law has recently taken effect. The new law provides that a driver with a diagnosed communication disorder can enroll in a database that connects to Ohio's law enforcement database. Then, if that driver is pulled over in a traffic stop, the officer is made aware that the driver may have difficulty communicating with the officer. The goal of the new law is to reduce potential misunderstandings brought about by the communication difficulties. To participate, any driver with a communication disorder can fill out the verification form found at:

<https://www.ood.ohio.gov/Portals/0/Communication%20Disability%20Verification%20Form%2008-14-18.pdf>

In late January, the DeWine Administration announced that it would be reprocurring Ohio's managed care contracts. In anticipation of this, many provider advocacy groups have

been working to analyze provisions of managed care contracts with the state to ensure fairness to Medicaid providers. Topic areas include prompt pay, reimbursement rates, all products clauses, timely submission, claims denials, credentialing, medical necessary, network adequacy, payment recoupment and provider termination. The recommendations have been shared with Ohio Medicaid for consideration. GAC may want to look to add its support to the provider groups' recommendations.

We are monitoring the following legislation on your behalf in the 133rd General Assembly:

- SB1** **REDUCE REGULATORY RESTRICTIONS** (MCCOLLEY R, ROEGNER K) To require certain agencies to reduce the number of regulatory restrictions and to continue the provision of this act on and after August 18, 2019.
Current Status: 2/19/2019 - Senate Government Oversight and Reform, (First Hearing)
- SB7** **TEMP STATE OCCUPATIONAL LICENSES-MILITARY** (LEHNER P, HACKETT R) Regarding temporary state occupational licenses for members of the military and their spouses.
Current Status: 2/20/2019 - Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce, (First Hearing)
- SB14** **DRUG PRICE INFORMATION DISCLOSURE** (MAHARATH T) Regarding pharmacy benefit managers, pharmacists, and the disclosure to patients of drug price information.
Current Status: 2/12/2019 - Introduced
- SB25** **MEDICAID WORK, EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS** (HUFFMAN M) Regarding work and education requirements for the Medicaid program.
Current Status: 2/13/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid
- SB29** **MEDICAID COPAYMENTS** (DOLAN M) Regarding Medicaid copayment requirements.
Current Status: 2/19/2019 - Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid, (Second Hearing)