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**Ohio Speech & Hearing Governmental Affairs Coalition
Legislative Activities Report
October 2017**

Both chambers of the Ohio General Assembly resumed committee hearings in September after briefly recessing following the passage of the state operating budget (HB 49). Although both chambers already voted to override 6 of the Governor's 47 vetoes from HB 49, there is still talk of more override action. The House continues to discuss whether it should override the veto on the Medicaid expansion eligibility freeze. That vetoed language would have not allowed any additional otherwise eligible consumers (100 – 138% FPL) to enroll in Medicaid after July 1, 2018. Similarly, the Senate continues to discuss whether it should vote to override the vetoed provision of HB 49 that requires Ohio Medicaid to seek CMS approval of the Healthy Ohio waiver. You will recall that Ohio Medicaid was required to seek this waiver once before and was denied by CMS on the grounds that the premium payments would have the effect of removing coverage for many consumers. Both the House and Senate have until December 31, 2018 to make any and all overrides on HB 49.

Outside of the legislature, the Ohio Board of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology is already working on its merger with the Hearing Aid Dealers and Fitters Board. You will recall that this was a part of HB 49. The new Board will take effect in January 2018 and will be made up of 3 audiologists, 2 SLPs, 2 Hearing Aid Dealers and 2 public members. Applications for the new combined Board are being taken now. All of the current Board members remain interested in serving on the new Board and had to reapply in order to be considered for the appointment.

Under the provisions of HB 49, the new Board can create advisory committees to assist on rules and policy development. It is our understanding that all of the interested parties would like to see those committees created so that each licensure category can provide expert advice in their area of licensure. Many other combined boards operate successfully with these committees today.

The Board is also busy accepting comments on its audiology assistant draft rules. Comments will be accepted until October 6th through the Board's website and emails. The comments will help to further refine the rule draft. It is important to note that the rule draft will be the second step in this process as it moves forward. The first, required step is to pass legislation creating the license for audiology assistants and giving the Board the authority to promulgate rules to allow for the licensure.

Also outside of the legislature, GAC has reached out to the new head of the Office of Exceptional Children at ODE, Kim Monachino. We understand that Ms. Monachino is working to create the related services providers workgroup that was mandated by HB 49. We have made Ms. Monachino aware of all the work that GAC members have undertaken on this important issue and offered our support and participation in the new workgroup.

The field of potential candidates to become the next speaker of the Ohio House recently narrowed when Rep. Rob McColley (R-Napoleon) announced that he is supporting Rep. Ryan Smith over Rep. Larry Householder for the top spot in the House. McColley first entered the race after expressing concerns over Rep. Smith only being able to serve as speaker for one term before facing term limits. Rep. Householder, who is a freshman, could conceivably serve three two-year terms has the chamber's leader. "Ryan to me has demonstrated himself to be a very strong leader that has always had the best interests of the caucus in mind," McColley said in a statement.

In other news, the House Republican Caucus has replaced outgoing Rep. Margaret Conditt with George Lang, a West Chester Township trustee. Conditt, who has represented the 52nd House District for the past six years, announced she would resign her post in order to spend more time with her family. Rep. Lang was one of seven applicants for the position.

Also of note, Ohio's unemployment rate has risen to 5.4 percent according to the most recent figures reported by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. This is an increase from 4.9 percent last year at this time. It marks highest unemployment rate in Ohio since September 2014.

We have been tracking the following legislation during the 132nd General Assembly:

HB49 OPERATING BUDGET (SMITH R) Creates FY 2018-2019 main operating budget.

Current Status: 8/22/2017 - Consideration of Governor's Veto

HB51 DEPARTMENT REVIEW SCHEDULE (FABER K) To require standing committees of the General Assembly to establish a schedule for the periodic review and sunset of state departments that are currently in the Governor's cabinet, and to require that Auditor of State performance audits be scheduled to coincide with the periodic review.

Current Status: 5/16/2017 - **REPORTED OUT AS AMENDED**, House State

and Local Government, (Fourth Hearing)

HB75 PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE-ARMED FORCES (GAVARONE T, MERRIN D) To establish an expedited process to grant a professional license to an individual who is on active duty as a member of the armed forces of the United States, or is the spouse of such an individual, and holds a valid license in another state.

Current Status: 3/15/2017 - House Armed Services, Veterans Affairs and Homeland Security, (Second Hearing)

HB85 ENTER HEALTH CARE COMPACT (RETFERFORD W) To enter into the Health Care Compact.

Current Status: 3/7/2017 - House Federalism and Interstate Relations, (First Hearing)

HB98 CAREER INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS (DUFFEY M, BOGGS K) Regarding the presentation of career information to students.

Current Status: 9/12/2017 - House Education and Career Readiness, (Third Hearing)

HB115 DATABASE-PERSONS WITH COMMUNICATION DISABILITY (GAVARONE T, WIGGAM S) To establish a database of persons who voluntarily register as being diagnosed with a communication disability or who voluntarily register a minor child or ward as the parents or guardians of such persons for purposes of law enforcement notification.

Current Status: 6/6/2017 - Senate Government Oversight and Reform, (First Hearing)

HB131 PHYSICAL THERAPY LAWS (GAVARONE T, REINEKE W) To modify the laws governing the practice of physical therapy.

Current Status: 6/21/2017 - House Health , (Third Hearing)

HB150 LICENSE PLATE CREATION (PATMON B) To create a special license plate for hearing-impaired individuals.

Current Status: 6/7/2017 - House Transportation and Public Safety, (Second Hearing)

HB262 INDEPENDENT BUDGET PROCESS (BUTLER, JR. J, ROMANCHUK M) To provide for the preparation of a state biennial budget independent of that submitted by the Governor and to authorize the Legislative Service Commission, upon the request of the Speaker of the House of Representatives or the President of the Senate, to arrange for an independent actuarial review of a proposed bill, specified analyses of economic policy initiatives and state benchmarking data, and a study of the state's long-range financial outlook.

Current Status: 6/20/2017 - Referred to Committee House Government Accountability and Oversight

HB280 MOTORCYCLE EARPLUGS (GOODMAN W) To permit a person to wear earplugs for hearing protection while operating a motorcycle.

Current Status: 9/20/2017 - House Transportation and Public Safety, (First Hearing)

HB289 OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING REVIEW (HOOD R, MCCOLLEY R) To establish a statewide policy on occupational regulation, to require standing committees of the General Assembly to periodically review occupational licensing boards regarding their sunset, to require the Common Sense Initiative Office to review certain actions taken by occupational licensing boards, and to require the Legislative Service Commission to perform assessments of occupational licensing bills and state regulation of occupations.

Current Status: 9/12/2017 - Referred to Committee House Government Accountability and Oversight

HCR5 SUPPORT AFFORDABLE CARE ACT (SYKES E) To urge the Congress of the United States, and in particular the Ohio Congressional delegation, to support the preservation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010.

Current Status: 2/28/2017 - Referred to Committee House Insurance

HCR6 REPEAL AFFORDABLE CARE ACT (GOODMAN W, FABER K) To urge congress to continue its efforts to fully repeal the affordable care act and to recommend that future federal health care policies restore power to the states, fund the Medicaid program through block grants to individual states, and permit the sale of health insurance across state lines.

Current Status: 3/7/2017 - Referred to Committee House Government Accountability and Oversight

SB3 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT (BEAGLE B, BALDERSON T) To revise the laws governing the state's workforce development system, programs that may be offered by primary and secondary schools, certificates of qualification for employment, and the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities Agency, and to designate the first week of May as In-Demand Jobs Week.

Current Status: 9/13/2017 - **SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED**, House Higher Education and Workforce Development, (Fourth Hearing)

SB27 DEAF HISTORY MONTH DESIGNATION (BEAGLE B) To designate the period beginning March 13 and ending April 15 as "Ohio Deaf History Month."

Current Status: 4/25/2017 - **REPORTED OUT**, House State and Local Government, (Third Hearing)

SB48 HEARING IMPAIRED-DRIVING (WILLIAMS S) To create a special license plate for hearing-impaired individuals and to require the registrar to include an identifying symbol on a driver's license, commercial driver's license, or state-issued identification card of a hearing-impaired individual, if requested.

Current Status: 3/7/2017 - Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs, (First Hearing)

SB59 BICYCLE USE-HELMETS (SKINDELL M) To require bicycle operators and passengers under 18 years of age to wear protective helmets when the bicycle is operated on a roadway and to establish the Bicycle Safety Fund to be used by the Department of Public Safety to assist low-income families in the purchase of bicycle helmets.

Current Status: 3/28/2017 - Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs, (First Hearing)

SB79 STATE DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW SCHEDULE (JORDAN K) To require standing committees of the General Assembly to establish a schedule for the periodic review and sunset of state departments that are currently in the Governor's cabinet, and to require that Auditor of State performance audits be scheduled to coincide with the periodic review.

Current Status: 9/12/2017 - Referred to Committee House Government Accountability and Oversight

SB91 OHIO HEALTH CARE PLAN (SKINDELL M, TAVARES C) To establish and operate the Ohio Health Care Plan to provide universal health care coverage to all Ohio residents.

Current Status: 3/28/2017 - Senate Insurance and Financial Institutions, (First Hearing)

SB93 HEALTH INSURANCE-HEARING AIDS (BROWN E) To require health insurers to offer coverage for hearing aids.

Current Status: 3/28/2017 - Senate Insurance and Financial Institutions, (First Hearing)

SB99 MEDICAID EXPANSION-NEW ENROLLMENT (COLEY W) To prohibit the Medicaid program from newly enrolling individuals as part of the expansion eligibility group.

Current Status: 3/21/2017 - Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid, (First Hearing)

SB110 HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS-IDENTIFICATION (TAVARES C) To require a health care professional to wear identification when providing care or treatment in the presence of a patient.

Current Status: 4/26/2017 - Referred to Committee Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid

SB168 MEDICAID EXPANSION (JORDAN K) To prohibit the Medicaid program from covering the expansion eligibility group and to require aggregate General Revenue Fund appropriations for state agencies to be reduced by specified amounts for the biennium beginning July 1, 2017, and ending on June 30, 2019.

Current Status: 6/28/2017 - Referred to Committee Senate Finance

SB174 WAGE PROTECTIONS-FAIR ACT (TAVARES C) To enact the "Fair and

Acceptable Income Required (FAIR) Act" and to revise the enforcement of the prohibitions against discrimination in the payment of wages.

Current Status: 9/7/2017 - Referred to Committee Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce

SB177 VOLUNTEER HEALTH CARE-IMMUNITY (LEHNER P) To expand the circumstances in which qualified immunity from civil liability applies with respect to volunteer health care services provided to indigent and uninsured persons.

Current Status: 9/26/2017 - Senate Judiciary, (First Hearing)