

## OHFAMA LEGISLATIVE REPORT SUMMER 2016

The Ohio General Assembly remains on its extended summer recess in preparation for the upcoming November general election where all Ohio House seats and roughly one half of Ohio Senate seats will be before Ohio voters. However, even though Ohio legislators are not in Columbus conducting committee meetings and legislative sessions, OHFAMA remains active monitoring and preparing to address pending issues for the “lame duck” legislative session that will be of debate in the ending activities for the 131<sup>st</sup> General Assembly.

### SENATE BILL 129

One issue that has already been completed and is a huge victory for our members and the health care community as a whole is the passage of SB 129, legislation to establish standards of operation for prior authorization in state statute. SB 129 was jointly sponsored by Senators Randy Gardner and Capri Cafaro and will make Ohio one of the very few states in the country to have uniform PA requirements in either state statute or administrative rule.

OHFAMA recently published an extensive outline of the contents of SB 129 in our association newsletter but one of the main components of the bill requires a “peer to peer” review of prior authorization requests, denials and appeals; a provision that OHFAMA fought extensively for to remain as part of this important legislation.

OHFAMA is especially supportive of all the hard work put into this bill by Senator Randy Gardner. Throughout this long and difficult legislative process, Senator Gardner was always receptive to input from OHFAMA and fought very hard to ensure the final contents of this bill would help the patients we serve and allow our members to cut down on unnecessary administrative burdens so our doctors can spend more time with their patients.

### HBOT LANGUAGE

Your association has been working with Representative Kirk Schuring and the State Medical Board (SMB) to formulate language that will allow our members to administer HBOT therapy for conditions within our recognized scope of practice. This therapy would be done in consultation with a physician certified in this area of treatment. OHFAMA is working with Representative Schuring, the SMB and other legislative leaders to find a legislative vehicle for this language in the upcoming “lame duck” session.

### CULTURAL COMPETENCY

As you are aware, OHFAMA has worked on stand-alone legislation (SB 33) which would mandate the inclusion of coursework on “cultural competency” in the continuing education requirements for podiatric physicians and most other health care providers. OHFAMA has stood in opposition to SB 33 and has provided the sponsor of the bill (Senator Charleta Tavares) and other members of the Senate

with all related activity our profession is and has been doing in this area for quite some time. While SB 33 has not progressed on its own in the Ohio Senate, the language was inserted into a recently introduced bill on Ohio's infant mortality rates, SB 332, sponsored by Senate Health Committee chairwoman Shannon Jones. OHFAMA is once again working with our partners within the Ohio Provider Coalition to express our opposition to this language and work with the sponsor and Senate leaders on a possible compromise or possible removal of this language from SB 332.

#### PROPOSED DRUG PRICING RELIEF ACT

In 2016, Ohio voters will NOT be facing a ballot issue as proposed by the AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF) of California that would have mandated that all prescription drugs for all state and county public health care programs be purchased at no higher than the cost level of the US Veterans' Administration. OHFAMA was part of a coalition opposing the proposed initiated statute mandate. Irregularities developed in the signature gathering process that led to a challenge being filed before the Ohio Supreme Court concerning the process used to gather these initial signatures that at this time, remains undecided. The out-of-state proponents of the measure chose not to meet a July 6 deadline for submission of additional required signatures, thereby meaning the earliest such an initiative could be before Ohio voters would be November of 2017.