Ohio Counseling Association Advocacy Update

The Ohio Counseling Association (OCA) is strongly opposed to House Bill 617 and SB 366, which are companion pieces of legislation that could greatly affect the counseling profession in Ohio. Representative LaTourette (R- Bainbridge Twp.), who is a part of House Leadership, introduced HB 617 on November 15th. There are no co-sponsors to the legislation. Senator Bill Seitz (R- Cincinnati) also introduced SB 366 on November 15th. Senator John Eklund (R- Chardon) is a co-sponsor.

If enacted, these pieces of legislation would consolidate several allied healthcare professional boards. Under this proposal, counselors would be licensed by a newly created Behavioral Health Professionals Board. A counselor would not be guaranteed a seat on the Behavioral Health Professionals Board.

The Ohio General Assembly is currently in “Lame Duck” session. All priority pieces of legislation will pass before the end of the year. Is is critical to let your legislator know that this legislation is bad policy and could impact your profession drastically.

Senate Bill 366 has not yet been assigned to a committee. House Bill 617 has been assigned to the House Government Accountability and Oversight Committee. Following is a make up of the committee:

Chairman Blessing (R) Cincinnati 614-466-9091
Vice-Chairman Rezabek (R) Clayton 614-466-2960
Ranking Minority Member Clyde (D) Kent 614-466-2004
Representative Amstutz (R) Wooster 614-466-1474
Representative Buchy (R) Greenville 614-466-6344
Representative Butler (R) Oakwood 614-466-6008
Representative Green (R) Mt. Orab 614-644-6034
Representative McColley (R) Napoleon 614-466-3760
Representative Pelanda (R) Marysville 614-466-8147
Representative Smith (R) Bidwell 614-466-1366
Representative Curtin (D) Marble Cliff 614-644-6005
Representative Howse (D) Cleveland 614-466-1414
Representative Leland (D) Columbus 614-466-2473

OCA urges you to CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATORS! If you don’t know who your state legislator is, you can find it here using your zip code:
http://www.ohiohouse.gov/committee/government-accountability-and-oversight