

To All ACP Ohio Members:

Please see the below an important message from Marisa Weisel, Manager of Advocacy and Policy for the Ohio State Medical Association regarding HB64.

Jan

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House of Medicine:

The OSMA testified yesterday on the Medicaid physician reimbursement sections of the proposed budget (Gongwer coverage is copied below, testimony is attached.) We are working to engage our members in advocacy efforts to eliminate the proposed cuts to dual-eligible payments and to further increase Medicaid's payment rates for E&M codes. Our current activities include:

- Next Monday (3/15), we will send a "call to action" email to our members urging them to contact their legislators.
- Next Wednesday afternoon (3/18), we will have physicians testify before the House Finance Subcommittee on Health and Human Services. We are urging physicians to visit the statehouse at this time to support their colleagues at the hearing and to talk with legislators.
- Scheduling one-on-one meetings for physicians to meet with their legislators at the statehouse and in their districts.

I know many of you are already engaging your members in similar activities. Please let me know if you, your organization, and/or your members would like to join forces or participate in our efforts.

Thanks for your support,

Marisa

#### **OSMA Urges Subpanel To Consider Reimbursement Increases**

lawmakers Wednesday to increase provider reimbursement rates in the biennial budget, saying it would improve access and capacity to serve Ohioans.

The association's call for funding increases came as the House Finance Health & Human Services Subcommittee kicked off public testimony on the governor's spending proposal ([HB 64](#) ) for Fiscal Years 2016-2017. (See *separate story*)

Tim Maglione, the OSMA senior director of government relations, refuted claims that the budget's proposed physician Medicaid reimbursements would equal \$156 million over the biennium and raised concerns about how the spending bill would pay for the increases.

"Let me be clear: the proposal before you to modestly increase primary care reimbursement rates is paid for by decreasing other physician reimbursement rates and by cutting funds for physician training," he said in written testimony. "Overall, the net impact of the executive budget on physicians is essentially zero, not a \$156 million increase."

Mr. Maglione added that "a physician rate cut would pay for a physician rate gain," under the budget, as the proposed changes would reduce Medicaid reimbursement to physicians who treat dual-eligible patients to pay for a slight increase in reimbursement for those who treat traditional Medicaid patients.

The witness cautioned that the measure could result in significant reimbursement cuts for specialty physicians. He added that if the proposed cuts occur, OSMA believes physicians across Ohio will be forced to limit the number of dual-eligible patients they see.

Mr. Maglione argued that better physician reimbursement rates improve access to care for Medicaid patients and asked lawmakers to reject the proposed cuts to the dual-eligible program and invest in raising Medicaid physician rates to Medicare levels.

"We believe without further increases, more Medicaid and dual-eligible patients will end up in our emergency rooms and nursing homes," he said. "We must recognize that investing in physician services, including care coordination and prevention, will result in long-term cost savings to the Medicaid program."

Mr. Maglione asked lawmakers to consider the investment as they look at the Medicaid budget.

He told [Rep. Emilia Sykes](#) (D-Akron) that when the state had the rate bump under the Affordable Care Act, more physicians were encouraged to get into the Medicaid program, extend office hours and hire more staff.

"We do know that there is a correlation between payment rates and physicians ability to participate in the program," the witness said.

Mr. Maglione added that exodus of trained physicians from the state is due to several factors, including how doctors are paid under different programs.

[Rep. Mark Romanchuk](#) (R-Mansfield) asked why it's prudent to continue increasing Medicaid and Medicare rates. The witness said salaries are included in office expense overhead, as well as new technology and other business-related expenses.

Mr. Maglione told [Rep. Nickie Antonio](#) (D-Lakewood) that he believes there will be many doctors seeing net cuts in reimbursements under the budget proposal.

Chairman [Rep. Robert Sprague](#) (R-Findlay) asked where the money from Medicaid expansion went to if not to improve primary care access. The witness said he believes it's gone to the same places it always has, but that the population has just expanded.

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