

# **Ohio Chemical Dependency Professionals Board**

## **Testimony on Sub. H.B. 153, SFY 2012-2013 Biennial Budget Ohio Senate Finance Committee**

May 4, 2011

Chairman Widener, members of the Committee, I am Bob Field, Executive Director of the Ohio Chemical Dependency Professionals Board. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you this afternoon.

### **Background**

Created in December of 2002 with the passage and signing of H.B. 496 (124<sup>th</sup> General Assembly), the Chemical Dependency Professionals (OCDP) Board was organized in April 2003 and assumed the authority to credential chemical dependency professionals June 13, 2004. The Board provides licensing and certification services to approximately 7,500 chemical dependency treatment and prevention professionals. It endorses approximately 350 individual trainings per year and awards, annually, approximately 25 to 30 educational provider status designations. In SFY 2010 the Board received 32 complaints, completed 30 investigations and issued 26 sanctions.

### **Mission**

The Board's mission is to ensure high standards of alcohol and other drug treatment and prevention for all citizens through the assurance of a competent, well trained and ethical workforce. This is accomplished by:

- establishing and maintaining standards for those who seek a license or certification
- guiding practice through the enforcement of ethical standards
- providing oversight and monitoring of continuing education activities
- overseeing the administration of professional examinations

The public is served further by the Board's ongoing efforts to develop a workforce of appropriate size and skill to serve the needs of Ohio's citizens. The Board seeks to facilitate professional development opportunities and serve as a catalyst for positive change.

### **Organizational Structure**

Organizationally, the Board has thirteen members. Twelve members are appointed by the Governor and consist of seven alcohol and other drug treatment professionals holding a chemical dependency counselor license, two professionals holding the prevention specialist certification, one medical doctor with experience practicing in a field related to chemical dependency counseling and two public members. The Director of ODADAS is authorized to appoint one ex officio member to the Board.

The Board currently has five full time staff: an Executive Director, Deputy Director, Prevention Certification Administrator, Treatment Credentialing Administrator and Office Assistant. The staff provides technical expertise and knowledge to the professionals in the field, allowing them to move efficiently through the licensing process. Thoroughness of application review and timeliness of staff responses are all a part of the quality customer service the Board values and expects.

### **Board Leadership**

The Board continues to play a key leadership role in a number of initiatives designed to provide chemical dependency professionals greater opportunities in the present, strengthen the profession in the future and ensure the state is provided well trained and qualified professionals. Some examples include:

- Playing a key role in workforce development with the goal of identifying pathways to recruit, retain and increase the number of alcohol and other drug treatment and prevention professionals
- Actively engaging with state-wide, national and international organizations to ensure Ohio continues to be a leader in the credentialing of alcohol and other drug treatment and prevention professionals.

### **Budget**

The Board is a fee based entity and does not receive or use General Revenue Funds. Specifically, the Board is part of the 4K9 Fund group. This fund serves as a repository for fees collected by Ohio's professional and occupational licensing boards.

The Board supports its portion of the budget as proposed in Sub. H.B. 153: \$433,734 in SFY 2012 and \$417,827 in SFY 2013. These amounts represent a reduction of \$10,266 in SFY 2012 and \$10,173 in SFY 2013 from what the Board originally submitted to OBM (\$444,000 in SFY 2012 and \$428,000 in SFY 2013). The Board understands that this reduction reflected the Administration's proposed shift in retirement contributions and anticipated effects of S.B. 5. Although the shift in retirement contributions is eliminated, the addition of pension shift replacement funding as a line item in OBM's budget addresses the Board's concern about meeting its obligations without a corresponding return to the appropriation authority levels it originally submitted to OBM.

Over the course of the biennium the Board expects to reduce its spending by over 13% when compared to its SFY 2011 spending authority. This reduction will be accomplished primarily by the elimination of one position, reducing the Board full time staff from five to four effective July 1, 2011. The Board is proposing this difficult, but necessary, step in order to help continue bringing Board expenses in line with its projected revenues. The loss of one staff member is expected to be off set by reallocating staff duties, as well as through improvements in automation, in online services and to the credentialing process. The Board will continue to use DAS' Central Service Agency (CSA) in order to help contain costs and as a vehicle to expand its participation in the sharing of services whenever and wherever possible.

Ultimately, the proposed budget recommendation will:

- Support the operations of the board and four full time staff
- Ensure the Board is able to provide consumer protection through the enforcement of ethical standards
- Enable basic renewal and new application processing
- Support efforts to increase efficiencies in the processing of renewals and new applications
- Support ongoing workforce development efforts designed to increase access to the Board's credentials

Moreover, the proposed budget meshes with the Board's priorities for the upcoming biennium and its overall strategic plan. They are:

- Ensure that the credentialing and ethics review processes are completed in a timely manner and to standard
- Continue to improve services for the Board's credentialed professionals
- Complete revisions to the Board's credentialing requirements in order to provide greater access to the profession
- Implement the Board's chemical dependency treatment and prevention curricula for use by Ohio's colleges and universities.
- Continue the implementation and evolution of the Board's college and university accreditation program
- Strengthen collaboration with other state agencies and related systems
- Continue working with educational providers to expand professional development opportunities

During the upcoming biennium the Board believes that the number of professionals licensed and certified by the Board will grow. This growth is expected, in part, to be the result of proposed revisions to the Board's credentialing requirements and structure which are designed to increase access to the profession and expand the pool of those who may be interested in holding one of the Board's credentials. The Board believes this initiative is critical to sustaining the profession and will require changes to the Board's statute. Draft legislation has been finalized and is ready for introduction pending the identification of a sponsor.

In closing, the Board fully appreciates the current budgetary environment. It intends to continue working diligently to contain costs, increase efficiencies and ensure that its expenditures are covered with sufficient revenues.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I will be glad to respond to any questions you may have at this time.