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**SENATE PRESIDENT-ELECT NIEHAUS SELECTS  
CHRIS WIDENER TO HEAD SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

*As chairman, Widener will steer challenging budget through the Ohio Senate*

COLUMBUS— Senate President-Elect Tom Niehaus (R-New Richmond) today announced his intent to appoint Senator Chris Widener (R-Springfield) as chairman of the Senate Finance & Financial Institutions Committee for the 129<sup>th</sup> General Assembly. Widener currently serves as the panel’s Vice Chairman.

An architect by profession, Chairman Widener will play a key role in constructing the state’s general operating budget. He will also serve as a member of the State Controlling Board, which approves the release of state funding to state agencies, boards and commissions.

“There is no secret that this is going to be a very challenging budget and that the budget bill is the single most important piece of legislation we will do next year.” Niehaus said. “Anyone who has worked with Chris Widener knows him to be knowledgeable, hard-working, thorough and a good listener. He is the right Senator at the right time to head the Senate Finance & Financial Institutions Committee.”

“My highest priority is to ensure Ohio gets back on sound financial footing so we can create an atmosphere that will bring new jobs and economic investment to every region of the state,” Widener said. “I am honored by Senator Niehaus’ confidence in me and look forward to digging in and getting to work alongside House Chairman Amstutz and Governor-Elect Kasich on a fiscally sound, balanced state budget bill.”

Senator Widener has served in the Ohio Senate since 2009, representing the residents of Clark, Greene and Madison counties. Prior to that, he served in the Ohio House of Representatives from 1999-2000 and then from 2003-2008. A fiscal conservative, Widener has been recognized numerous times as a “Watchdog of the Treasury.” As the current chairman of the Senate Energy & Public Utilities Committee, he recently passed

legislation designed to make Ohio's tax code more competitive for attracting advanced energy jobs to Ohio.

Senator Widener resides in Springfield, Ohio with his wife Sally and two children.

Today marks Senate President-Elect Niehaus' first committee announcement. The rest of the assignments will be made at the beginning of the next General Assembly.