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Senate Bill 144 Moves to Governor Kasich's Desk

Columbus, OH – Senate Bill 144, sponsored by Senator Dave Burke, was unanimously passed by the Ohio Legislature and is headed to Governor John Kasich's desk for his signature. The bill will streamline the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) Commissioners, the Governor's Council on People with Disabilities, and the Consumer Advisory Committee into a single, more inclusive council that will provide feedback to OOD on vocational rehabilitation services. The council will be named Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities Council.

“Moving to the OOD Council will improve collaboration with advocacy groups, consumers and their families to ensure quality services for Ohioans with disabilities to achieve meaningful employment and independence,” said OOD Executive Director Kevin Miller.

The council will consist of 15 members. Additionally, the existing OOD Commissioners will be rolled onto the council to serve out the remainder of their terms. All members of the OOD Council will be appointed by the Governor.

The makeup of the council follows criteria established by the federal government, including that a majority of the members on the council have a disability. Other seats on the council include an individual who has applied for or received vocational rehabilitation services; an individual who represents community rehabilitation program service providers; and an individual who represents an organization that advocates on behalf of individuals with physical, cognitive, sensory or mental disabilities.

OOD worked with stakeholder groups to address concerns throughout the legislative process. Proponents of the legislation include Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence (OCALI), National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), Deaf Services Center, National Multiple Sclerosis Society, and Ohio Coalition for Education of Children with Disabilities.

If you are interested in serving on the OOD Council, you can find an application at [Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities Council Application](#).

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities is the state agency responsible for assisting individuals with disabilities to gain meaningful employment, to live independently or receive disability benefits through the Social Security Administration. www.ood.ohio.gov

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