



**Ohio Component**  
**Dr. Dale Anne Featheringham**

**2/15/24**

Hello!

The Ohio Association of Orthodontists held their fall meeting in conjunction with the Cleveland Society of Orthodontists on October 6, 2023. I was given time at this meeting to speak to the orthodontists in attendance, both to introduce myself as our new Ohio director, and to give news of what is happening in the Great Lakes Association of Orthodontists as well as at the AAO.

Specific items that I discussed at this meeting included:

- The fact that \$70,000 of support was received from the AAO Legal Support fund to support advocacy efforts to strengthen teledentistry laws in Ohio by defeating attempts to rewrite the Ohio Dental Practice Act. Mail-order orthodontic companies and the American Teledentistry Association were trying to change the Ohio Dental Practice Act to allow the full spectrum of orthodontic care to be provided completely by teledentistry. Due to the work of the AAO, our state lobbying team, and local orthodontists, these efforts were soundly defeated, and language was put in place to ensure patient safety and the practice of responsible orthodontics in our state.
- The occurrence of meetings of Ohio orthodontists with the Ohio Community College Association with the goal of figuring out ways to promote dental/orthodontic assistant programs in Ohio's community college system.
- And finally, exploration of the possibility of providing some dental loan repayment to orthodontic graduates that are willing to go to underserved areas in Ohio. A program currently exists for dentists in Ohio, which is funded by a fee that is collected with each license renewal. Our lobbyists wanted to see if there was any possibility of expanding this program to include orthodontists, or if the state would consider building funding for this into the budget. Although it appears that this will not be happening at this time, I appreciated the initiative taken by our lobbyists to provide a creative solution to the student loan debt problem, while improving access to care in Ohio.

The Ohio Association of Orthodontists remains active in lobbying for patient safety and the ethical practice of orthodontics. In addition, we continue to enjoy collaborative efforts with the Cleveland Society of Orthodontists, who allow me to report on GLAO activities at each meeting. Most recently, I spoke at the Winter meeting on February 9<sup>th</sup>, where I discussed our upcoming fall annual session meeting in St. Thomas.

In addition to keeping the communication channels open at each quarterly meeting in Cleveland, I was busy contacting non-renewals in our state. I am delighted to be serving in this role, and am always available to answer any questions that you might have.

Respectfully submitted,  
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GLAO Ohio Director

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