GLAO

THE GREAT LAKES ASSOCIATION OF ORTHODONTISTS

Board Report- Fall 2026

Dale Anne Featheringham, GLAO Director

Hello everyone, greetings from Ohio where we are focused on all things Buckeye football as we head into the fall. In addition to cheering on the Buckeyes, we are excited to host the GLAO 100th Anniversary celebration in Columbus as well!

Prior to the GLAO meeting, on October 22nd, the Ohio Association of Orthodontists will host a Lobby Day event in Columbus at the statehouse. This will be Ohio's 4th Annual Lobby Day, and will be attended by both practicing orthodontists and residents, our AAO Advocacy Team, and our Ohio Lobby team. As this becomes an annual event, it allows us to build relationships with legislators that can come in handy when an issue arises. In addition, it helps us strengthen our relationship with our lobby team, and gain experience in discussing our issues with legislators. This helps us become trusted resources for our legislators, and gain the confidence to testify about an issue if needed. A final benefit is that we can strengthen our relationship with our state dental association, the ODA, which is important to working collaboratively.

Sometimes when we work on advocacy goals, it's easy to get frustrated and feel like "nothing is happening", despite donating to the PAC or even acting on alerts or attending advocacy conferences. Unfortunately, this is the nature of the business when trying to get things done in Washington or at the state level. However, I was pleased to see the result of advocacy efforts on both the state and federal level (most recently from a meeting with the FDA during the 2026 Professional Advocacy Conference), result in the publication of a new consumer webpage on clear aligners that reinforces several patient health and safety principles that have been part of the AAO's longstanding position on clear aligner treatment. Since clear aligners are regulated as prescription medical devices, the FDA heard the AAO's message and created a new webpage resource explaining the benefits, risks, and appropriate use of clear aligners. Specifically, the webpage includes points such as the importance of ongoing supervision by a licensed practitioner, the importance of having an in-person examination before treatment, and the ways patients can report adverse events that happen with clear aligner treatment. This is just another example of the AAO putting patient safety as a foundational principle in our advocacy efforts, and using a multi-pronged strategy composed of regulatory engagement, federal and state legislation, coalition building, clinical evidence, and sustained grassroots outreach. None of these efforts work without engagement of our members- at the very least, donating to the

PAC and taking a minute to sign on to legislative alerts that come to your email- and if you choose to go to the next level, attending a Lobby Day on the state and/or federal level.

I have regularly conveyed the importance of the AAO's advocacy efforts, and the need to fund those efforts by donating to the PAC, at the Cleveland Society of Orthodontists meetings.

In addition to our typical focus on advocacy, the Ohio Association of Orthodontists has undertaken a project to revamp its website and logo. This effort has been spearheaded by our executive director, Lori Mollohan. Special thanks to Lori for all of her work in helping to get the much-needed relaunch of our website completed.

We look forward to seeing everyone in Columbus to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the GLAO. And don't forget to come a day early to attend the 4th Annual Lobby Day!

Sincerely,

Dale Anne Featheringham