



**Council on Governmental Affairs  
Albany Hilton  
April 17, 2023**

*MINUTES*

The NYSDA Council on Governmental Affairs met in Albany on Monday, April 17, 2023, at 12:00 p.m. Present were: Drs. Kenneth B. Cooperman, New York County via Zoom; Seth T. Farren, Third District; Phong T. Chung, Fourth District; Howard J. Warner, Sixth District; William L. Hurtt, Seventh District; Michael D. Ehlers, Eighth District via Zoom; Bhagwati J. Mistry, Ninth District; Michael S. Shreck, Nassau County; Radha Sachdeva-Munk, Suffolk County; Frank J. Palmaccio, Board of Trustees Liaison; and Raymond G. Miller, ADA Representative. Also present were Ms. Briana McNamee, Director of Governmental Affairs; Patricia J. Marcucia, Administrator; Carolyn Kerr, Brown and Weinraub, PLLC; Lauren Tobias, Brown & Weinraub, PLLC; and Mr. Bernard Hackett, Second District Dental Society Executive Director. Absent from the meeting were Drs. Robert F. Schaefer, Chair and Fifth District; Raymond A. Flagiello, Second District; Paul J. Kim, Ninth District; for whom Dr. Mistry substituted; Joseph R. Caruso, Queens County; Moshe Glick, Bronx County; and James A. Wanamaker, New Dentist Representative.

The meeting was called to order at 12:15 p.m. Self-introductions of Council members, guests and NYSDA staff were taken.

A motion to accept the agenda as printed was made by Dr. Farren and seconded by Dr. Shreck. The agenda was approved unanimously.

A motion to accept the minutes from the November 18, 2022 meeting was made by Dr. Warner and seconded by Dr. Hurtt. The minutes were approved unanimously.

**Brown and Weinraub, PLLC Introduction**

Back at its November 2022 meeting, the Council was informed by NYSDA Executive Director, Mr. Greg Hill, that Lobby Review Committee, comprised of: Drs. Kevin Henner; Frank Palmaccio; Luis Mauleon; Theresa Casper-Klock; John Demas; Robert Schaefer; and Michael Breault sent out Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for a contract lobbyist. After review and discussion of the RFPs by the committee members, they narrowed the field down to five firms, three of which were interviewed by Mr. Hill and Ms. McNamee. The firm that stood out the most was Brown and Weinraub, PLLC. Ms. McNamee

introduced to the Council two of the Brown and Weinraub lobbyists assigned to the “NYSDA Team,” Carolyn Kerr and Lauren Tobias.

Ms. Kerr has been at Brown and Weinraub for twelve years. She served four years as vice president of government affairs for UnitedHealth Group in New York. There, she was responsible for managing all aspects of external relationships with the governor’s office, state legislature, state agencies and other stakeholders for United’s commercial insurance, Medicaid managed care, Medicare, health information technology, behavioral health and other business segments. Before joining United, Ms. Kerr served in Governor George E. Pataki’s Counsel’s Office for three years, with a portfolio that began with housing and human services issues and agencies, then transitioned to health and mental health agencies and issues, including Medicaid. Ms. Kerr joined the governor’s office after working for seven years as assistant counsel to the Office of General Counsel for the U.S. House of Representatives. Ms. Kerr is a graduate of The George Washington University Law School (J.D.) and Bates College (B.A.).

Ms. Tobias has been at Brown and Weinraub for two years. She served as the Director of the Division of Family Health in the New York State Department of Health and the New York State Title V Director. She has served in several other state positions including Deputy Director for Policy in the Office of Health Systems Management and the Assistant Division Director, Program Development and Management, in the Office of Health Insurance Programs where she played an integral role in implementing the initial set of Medicaid Redesign initiatives, including Health Homes. Ms. Tobias also served in the NYS Assembly and worked in the nonprofit sector on policy and advocacy related to public health and social service systems which serve people of reproductive age and families. Ms. Tobias earned her BA from Muhlenberg College and her Master’s degree in Public Affairs and Policy with a concentration in health policy from the Rockefeller College of the State University at Albany.

Dr. Shreck inquired about the role of Brown and Weinraub with NYSDA and its members. It was explained that Brown and Weinraub are NYSDA’s contracted lobbyists, but Ms. McNamee is the internal lobbyist and Director of Governmental Affairs, therefore, she will be the point of contact for NYSDA members for anything having to do with legislation, policy or advocacy. The team assigned to NYSDA from Brown and Weinraub are the boots on the ground team at the Capitol. Those team members are in constant contact with Ms. McNamee and are support to the Governmental Affairs team at NYSDA. They also have scheduled weekly meetings.

### **Overview of 2023-24 Legislative Session**

The Council was provided with the full list of bills with positions that NYSDA is tracking. Ms. McNamee told the Council that there are 38 new legislators this year, which provides NYSDA an opportunity to build new relationships. Participants in Advocacy Day will have the opportunity to meet with many of those new legislators tomorrow.

Ms. McNamee presented a higher-level overview of bills NYSDA is tracking. She explained that over 12,000 bills have been introduced in this session so far. NYSDA is currently tracking 192 bills that could somehow impact dentistry. In her role as Director of Governmental Affairs, Ms. McNamee will continue to provide updates to the Council so the Council members have a better pulse on what's going on at the Capitol.

## **2023-24 Legislative Priorities**

NYSDA has currently identified four legislative priorities for the 2023-24 legislative session so far. These priorities were identified by way of resolutions from NYSDA Councils, the Board of Trustees and the House of Delegates. Of course, the priorities can change and they can also be expanded. The Council was provided with the one-pagers and talking points for workforce shortages; insurance reform; and vaccination administration eligibility. These topics will be discussed in much greater detail to kick off Advocacy Day. Another NYSDA priority that was identified was virtual credit cards.

There was an inquiry about the dental scope of practice and why that is not listed as a priority. It was explained that internally it hasn't been identified as a priority yet. NYSDA is still tracking the bill. In the past Assemblymember Deborah Glick was a roadblock for legislation having to do with expanding the scope of dentistry. There is now a new chair for the Assembly Higher Education Committee, Assemblymember Pat Fahy. NYSDA is hopeful that she will be more open to discussion about expanding the scope and NYSDA can successfully move forward with that legislation. The Council believes it is important to make this issue a priority for NYSDA.

Knowing this is a very broad issue, the Council went into a more detailed discussion on the workforce shortage issues. There are several caveats when it comes to workforce shortages. Our ask of the legislators would be to streamline the administrative barriers and loosen administrative bottlenecks relating to the delays in licensure; to expand existing loan repayment programs such as Doctors Across New York to include dentists; to create a loan deferral and/or forgiveness for dentists during their dental residency program; and to create and/or expand dental hygiene and dental assisting programs to make the pathway to licensure more portable. It was mentioned to the Council that Dr. Steven Gounardes has been successfully helping his residents fill out their licensure applications with accuracy. NYSDA is working with him to put together a webinar that will be made available to residency directors and residents alike.

## **Visions for Council on Governmental Affairs in the Future**

Ms. McNamee explained to the Council that she would like to see more engagement and communication between CGA and NYSDA than there possibly has been in the past. She would also like to see more opportunities for members to participate in our advocacy efforts by way of "Take Action" campaigns. There is a virtual "Take Action" campaign set up to run through the end of the week live on the NYSDA website. This will allow members who are not able to attend Advocacy Day to be able to contact their legislators to help push NYSDA legislative priorities. The link for the "Take Action"

campaign is being emailed to the entire membership at the kickoff of Advocacy Day. Also, it is worth mentioning that the Advocacy section of the NYSDA website has been revamped. Everything a member would want to know about NYSDA legislative agenda is available on the website.

### **ADA CGA Report**

Dr. Miller discussed the work of the ADA Council on Governmental Affairs (CGA). He submitted a detailed written report, which is attached. He said if anyone has any questions they are more than welcome to call or email.

### **Policy Manual Review**

The Council was provided with the Governmental Affairs section of NYSDA Policy Manual. This Manual is slated for update. It wasn't explained to the Council what the NYSDA Board was asking them to do, and since the materials are voluminous the Council asked for time to review the policies and vote via electronic survey. The following resolution passed unanimously:

**RESOLVED:** That the Council on Governmental Affairs have one week to review the "Legal and Government" section of the NYSDA Policy Manual; and be it further

**RESOLVED:** That the Council vote via electronic survey on whether or not they agree with the proposed changes in that section of the NYSDA Policy Manual.

UPDATE: The Council was given until closed of business to review and vote on the Legal and Government section of the NYSDA Policy Manual from 1983 through 2005. After review, the Council agreed 9 in favor, 1 opposed (Schaefer), to delete the following resolutions from the NYSDA Policy Manual because they have either already been carried out and are now moot or they are living in another NYSDA governance document.

**RESOLVED:** That the following resolutions be deleted from the NYSDA Policy Manual: 7-D-83; 12-D-83; 18-D-83; 23-D-83; 26-D-83; 27-D-83; 38-D-83; 40-D-83; 7-J-84; 30-J-84; 31-J-84; 32-J-84; 51-J-84; 56-J-84; 29-D-84; 31-D-84; 44-D-84; 45-D-84; 47-D-84; 48-D-84; 8-EC-84; 9-EC-84; 11-EC-84; 16-EC-84; 19-M-85; 38-M-85; 58-M-85; 63-M-85; 67-M-85; 14-D-85; 29-D-85; 30-D-85; 32-D-85; 37-D-85; 40-D-85; 47-D-85; 52-D-85; 70-D-85; 74-D-85; 1-EC-85; 7-EC-85; 36-EC-85; 12-J-86; 28-J-86; 34-J-86; 41-J-86; 7-D-86; 55-D-86; 59-D-86; 8-EC-86; 14-EC-86; 13-J-87; 14-J-87; 47-J-87; 51-J-87; 54-J-87; 71-J-87; 17-D-87; 40-D-87; 56-D-87; 59-D-87; 6-EC-87; 8-EC-87; 38-J-88; 41-J-88; 45-J-88; 54-J-88; 27-D-88; 38-D-88; 44-D-88; 45-D-88; 4-EC-88; 14-M-89; 21-M-89; 42-M-89; 20-D-89; 25-D-89; 6-EC-89; 18-J-90; 43-J-90; 56-J-90; 19-D-90; 26-D-90; 33-D-90; 36-D-90; 4-EC-90; 13/52-J-91; 30-J-91; 31-J-91; 33-J-91; 34-J-91; 7-EC-91; 8-

EC-91; 29-D-91; 30-D-91; 44-D-91; 52-D-91; 15-J-92; 18-J-92; 41-J-92; 4-D-92; 11-D-92; 26-D-92; 44-D-92; 48-D-92; 19-J-93; 32-J-93; 33-J-93; 39-J-93; 14-D-93; 31-D-93; 47-D-93; 28a-J-94; 10-N-94; 35-J-95; 46-J-95; 45-N-95; 2-EC-95; 4-J-96; 8-J-96; 21-N-96; 1-MAR-97; 2-MAR-97; 5-EC-98; 7-EC-98; 5-N-98; 9-N-98; 23-N-98; 27-N-98; 4-EC-99; 12-EC-99; 10-J-99; 6-EC-00; 14-N-00; 17-N-00; 19.1-N-00; 19.2-N-00; 41-N-00; 10-J-01; 12-J-01; 31-J-01; 31.1-J-01; 21-N-01; 38-N-01; 26-D-02; 32-D-02; 28-D-03; 3-EC-04; 6-EC-04; 10-N-04; 11-N-04; 15-N-04; and 39-N-04.-

## **New Business**

Dr. Farren brought up two items that he would like NYSDA to put on their radar. He mentioned the two residency programs that closed in the capital region. He discussed the funding issues for those residency programs. Ms. McNamee told him that the Council on Dental Education and Licensure is in the middle of looking into the PGY-1 programs. He also mentioned that he would like to see the Council on Governmental Affairs have more input into the resolution process at the House of Delegates meeting.

The Council unanimously voted to recommend Dr. Robert F. Schaefer for appointment as Council Chair for the 2023-2024 term to Dr. Anthony Cuomo. This will be Dr. Schaefer's second term.

The next meeting of the Council on Governmental Affairs will be determined an electronic poll by the Council members in the fall.

## **Adjournment**

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was approved by unanimous consent at 2:05 p.m.