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OHIO'S BUDGET PROCESS IN BRIEF

As Introduced Budget (early to mid-March)

- The new Governor is required to release budget recommendations by March 15th. These recommendations come in the form of Blue Books. The Blue Book is the executive summary of the budget. It contains high-level summaries, but no actual language;
- By late March the "As Introduced" version of the budget will be introduced in the Ohio House; and
- At a later date, the Legislative Service Commission (LSC) will produce Redbooks. Redbooks are detailed summary documents for each agency, board, and commission

House Hearings (mid-March through mid-April)

- The House Finance Committee assigns different pieces of the "As Introduced" version of the budget to specific budget subcommittees;
- Each subcommittee will hold hearings. At these hearings, each state agency will have an opportunity to provide testimony;
- During their testimony they will provide information and answer questions about the budget proposal for their agency;
- Some non-agency organizations will also be invited to testify; and
- Typically the major organizations and stakeholder groups, like Disability Rights Ohio, and individuals and groups that will be impacted by specific provisions will also have an opportunity to testify.

House Substitute Bill (mid-April to early May)

- Each House Finance subcommittee will create a committee report with amendment recommendations;
- The full House Finance committee will create a new version of the budget bill, usually called a “substitute” or “sub-bill” that incorporates all of the subcommittees’ recommended amendments;
- LSC will produce a comparison document, called the Compare Doc. This document will contain all of the changes from the “As Introduced” version to the House substitute version of the bill (as well as subsequent versions of the bill);
- The full House Finance committee will hold hearings on the substitute budget bill; and
- Organizations, agencies and others will have a brief opportunity to provide testimony.

House Omnibus Amendment and Floor Vote (early to mid-May)

- The full House Finance committee will determine what additional changes are needed in the substitute bill and will compile all of these changes in a large omnibus amendment (the omnibus amendment is essentially a group of smaller amendments, compiled and treated as one) and adopt that amendment. The full committee may also adopt additional amendments to the budget bill at this time;
- The full Finance committee votes on the budget bill, which includes the omnibus amendment changes and reports the budget bill to the House for consideration and a vote;
- The full House will vote to pass the budget, which now includes all of the changes made in committee; and
- The full House might make additional amendments at this time.

The Senate Process (mid-May through mid-June)

- The House Passed version of the budget will be introduced in the Senate. The Senate process tends to be an abbreviated process compared to the House hearings;
- The Senate will assign different portions of the budget to various

Senate Finance subcommittees for hearings. During these hearings, there will be opportunities for agencies and organizations to provide testimony;

- After the initial hearings, each subcommittee will make recommendations to the full Senate Finance committee;
- The Senate Finance committee will create a substitute bill with all of the subcommittees' amendments;
- The Senate substitute bill will have a limited number of hearings in the full Senate Finance committee. Organizations and agencies can provide testimony during these hearings;
- The full Senate Finance committee will determine what additional changes are needed in the substitute bill and will compile all of these changes in a large omnibus amendment and adopt that amendment;
- The full Senate will vote to pass the budget, which now includes all of the changes made in committee; and
- Once out of the Senate Finance committee, the full Senate will debate the bill and consider additional amendments at this time. After all debate the Senate will vote to pass the budget bill.

The Conference Committee Process (mid-June through late June)

- The Conference Committee is made up of select members of the House and Senate. They will review the budget and reconcile the major differences between the House and Senate. There are no public hearings for this process;
- The Conference Committee will create a report with the final version of the budget and the bill will go to the full House and Senate for final concurrence; and
- The full House and Senate cannot make any more changes at this point and must vote to adopt or reject the conference committee report.

Governor's Vetoes (by June 30)

- Ohio's Governor has line-item veto powers on budget bills. This means that he can strike out any provisions he likes before signing the bill, but he cannot add or move any of the bill's language; and

- The appropriation provisions of the budget have an immediate effective date and must be signed by June 30 and take effect on July 1st.

Opportunities for Advocacy throughout the Legislative Process

- Attend committee hearings, monitor testimony, and review budget language through the Disability Rights Ohio Legislative Resource Page;
- Monitor the LSC Compare Doc to see all changes that are made;
- Provide written or spoken testimony in House subcommittees and Senate committees;
- Meet with legislators and other stakeholders to discuss issues of concern; and
- Reach out to media outlets about issues of particular concern.