As we prepare for the 2018 legislative year, GDHA urges you to take an active role in your professional association. Your GDHA membership and voice in the Georgia Dental Hygienists’ Association helps provide meaningful input as we work for legislation that helps you.

Following are some of the important efforts your GDHA legislative Action Committee has been working on and participating in:

1. **Georgia’s Coalition on Aging to advocate for a “Fingerprint background check system to build a database of employees eligible to provide care for residents of long term care facilities”**. This issue was voted by Georgia’s Coalition on Aging members as a 2018 legislative priority. The issue supports funding for the Department of Community Health in the Governor’s budget to implement a fingerprint background check system for employees providing long-term care and build a database of employees eligible to provide care.

2. **The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Clinical Scholars team to create a General supervision toolkit for HB 154.** The toolkit will be shared with all interested parties and stakeholders interested in utilizing dental hygiene general supervision to the full extent of the law.

3. **Water Fluoridation Advisory Committee led by Dixianne Parker, RDH, MEd Fluoridation Specialist/Educator, Georgia Department of Public Health/Oral Health Prevention Program.** The committee is committed to educating state and local legislators on the benefits of water fluoridation. GDHA has been and is an advocate of water fluoridation in Georgia for the prevention of caries. For more information on water fluoridation see the GDHA website at

4. **Barriers to Georgian’s Access to Adequate Healthcare task force chaired by Senate Health and Human Services Committee Chairman, Senator Renee Unterman.** The intent of the task force is to undertake a study of the conditions, needs, issues, and problems impacting rural Georgians form adequate Healthcare and recommend any action or legislation which the committee deems necessary or appropriate.

5. **House Study Committee on Georgians' Barriers to Access to Adequate Healthcare, chaired by House Health and Human Services Chairman Representative Sharon Cooper.** The committee explored a variety of health care issues, including disparities in health care and health outcomes in Georgia; prevalence and care for chronic diseases, such as obesity, diabetes,
hypertension, arthritis, heart disease, cancer, and HIV. The Committee also explored immunization practices for a variety of preventable diseases.

6. **Georgia’s Health Care Reform Task Force led by Lieutenant Governor Casey Cagle.** The intent of the task force is to find solutions to improve quality care for rural Georgians.

7. **House Rural Development Council chaired by Rep. Terry England and Rep. Jay Powell.** The council is exploring a full range of issues affecting Georgia’s rural areas, including economic development, communications, infrastructure, education, environmental pollution, employment and health care.

8. **Preparing for Dental Hygiene Appreciation Day at the Capitol.** GDHA is pleased to offer members, non-members and dental hygiene students the opportunity to learn about legislative issues impacting dentistry, dental hygiene and the public at large during our “Legislative Hot Topics” led by GDHA lobbyist Charles Craig. We will then have our picture with the Governor and spend the rest of our time at the capitol speaking with our legislators about issues impacting oral health, encouraging their support and thanking them for efforts on legislation. GDHA Dental Hygiene Appreciation Day at the Capitol is scheduled for Thursday February 8, 2018, so be sure to save the date and plan to attend.