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Ohio Senate President, State Representative Talk Policy and Medina County Board of DD

Medina, Ohio, August 6, 2018 – Ohio Senate President Larry Obhof, R-Medina, and Ohio State Representative Darrell Kick, R-Loudonville, met with leaders of four county boards of developmental disabilities Friday to discuss disability policy ahead the upcoming two-year state budget process and tour Medina County Board of DD offices and facilities.

The regional meeting, which was held at the Medina County Board of DD, drew superintendents from the Ashland, Holmes, Medina, and Richland County Boards of DD, which together provide services and supports to more than 3,000 people in North Central Ohio.

Supports for Ohioans with developmental disabilities are funded by a combination of local, state, and federal dollars. Much of the state's portion of that funding is decided every two years during Ohio's biennial budget process, during which lawmakers draw up the state's two-year spending plan. The 2020-21 state budget will be written in the first half of 2019.

Lawmakers also learned more about the supports county boards of DD provide and got hands-on experience with assistive devices that help people with developmental disabilities communicate and live more independently.

Jon Bluebond, MCBDD Superintendent, stated, "I appreciated the opportunity to meet with Senator Obhof and Representative Kick, to discuss key issues facing the DD system in Northeast Ohio. I know they are very busy, and I am grateful they made time to talk with us. We had productive conversations and I look forward to continuing discussions in the future."

Bluebond and other board superintendents also spoke to Obhof and Kick about numerous DD-related topics in addition to the upcoming state budget process, including state funding for DD programs and the ongoing statewide shortage of direct service professionals (DSPs) to care for people with developmental disabilities in home and community-based settings.

"The boards of developmental disabilities provide invaluable services," Obhof said. "I look forward to working with them proactively as we approach the next state budget cycle."

Obhof represents Ohio's 22nd Senate District, which includes all or part of Ashland, Holmes, Medina, and Richland Counties. He has served in the Ohio Senate since 2011 and has led the chamber as senate president since 2017. Kick represents Ohio's 70th House District, which includes all or parts of Medina, Ashland, and Holmes Counties.

"I was thrilled to sit down with local leaders in the developmental disabilities community today," Kick said. "I look forward to continuing these discussions with facilities in my district to get a better understanding of how best to serve them and advocate on behalf of them as they continue their outstanding work."

The Medina County Board of DD supports more than 1,200 Medina County residents with developmental disabilities, including more than 160 babies and toddlers, more than 400 school age children, and more than 500 adults.

County boards offer a variety of supports for people with developmental disabilities, including early intervention, school age services, and employment services. Established 50 years ago by the Ohio General Assembly, Ohio's 88 county boards of DD now support more than 93,000 people with developmental disabilities.

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Photos Included:

MCBDD Visit 1 – MCBDD Superintendent Jon Bluebond (l) meets with Ohio Senate President Larry Obhof (c) and State Representative Darrell Kick (r) to tour the Medina County Board of Developmental Disabilities to learn about key issues facing the Ohio developmental disabilities system.

About the Medina County Board of DD

The Medina County Board of DD is the community resource responsible for connecting, coordinating and funding services for individuals of all ages with developmental disabilities. We help with everything from early intervention and education opportunities for children to employment and community inclusive living for adults. The mission of the Medina County Board of Developmental Disabilities is to promote and empower over 1250 individuals with developmental disabilities, from birth to death, to live, learn work and socialize in their communities.