

BOARD CONSOLIDATION

The House Finance and Appropriations Committee removed language from the H.B. 530, the budget corrections bill that would have consolidated the Board of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology under the Superintendent of Professional Regulation in the Department of Commerce in July 2007. The language was deleted during the mark up of the budget bill on Monday night. The language to consolidate 20 regulatory boards under the Division of Professional Regulation was included in the budget bill even though Senate leadership was opposed to consolidation. We do not anticipate any attempt to resurrect the consolidation language in the Senate.

In response to the removal of the consolidation language Gongwer news service reported, *"In another setback for the Taft administration, its plan to consolidate certain functions of 20 regulatory boards and commission within the Department of Commerce - already on life support in the skeptical legislature - was finally put to rest. The House struck from the bill language providing for the consolidation on July 1, 2007 because of intense opposition and the lack of sufficient evidence that the moves would save money. Various regulatory boards have made the case against the proposal, arguing among other things that they are fee-based oversight panels that have the support of their respective professions - some of which were also vocal in their opposition to the plan. 'They've been pounding and pounding and pounding on members,' the House GOP chief of staff said."*

The Board appreciates the efforts of all of those that contacted their legislators and voiced their opposition to the consolidation. Your voices were heard.